Collaboration: Alliance Regional Meetings

Michelle Saenz-Adames, Program Specialist

The Alliance held its regional meetings on November 30, 2010 at the Deming Public School District for the Southwest region and December 14, 2010 at the Dexter Consolidated School District for the Southeast region Alliance partners. The meeting agenda included: Math Initiatives, Parent Centers through ENLACE, Grant Initiatives, Non-Violent Communication Initiatives, STEM and School Gardens, developing Bilingual School Psychologists, support for mental health issues such as bullying, grief and loss, border violence support, Literacy Initiatives, and information about the J. Paul Taylor justice for youth symposium as well as CAMP (College Assistance Migrant Program at NMSU).

The regional meetings gave districts and community agencies an opportunity to share collectively in many of the initiatives that are currently taking place in the College of Education and across the main campus, which may benefit their specific needs as a school district and/or community agency. There were over 25 individuals who participated in each of the regional meetings. Many of the attendees were superintendents, district and building administrators, directors of Curriculum and Instruction and Special Education. Additionally community agency directors, a representative from Senator Bingaman’s office and NMSU faculty and staff were also in attendance.

The Alliance Regional meetings have resulted in future collaborative efforts to provide professional development training in the area of Response to Intervention, Mental Health (in particular focusing on bullying in the school setting) and future opportunities to provide Literacy training. The Alliance is planning to host these collaborative events in April.


Photo Courtesy of Deming Public Schools
Good News From Regional Education Cooperative #8
Lena Trujillo-Chavez, Executive Director

Pecos Valley Regional Education Cooperative #8 has Been Accredited by the Council on Accreditation

The Council on Accreditation (COA) is delighted to inform you that Pecos Valley Regional Education Cooperative #8 has been accredited. COA’s commitment to maintaining the highest level of standards and quality improvement is designed to identify providers that have set high performance standards for themselves and have made a commitment to their constituents to deliver the highest quality services. COA is proud to recognize Pecos Valley Regional Education Cooperative #8 as one of these outstanding providers.

COA accreditation is an objective and reliable verification that provides confidence and support to an organization’s service recipients, leadership, staff and community partners. The COA accreditation process involves a detailed review and analysis of both an organization’s administrative operations and its service delivery practices. All are “measured” against national standards of best practice. These standards emphasize services that are accessible, appropriate, culturally responsive, evidence based, and outcomes-oriented. In addition, they confirm that the services are provided by a skilled and supported workforce and that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

Because COA reviews and accredits the entire organization, not just specific programs, you can have confidence in the credibility, integrity and achievement of your entire organization. COA congratulates Pecos Valley Regional Education Cooperative #8 for their hard work and wonderful achievement and is proud to have it as part of COA’s Community of Excellence.

ALLIANCE LOGO

The Alliance has recently established a logo, which resembles what our work entails based on our focus to provide support through the P-20 Pipeline.
Upward Bound  
Rene Guillaume, Director

The Upward Bound Program at New Mexico State University is a federally funded program serving eight-five (85) participants from the Las Cruces Public Schools and Gadsden Independent School District. The mission of the NMSU TRIO Upward Bound Program is to assist participants to successfully complete their secondary education while preparing participants for entry into and graduation from a four-year institution of higher education. Participants learn skills and develop the motivation necessary for success in post-secondary education. During the fall and spring semesters students in the NMSU Upward Bound Program participate in a variety of activities aimed to ease the transition from high school to college. The activities include: after school advisement meetings, Saturday academic workshops, Upward Bound student council, and parent workshops. Students in their senior year receive assistance with college admissions, financial aid, scholarships, selecting majors, complete ACT/SAT exams. After graduation students enroll at NMSU and take Freshmen English and Freshmen Year Experience during the summer session and receive 7 credit hours. During the summer NMSU Upward Bound Students will participate in a six week summer program. Summer participants attend class on the NMSU campus Monday through Friday. Upward Bound participants enroll in English, Math, Science, Foreign Language and Computer Science courses.

ENLACE  
Dr. Federico Marquez, Director

Engaging Latino Communities for Education (ENLACE-Southern) at NMSU recently received a small grant from New Mexico Public Education Department to produce several video training modules relating to parent involvement. The modules are to highlight the importance of family-school partnerships, the families’ role on educating children, and the development of advocacy skills.

The audience is New Mexico families with special emphasis on those who are hardest to reach. Other audiences are grassroots organizations and school personnel. The product is a video or audio recording of interaction that illustrates a particular point of view regarding parental involvement with supporting material. The modules will be available through the IDEAL New Mexico web site for parents across the State. These modules will be utilized as a tool for parents to access those best practices in Southern New Mexico.
Cobre-Alliance Partnership  
Dr. Amalia H. Ludeke, Associate Professor

“Schools will not improve unless the administrators and teachers within them improve (Wise, 1991). This overarching tenet has been firmly embedded in the framework that guides the work of the partnership between the COBRE School District and the Alliance at New Mexico State University. The partnership has commenced its fourth year, bound by a shared and unwavering vision and deep commitment to build leadership capacity for leading and facilitating change in the organizational culture.

As the partnership cultivated the shared vision, it was determined that the system will not make sustainable improvement reflected in student achievement unless school renewal is addressed systemically. It was also agreed upon that leadership matters, and is essential for building teacher capacity and for changing the organizational culture that embraces continuous improvement evidenced in student-centered practices. This thinking led to the implementation of the Administrators’ Professional Learning Community, which is now in its third year. A purposeful outcome of this model is that leaders will become more intentional and skillful in helping their teachers to become increasingly connected with teaching and their students’ learning.

The framework of the Administrators’ Professional Learning Community is grounded in the ISLLC Standards and in the 13 Critical Success Factors developed by the Southern Regional Educational Board, reflecting the skills and attributes of what leaders need to know and be able to do. The principals in this learning community have continuous opportunities to practice, reflect, and assess their skills and leadership behaviors that research suggests affect teacher behaviors and student achievement.

As the stakeholders continue to build upon individual and collective capacities in the Administrators’ PLC, implementation of shared learning in context to the principals’ school sites continues to be the focus of our work. Indicators are used to provide evidence that the Administrators’ PLC is working toward its outcome. The use of data that informs our practice provides increased evidence that the principals understand the complexity and importance of leading professional learning communities at the school sites, as a mechanism for sharing leadership, achieving results and for providing a platform to build leadership capacity in their own teachers.

The changing conversations in our book studies and activities are reflected in increased levels of confidence and participation by the principals in the Administrators’ PLC. There are also positive indicators that the principals are increasingly integrating the learning acquired from the Administrators’ PLC. These indicators include increased levels of concern to make change at their respective school sites. The principals are making critical connections between their leadership, and their individual and collective abilities to lead and facilitate change in their schools. They are better equipped with utilizing existing school resources necessary for building teachers’ capacities and for implementing school goals that cultivate a collaborative and interdependent learning culture that corresponds to increased levels of student achievement.

In summary, there is also increased evidence of interdependence and cohesiveness between the district and university; a partnership built on trust and shared values, committed to leadership development as the cornerstone to school renewal. While the partnership is proud of the growth attained as it corresponds to the vision and outcome, it is also committed to continuous shared learning and growth, as the process of continuous renewal is embraced by the stakeholders.
MISSION:
The mission of the Alliance for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning is to collaboratively contribute to the success of children throughout New Mexico and to the educators who serve them.

VISION:
The vision of the Alliance is to serve as a catalyst for improved education for teachers as well as children and families, particularly for those in rural and border areas in New Mexico and to collaborate with appropriate partners to meet the diverse needs of our children.

GOALS:
• To be the principal academic entity providing comprehensive training and educational consulting services to New Mexico schools, particularly rural schools.
• To be the catalyst and inspiration for all schools to meet and exceed the expectations consistent with the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, evolving New Mexico Statutory requirements, strategic planning and the Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS).

OBJECTIVES:
• To provide teachers, administrators, parents, and children access to materials that will improve academic progress and success.
• To collaborate with the Public Education Department (PED) and Regional Educational Cooperative Centers (REC) to provide training and consulting services to schools, particularly rural schools.
• To work with identified schools to assist them in achieving alignment between the Educational Plan for Student Success, Instruction, and Student Outcomes
• To provide additional resources for identified areas (e.g. reading, science, math, special education, and bilingual education).
• To conduct formative and summative evaluation of collaborative initiatives implemented to address the goals of the Alliance and to statistically evaluate best practices for improving the education of children in schools.
• To disseminate information and research about best practices in meeting the challenges of schools.
• To advise and assist school districts and schools in the development of family involvement policies and procedures that facilitate and sustain family involvement that is consistent with the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, evolving New Mexico Statutory requirements, strategic planning and the Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS).
ALLIANCE MEMBERS

SCHOOL DISTRICTS:
Alamogordo Public Schools  Las Cruces Public Schools
Animas Public Schools  Lordsburg Municipal Schools
Cobre Consolidated Schools  Loving Municipal Schools
Deming Public Schools  Pecos Independent Schools
Dexter Consolidated Schools  Reserve Public Schools
Gadsden Independent Schools  Silver Consolidated Schools
Hagerman Municipal Schools  Tatum Municipal Schools
Hatch Valley Public Schools  Tularosa Municipal Schools
Lake Arthur Municipal Schools  Alamogordo Public Schools

OTHER AGENCIES:
Aprendamos Intervention Team  NM Research & Study Council
MVEDA  Parents Reaching Out
MECA Therapies, LLC  Regional Education Cooperative #2
NM Education Network Center  Regional Education Cooperative #8
NM Highlands University  Regional Education Cooperative #10
NM Higher Education  Re-Learning New Mexico
NM Northern Network  Western New Mexico University
NM Public Education Department

NMSU AFFILIATES:
American Indian Programs
NMSU Carlsbad
International & Border Programs
University Outreach & Extension Programs
Engaging Latino Communities in Education (ENLACE)

Colleges of:
Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences
Arts & Sciences
Business
Engineering
Extended Learning
Health & Social Services

INTERNAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:
Susan Brown  Amalia Ludeke
Susie Bussman  Federico Marquez
Betsy Cahill  Michael Morehead
Dana Christman  Jim O’Donnell
Pat Conn  Robert Rhodes
Kathleen Cronin  Michelle Saenz-Adames
Anne Gallegos  Alicia Salazar
Odilia García  Jonathan Schwartz
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Gary Ivory  Brenda Vigil
Cathy Kinzer  Karin Wiburg
Eric J. López  Robert Wood