



August 26, 2009

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### **Leadership: The Path to Student Success**

The theme for this year's conference devoted its time to leadership. As leaders in this state, we have a great responsibility. We have multiple layers that support the schools as well as the need to support each other. Professional development is more critical today as we are being pushed to perform and the level of accountability continues to rise. We need additional strategies that strengthen our support for students. With Response to Intervention (RtI), we have expanded the need to use effective differentiated instruction that can be implemented in any classroom setting. Today's administrator/teacher faces the challenge of understanding each of their students learning needs while addressing the curricula demands of their own educational system. How do we help our staff and keep our own sanity? How do we teach the research based strategies, teach how to interpret assessment, create opportunities and have high expectations for differentiation? As Robert Marzano has stated, *"The single most influential component of an effective school is the individual teachers within the school."* As leaders, we are not short of work to do. It seems as though everyone is trying to get more accomplished in less time- and with better results than ever. We all know that more mandates with less money is a challenge.

As the year has just begun, we are already hearing that we will be having additional cutbacks during the school year. We now need each other more than ever. One district/state does not have all of the answers. As we pull each other together, I wanted to state that I am proud of our school leadership in the state and that we do seek each other out in times of need. Please stay tuned to NMCSA for current and accurate information throughout this school year. We need to be aware of what is happening. I look forward to working with NMCSA and their staff for the next two years and supporting the mission and purpose of the organization which rests in the advocacy for the children of New Mexico.