

THE RECORDER

NM Coalition of School Administrators Newsletter

February 2010



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Autonomy for School Leaders

--James Eck & Bryan Goodwin

Excerpted from January Issue of The School Administrator

In the past few years, we've experienced many forms of site-based management and much has been written about the success of schools and student achievement being attributed to the amount of autonomy provided to school administrators. However the research has also shown that autonomy alone does not guarantee improved student performance. Marzano's research has demonstrated that there is a statistically significant relationship between effective district leadership and student achievement. The school principal who is shouldering much of the burden of the accountability system cannot improve student performance without the authority they need and they certainly cannot do so if the district leadership does not have clear, non-negotiable goals for student achievement and classroom instruction, for monitoring those goals and marshaling the resources and board support to achieve the goals. Waters and Marzano have concluded that effective superintendents provide principals with "defined autonomy"—they set clear, non-negotiable goals for learning and instruction and provide school leadership teams with responsibility and authority for determining how to meet those goals.

Defining Autonomy

In previous publications, McRel has described "purposeful communities" as those which display four key elements of high performing organizations:

- Developing and pursuing outcomes that matter to all
- Establishing and following agreed-upon processes

- Using all available assets, both tangible and intangible to achieve these outcomes and
- Demonstrating a strong sense of collective efficacy

Defining purpose

McRel's analysis of the research on superintendents found that leaders of high-performing districts:

- Adopt five-year, non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction
- Establish clear priorities among the district's instructional goals and objectives
- Develop coherent goals that call for higher levels of achievement rather than maintenance of the status quo and
- Commit their districts and schools to continuous improvement.

Most districts already have some type of strategic plan with goals for increasing student

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Tom's Tales



Although our Organization has not formally been involved in any of the recent media “debates” regarding the proliferation of Charter Schools and whether or not that pattern should be curtailed, it may now be appropriate for us to at least share some observations on this topic. Our Governor and the U.S. President have already expressed

their support of the Charter movement while NMCSA, the NM School Boards Association and Albuquerque Public Schools among others have expressed reservations.

The New Mexico statutes which have thus far allowed more than 80 Charter schools to be created are not going away, and neither are those schools which currently serve thousands of NM Students. So rather than engaging in a philosophical debate about the importance of parental choice, the value of competition in the educational arena, or the desire to pursue alternative, creative models of successful practices, perhaps we should simply focus on financial issues.

The question to be asked, and answered, when there are over 40 new Charter applicants in the queue hoping to be allowed to open shortly – potentially a 50% increase statewide – isn't whether the NM Charter movement has a record of improved student success, (although it doesn't); nor whether NM Charters have been the great incubators of innovation and best practices they were purported to be (although that hasn't happened either).

But rather in these stark financial times we should look exclusively at whether the Charter movement is really a more fiscally responsible practice, thus a wise investment for the NM legislature to continue supporting and expanding.

Here are some financial facts that should, however, be clearly understood and considered now in any discussion or debate about freezing or expanding Charter schools. Should there be a threshold price placed on the importance of parental choice given that less than 10% of

the state's parents currently avail themselves of this option?

- Charter school students cost the state of NM approximately 20% more than the statewide average for all other students in the regular public school setting
- In Albuquerque, in which traditional students actually cost less than the statewide average, Charter school students nonetheless cost about 25% more than their counterparts
- In the Charter schools that have been authorized by the state's Public Education Commission the discrepancy is even more dramatic.

While some of this discrepancy is easily explainable by the fact that Charters often intentionally serve challenging student populations, it is worth noting that traditional “alternative” schools within local Districts receive no such additional funding.

And perhaps most significant during an economic crisis, when a new Charter opens, in its first year of operation the state of NM essentially double funds all of those students. Under the current school funding system a District is credited and funded for its prior year student counts, while the new Charters can base their budgets on their current year 40th day numbers.

Therefore recent Charter approvals by the Public Education Commission in the Fall of 2009 will result in approximately a \$25 M state general fund obligation next year rather than \$12M or so- there's that double funding- which would be needed for those students in the Charters' absence, effectively harming the funding for all 89 Districts as well as any other existing Charter schools- all during a catastrophic budget crisis.

So the issue here need not be philosophical, but rather financially transparent – legislators will need to decide if they wish to accept a significant additional cost for all taxpayers to support this particular version of parental choice in education.

Tom Sullivan



Autonomy for School Leaders

continued from page 1

achievement, however, the difference is that few have established non-negotiable goals for both achievement and instruction, to be adhered to by every school; and in many cases, districts skip over the need to set the goals collaboratively and instead impose top-down mandates which fail to energize the communities because the outcomes may not matter to everyone.

Operating Principles

Developing clean operating principles and processes for accomplishing shared goals is another key characteristic of purposeful communities. McRel has found that effective superintendents

- Focus their human resource systems and policies on hiring and retaining capable experienced teachers
- Direct district staff to work with principals to screen, interview and select teachers
- Establish teacher evaluation as a priority for principals
- Develop policies and procedures for rewarding successful teachers and terminating the employment of unsuccessful teachers
- Establish strong, agreed-upon principles/values that direct the actions of all district staff members; and
- Develop a shared vision and understanding of “defined autonomy” for school leaders making it clear what it is principals are responsible for doing and what it is district personnel are responsible for doing.

Tangible and Intangible Resources

Effective district leaders focus on ensuring the equitable distribution of tangible assets and the systematic development of intangible assets by:

- Controlling resource allocation to ensure the equitable distribution of the district’s tangible assets, including its work force
- Allowing for and promoting innovation at the school level
- Providing extensive teacher and principal staff development to develop the human capital

necessary to achieve the district’s goals for teaching and learning.

Stated differently, this might mean having the flexibility in both staffing and budgeting to create an interventionist or teacher leader position or the freedom to work with school leadership teams to identify and implement new strategies for helping schools accomplish district goals.

Collective Efficacy

Roger Goddard, Texas A&M professor has noted that collective efficacy, a shared belief among teachers that all students can learn and that by working together they can help all students in their school succeed is actually a better predictor of school success than student socioeconomic status or race.

Superintendents can support the development of collective efficacy in schools through a variety of practices including:

- Maintaining high expectations for school performance to reinforce the notion that all students can learn
- Including socializing functions in district meetings to develop and reinforce the shared belief that every school in the district is capable of ensuring the success of every child
- Celebrating initial success by rewarding students beyond standard honor rolls and recognition assemblies for exceptional performance

Although these four points may serve as guiding principles for defining autonomy for principals, each district has to decide how to best achieve such autonomy—being directive in some areas and recognizing which actions are best left up to principals. Simply “allowing” site based management does not provide the tools or resources needed to improve student achievement. Instead, “defining” autonomy seems to be providing the best climate for improved performance among both students and adults.

To read the entire article, please see the January issue of AASA’s *The School Administrator*.



THE RECORDER

2011 Superintendent of the Year Nominating Period is Now Open

The New Mexico Superintendent of the Year award is a prestigious award granted to one of New Mexico's superintendents on an annual basis. Each year the membership of the NM School Superintendents' Association (NMSSA) elects one of their colleagues to represent them as the Superintendent of the Year. Former Superintendents of the Year include our present representative, Dr. Karen Couch of Moriarty-Edgewood Schools, our own Secretary of Education, Dr. Veronica C. Garcia, Dick Pool of the Silver Schools, RL Richards of Texico and our own Executive Director, Tom Sullivan. Dr. Sue Cleveland of Rio Rancho was a national finalist, in 2005 when she was Superintendent of the Year. The organization presents the successful candidate with a plaque and a \$500 check that can be used to offset travel costs related to attendance at the next year's AASA conference where Superintendents of the year from all 50 states are recognized.

The NMSSA has made some changes to the selection process effective this year. The changes are as follows:

- The nomination period will open in January of each year. Anyone can nominate a current, practicing Superintendent. The nomination form is included in this newsletter and is available on the NMSSA website.
- Applications/nominations will close on April 1.
- Nominations will be vetted by a committee of at least three former NMSSA Superintendents of the Year appointed by the NMSSA President. The committee will

create a pool of qualified nominees.

- A qualified nominee must be a practicing superintendent in a New Mexico school district, must be nominated by a colleague and must accept the nomination based on the commitment to complete the National Superintendent of the Year application in accord with AASA guidelines and commit to attend the following year's AASA annual conference as the New Mexico representative.
- Qualified nominees will be submitted to the general membership of the NMSSA for selection by secret ballot during May/June.
- The individual receiving the most number of votes shall be the NMSSA Superintendent of the Year and shall follow AASA guidelines to submit his or her application for National Superintendent of the Year. The winner will be announced at the NMCSA Annual Summer Conference in July.

Please consider nominating one of our Superintendents for this award. It is a way to recognize the efforts of this hard working group of administrators.

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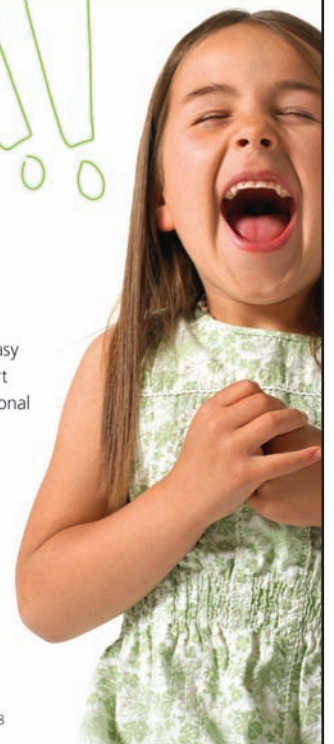
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Technology Saves NMCSA and Affiliates Big Dollars

How does realizing a \$33,400 return on a \$2,400 investment in nine months sound to you? It sure sounded good to the New Mexico Coalition of School Administrators' board when they received the initial report on a year-long study conducted on the use of an online meeting technology for all affiliates called Talking Communities.

Talking Communities is a web based virtual meeting process that allows participants from anywhere you have access to DSL speed Internet connectivity to enter a "virtual meeting room" where PowerPoint, Excel, Word, and PDF documents can be shared and where dialogue and text messages can take place in real time with all participants. Imagine for a moment that you need to meet with a committee of five people to discuss a draft revision of your organization's constitution. You all log in (a very simple process) and there you are -- talking to each other, interacting with each other and collectively studying the draft revision without anyone ever leaving his or her office.

Dr. Kathy Andreson, President-Elect of the national Phi Delta Kappa, made a sample of this process and technology available to the New Mexico Superintendents' Association several years ago. The results of using Talking Communities with new superintendents was so encouraging that the NMCSA board approved a pilot study using Wallace funding to secure the service for all interested affiliates during the 2008-2009 school year.

One of the major motivators for this project was the rapidly increasing cost of fuel at the time along with the increasing number of meetings that all busy New Mexico administrators are being asked to attend. When a new superintendent from Des Moines needed to meet with a new superintendent from Animas (a real situation) both had to drive about five hours each way to attend a one-hour meeting and then drive five hours to return home. Just those two superintendents would have used up 20 hours of driving time and over 1000 miles on the highway

to attend a one-hour meeting. There had to be a better way and Talking Communities was that better way.

The pilot study began with each affiliate being offered its own virtual meeting room in the Coalition Talking Communities server. All but one organization accepted. Each participating affiliate identified a person who would serve as the affiliate's moderator. That individual was trained in using the bells and whistles associated with Talking Communities. The training took about an hour for each moderator and several of the organizations dived in with real gusto.

The New Mexico Activities Association planned and conducted a year-long series of web based seminars (webinars) for coaches, athletic trainers, and athletic directors across the state. New Mexico ASC D. conducted most of its board meetings last year online using the Talking Communities venue. The new superintendents' transition and mentoring program (STAMP) held all of its monthly "Coffee and Conversation" meetings in their virtual meeting room.

Talking Communities does not replace the face-to-face meetings that administrators must and need to attend, but at the end of the year-long study where each moderator kept track of the meetings held online, the mileage saved, and the hours of driving time not expended some fascinating figures emerged. Over 66,800 highway miles were not driven by virtue of being able to attend online meetings. This accounts for the \$33,400 cited above at standard IRS reimbursement rates. Even more impressive are the 1,350 administrator hours saved by not having to drive to meetings. That's a lot of administrative time used more productively than sitting behind the wheel.

Talking Communities is in its second year of NMCSA use and is available to any affiliate for any affiliate purpose. NMCSA has provided this service to its affiliates for the past two years and the data is clear: it's proven to be a great timesaver and money saver.



THE RECORDER

2010 NMCSA/PED Summer Conference July 26-28, 2010 - Hotel Albuquerque

NMCSA is now accepting registrations for the annual NMCSA/PED Summer conference. We are pleased to have three very prestigious keynote speakers for this year's conference:

- Dr. Pedro Noguera, a national expert and renowned speaker on the topic of closing the achievement gap among minority students will be the keynote presenter on Tuesday morning, July 27, 2010
- Dr. John Draper, back by popular demand, will make the keynote presentation on Tuesday afternoon, July 27 and his topic will be on Crucial Conversations about America's Schools—with the emphasis on the types of conversations that resonate with the public, build morale among staff and generate support from political and business leaders.
- Dr. Gerald Tirozzi, the Executive Director of National Association of Secondary School Principals will present on Wednesday morning, July 28, 2010. His presentation will address the challenges of the site administrator in increasing student achievement.

Your conference fees cover materials, a Continental breakfast on both days, a very nice welcome reception on Tuesday afternoon, July 27, the Awards luncheon on Wednesday, July 28 and a unique opportunity to interface and network with colleagues from across the state. Early registration fees are a bargain at \$150 per participant and the beautiful Hotel Albuquerque offers a very reasonable

room rate. Submit your registration early to take advantage of this price. Registration forms are included in this issue and can be faxed or e-mailed to the NMCSA office, or you may register online. All information is on the form itself. Make plans now to join us in July.



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THE RECORDER


2009-2010 Leadership Series February 23, March 12, April 27

The Leadership Series of professional development activities for school and district leaders will continue in February. Registration material for the Leadership Series was sent to all district superintendents via e-mail in December. The registration forms are also available on the NMCSA website. The next presentation will be on Tuesday, February 23, 2010. Tom Many, a current Superintendent, will facilitate the February and March session and Dick Jones from the International Center on Leadership in Education will facilitate the April session. Each session will build on the previous one, so our hope

is that participants will be able to attend all three sessions, however we understand the realities of school and district schedules and commitments.

We will also have two more Webinar presentations as part of our Leadership Series. In March the focus will be on Technology and Ethics will be the topic in April. Details to come later via email.

The registration deadline has been extended until February 12 - see the registration form included in this newsletter.



DIBELS® Summit 2010
 February 23-26, 2010
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REMINDER! REMINDER! NMCSA 2010 Student Scholarship Applications Due February 15

Applications for the annual NMCSA student scholarship are due in the NMCSA office no later than February 15, 2010. Two awards for \$2000 each will be awarded to two students who will graduate in Spring 2010 . Application

forms have been sent to all high school counselors and principals and are available on the NMCSA website. Please encourage your students to submit an application before the February deadline.



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Welcome to the New Mexico Leadership Institute

--Linda M. Paul, Ed.D., Executive Director

Leadership matters; it matters in the roundhouse, it matters in the white house and it matters in the school house. The New Mexico Leadership Institute (NMLI) has been created to recruit, prepare and support great leaders at the school and district level.

The momentum for the NMLI grew out of the work of SJM3 which called for our state to develop a plan to enhance the recruitment, preparation, mentoring, evaluation, professional develop and support for school principals and other school leaders. SB 124, creating the NMLI, was introduced during the 2009 Regular Session. This bill died in committee, but HB2 carried funding to begin the NMLI.

The New Mexico Leadership Institute is a partnership between school districts, the five state universities offering education administration programs (UNM, NMSU, ENMU, WNMU and NMHU) and three state agencies (PED, HED OEA). In the months to come we will convene an Executive Board to oversee the work of the NMLI and a Partnership Board to help inform our work.

The scope of work of the NMLI includes five initiatives. Each initiative and a brief description of the current work are given below.

1. Preparation and Licensure for Aspiring Principals

The NMLI is supporting two important projects called for in SJM3: revitalizing the core curriculum offered in NM for an education administration degree and revising the administrator competencies for licensure in NM. Faculty from the five universities have been working for 18 months on the revitalization and are prepared to present a draft of their work to superintendents in February 2010.

2. Mentoring for New Principals

The NM Principal Mentor Network was begun in the summer of 2009 after two meetings with representatives from across the state and a great amount of research. We gathered input on the needs of districts and of new principals and launched a membership-based website with resources and a way to connect mentors across the state as well as high quality mentor training. Visit us at www.leadnm.info.

3. Intensive Support For Principals In Schools In Need of Improvement

For the fourth consecutive year, the Principal Support Network has offered training and support for principals on how to use the NM Standards Based Assessment Data to inform decisions on instruction. The NMLI is working closely with the PED's Priority Schools Bureau to provide additional support to principals in SINOI.

4. Professional Development for Aspiring Superintendents

September 2009 brought the start of the first cohort of the NMSSA's Aspiring Superintendent Program. Under the expert guidance of Dr. Hugh Prather, Tom Sullivan, and Dr. Gloria Rendón 17 brave individuals entered the year-long program designed to prepare them for the superintendency. Work is underway to strengthen this program for 2010-2011 and more information about the application process for the next cohort will be forthcoming this spring.

5. Mentoring For New Superintendents

The NMSSA's STAMP program has been in operation for several years and provides a combination of online and in person support services to new superintendents. Spearheaded by Dr. Hugh Prather, Tom Sullivan, and Dr. Gloria Rendón experienced superintendents, lobbyists, legislators and other partners provide valuable information and "just in time" training.

The NMLI will also work closely with universities and other providers to make available high quality professional develop for school leaders. Watch this space for more information this spring.

Every child in New Mexico deserves a great leader in his or her school. Together we can recruit great leaders, prepare them well and support them so every child receives a great education.



NEW MEXICO
LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE



Calendar of Events 2009 - 2010

NMASBO 2010 Winter Conference - "Regulatory Training"

Albuquerque Hilton
February 17 - 19, 2010

PED / NMASBO Spring Budget Workshop

Hotel Albuquerque
March 22 - 24, 2010

NMCSA/NMPED Annual Conference

Hotel Albuquerque
July 26 - 28, 2010

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See latest administrative vacancies and other news.

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from our State.*

Any interested party may join by going online to <http://list.unm.edu>. Once on the site, select Subscribe to a list, this will take you to a page where you may subscribe to our list. In the box provided, please type in NMCSA-L and submit. You will be taken to another page where you will enter your email and name and click on Join NMCSA-L. You may remove your name at any time in the future.

NMCSA 2010 Leadership Series
February 23, March 12, April 27, 2010
9:00 am - 3:00 pm
CNM Workforce Training Center
5600 Eagle Rock Rd. Albuquerque

In partnership with the state's Wallace grant (OEA), NMCSA is pleased to present a series of Leadership Development activities. Districts are encouraged to send teams (Superintendents, District Administrators, Principals, Teacher Leaders) who will participate in the Webinars and the three face to face sessions. Districts may send up to four participants, however registration is limited to 100 participants. The cost per session is \$50 per participant per event or \$125 for all three events to cover meals and materials. There is no cost for the webinars. NMCSA is covering the cost of presenters and some materials.

Please complete this Registration and submit via e-mail to nmcsa@unm.edu, fax: 505-277-5496 or via mail to:

NMCSA
3040 COE MSC05
Manzanita Hall 1 UNM
Albuquerque, NM 87131

District Name: _____

Name, phone # & e-mail of contact person: _____

Participants:

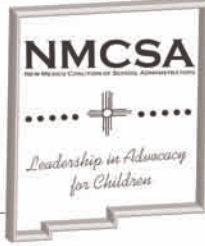
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2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____

We will attend the following sessions:

- February 23 (\$50 per participant)
- March 12 (\$50 per participant)
- April 27 (\$50 per participant)
- All three (3) sessions (\$125 per participant)

Please remit the registration fee for all participants with the registration form. Deadline for submitting registration is February 12, 2010.

PO # _____



NEW MEXICO COALITION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
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Albuquerque, NM 87131
phone: 277-6986 fax: 277-5496 email: nmcsa@unm.edu

LEADERSHIP IN CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

NMCSA & NMPED 2009 SUMMER CONFERENCE REGISTRATION JULY 26 - 28, 2010

Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town, 800 Rio Grande Blvd. NW, Albuquerque

**Mail or fax this form to contact above or register on-line at: www.unm.edu/~nmcsa
 (on-line registrants will be eligible to win a prize – P.O. # Required)**

NAME (please print): _____ **District** _____

BILLING ADDRESS: _____

POSITION: _____ **E-MAIL:** _____ **PHONE** _____

EARLY REGISTRATION (received by July 5, 2010)

Members . . \$150.00. Non-Members . . \$300.00.
 All cancellations must be received in writing, fax or email.
 A fee of \$50.00 will be charged for cancellations received after July 5, 2010
 No-shows will be billed full amount of registration.*

LATE REGISTRATION FEE (after July 5, 2010 - including walk-ins): ADD \$50.00 TO APPROPRIATE FEE ABOVE!

My conference fee is \$ _____ Method of Payment: PO# _____
 Please invoice. Check Enclosed.

* Contact your superintendent's office or the NMCSA office to check for membership status if you are not sure.
Pre-registration ends on July 16, 2010. After that date we will only have on site registration.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Call the Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town at (800) 237-2133 or (505) 843-6300 before July 5, 2010. Identify yourself as an attendee to the NMCSA Summer Conference in order to qualify for conference room rates of \$109 for single or double occupancy.