

# COUNSELING CONNECTION

*New Mexico School Counselors' Newsletter*



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Page 1:

- Tularosa Counselors and Teachers Team Up to Re-Engage Students During Pandemic

### Page 2:

- Tularosa Counselors and Teachers Team Up to Re-Engage Students During Pandemic (cont.)

### Page 3:

- Virtual Meet the Employer: Hospitality & Tourism Career Cluster
- Early Childhood Fast Track Program
- Attendance Supports for CTE Students

### Page 4:

- Grief During the Holidays
- Upcoming Events
- Contact Us
- Announcements

### Page 5:

- New Mexico School Counselor Association Info and Membership
- ASCA Information Before Year End
- New Mexico Launches NM Connect

## TULAROSA COUNSELORS AND TEACHERS TEAM UP TO RE-ENGAGE STUDENTS DURING PANDEMIC

In ordinary times, Tularosa agriculture and welding teacher Thomas “Chase” Montes and school counselor Tom Mulkey make a pretty good team when it comes to recruiting and retaining students in Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways. In COVID-19 times, they have notched up the teamwork to keep students from giving up on their CTE coursework or falling off the graduation track.

The Tularosa secret: Keep parents, students, and all teachers involved in the communication process. It’s a plan that has worked pretty well. Out of the 60 students in Montes’ various agriculture and welding classes, only one has decided not to return to classes. Montes still hopes he can get that student back.

Montes and his fellow Tularosa teachers are also advisors to a cohort of about 15 students. He said he knew that once the decision was made to not have students in the brick and mortar schools, some teachers would face even more challenges. Not only do they have to change their style of teaching, they would have to make sure students would attend virtual classes and figure out how to replace hands on work in shops or laboratories that is critical to most CTE classes.

“A lot of CTE teachers never planned on having to do virtual

(continued on page 2)

## TULAROSA COUNSELORS AND TEACHERS TEAM UP TO RE-ENGAGE STUDENTS DURING PANDEMIC (CONT.)

education,” said Montes. “But we got together and decided that we better get organized and start to build online courses that could keep our students tuned into all their classes.”

At one point during the semester, Montes hoped for a hybrid learning environment, but it quickly became apparent it would not be possible with a rise of coronavirus cases in Otero county. That is when he went to the drawing board for his CTE classes including Agriculture Mechanics, Agriculture Leadership, Welding, and Animal Science.

He had to use much more computer technology to bridge the gap, especially in the rural areas of the Tularosa Basin.

“Our school district decided to use recorded video clips for students that who don’t have great internet access,” Montes said. “We would record lessons on a daily basis so students could download everything they needed for the week from a hub (near the school), take it home, do their work, and upload everything back into the hub.”

Along with making sure all students had access to learn, Montes had to completely change his techniques. He said he had to slow down and break up the lectures.

“I slowed way down and broke up the lessons into more digestible pieces,” he said.

Next semester, for instance, he plans to use some “easy to get, easy to use” household items in his welding classes to show them basic welding techniques. He said he is going to use graham crackers and icing or crackers and spray cheese to teach his students the basics of welding.

“It’s something cheap and basic the kids can buy,” he said. “You can teach them what the actual welding joint should look like and how you should put your material together.”

The snack is a bonus.

Mulkey said he and the other teachers are all working together to keep students on track. This is not easy, he said.

“These are trying times,” Mulkey said. “But we know how important CTE is to our students in this town and in our region. Most of our students do not have the equipment we have at our school to complete their welding or agriculture classes. What Chase has done is recreate lessons without just telling students to watch this video, or listen to his lecture. He wants them to know that these times are temporary and that they will be back in the classrooms soon.”

Montes makes a weekly phone call to students, and he keeps a call-log. He also takes calls from parents and talks to them as much as possible on weekly calls. Mulkey does the same and works with all the teachers to let them know how some of their students are doing emotionally right now.

Like Mulkey, Montes said he knows parents truly care how their children are doing in every class.

“Parents want to know how their child is doing, and they like to hear it from us,” he said. “This really is a team approach – our counselors, teachers, parents and the students.”

Montes acknowledges that many CTE teachers are facing a difficult stretch currently, so he wanted to leave them with words of wisdom: “There’s certainly a drawback to the pandemic; there’s a disconnect this year. But we have to focus on the positive. No one likes the setup, but we have to make the most of it.”

### TULAROSA VIDEO EXAMPLES:



[Ag Mech 2 – General Shop Tools, Part 1](#)



[Ag Leadership/ Ag Mech 2/ Welding 3](#)

## VIRTUAL MEET THE EMPLOYER: HOSPITALITY & TOURISM CAREER CLUSTER



**When:** Wednesday, December 9 from 10-11:30AM

**Registration:** [here](#) & Zoom invite will be sent directly to registered students/advisors

**Full details:** [here](#)

SkillsUSA is excited to launch their new Virtual Meet the Employer series. These interactive webinars will provide students the opportunity to ask questions of industry professionals on how to get hired and promoted within their trade. In addition, they will hear directly from industry partners about the opportunities they have available for employment, training, and education. The [kickoff Meet the Employer event](#) will be highlighting the Hospitality & Tourism Career Cluster with the following individuals participating in the panel:

**Gary Archuleta** - Vice President, National Distributing Company

**Andrea Arrigucci** - Program Coordinator, Marriott Hospitality Futures Center

**Dr. Jean Hertzman** - Department Head, School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management

**Rose Lucero** - Bond Outreach Coordinator, El Paso Public School  
Community Engagement Department

**Randy Randall** - Executive Director, Tourism Santa Fe

**Tim Severns** - Revenue Director, CrownePlaza Hotels and Resorts

### EARLY CHILDHOOD FAST TRACK PROGRAM

Please share this information with your education assistants in early childhood classrooms: Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) is now [accepting applications](#) for the new Early Childhood Fast Track AA Degree Program. The first cohort will start in January and finish in summer 2022. CNM will work with students to provide a remote option for all classes and seminars. In addition, CNM will provide a laptop computer for those accepted into the program. Scholarships are available. After completing the AA degree, students will continue to receive the Public PreK Scholarships through their BA program. More information is available on CNM's [webpage](#) and during upcoming online information sessions.



The CNM Early Education Fast Track Program turns your passion for teaching young children into a new career in 19 months!

### ATTENDANCE SUPPORTS FOR CTE STUDENTS

Federal Perkins funding can now be used to help address the issue of absenteeism during remote learning. The United States Department of Education has determined that the use of Perkins V funds to support salaries for "attendance coaches," who provide outreach to *CTE students*, is an appropriate use of funding.

Attendance coaches can be used as a strategy within the Attendance Tiers of Support to offer support to CTE students who have disengaged or are struggling with attendance issues. Approximately 85-percent of high school students participate in CTE at some point during their secondary career so this type of outreach could benefit many high school students. Interested LEAs should work with their respective Perkins coach to adjust their application for funding.

## GRIEF DURING THE HOLIDAYS



The Children’s Grief Center has scheduled its **Grief During the Holidays** workshop for December 12, from 11:00am - 12:30pm. During this workshop, there will be a discussion on coping with grief through the holiday season, and demonstrations for holiday activities and crafts for grieving families.

Registration is now open, and families can sign-up using this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMuceuprT4uHtBCS0cWwyTn7soMB2FFpPE4>

The registration deadline is **December 3**, so that the center has time to prepare boxes for families to come pick up at their office location, with all the supplies needed per family. Families who are outside of the Rio Rancho/Albuquerque area can have their box mailed to them. Dates for box pickup will be emailed to all registrants.

### CONTACT US

#### NMPED COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS BUREAU

**DIRECTOR:** Elaine Perea, PhD  
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CLICK [HERE](#) TO VISIT WEBSITE



### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### December 8

- 9:00 a.m. – Career & Technical Education PLC with Joseph Goins

#### January 12

- 9:00 a.m. – Career & Technical Education PLC with Joseph Goins

#### January 20

- 3:00 p.m. - New Mexico School Counselors’ Update Meeting

*For additional information and to register for the above events, see the “Upcoming Events” section or the Events Calendar on the home page of the counselor website:*

[schoolcounselors-nm.com/](http://schoolcounselors-nm.com/)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

There are several announcements regarding upcoming holidays and associated calendar adjustments:

- **NM School Counselors’ Update Meeting** - The monthly update meeting will not be held in December. Our next meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2021.
- **Friday Update Emails** - We will not send Friday update emails on December 25 or January 1. Regular Friday update emails will resume after the January newsletter, scheduled for distribution on Friday, January 8.

## NEW MEXICO SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION (NMSCA) INFO AND MEMBERSHIP

Hello! I would like to introduce the New Mexico School Counselor Association (NMSCA). The NMSCA Board is composed of 12 volunteers and we have been a division of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) for 56 years. The goal of NMSCA is to provide support to school counselors in the state of New Mexico. We keep an eye on NM legislation affecting school counseling and work hand in hand with ASCA at the national level. We also work with the New Mexico PED regarding licensing, graduation requirements, and school counselor support.

We currently host monthly virtual Happy Hours, provide professional development with free CEUs (for our members), and we are always looking for new ideas on what NM School Counselors need!

To join NMSCA, please visit our website: <https://www.nmschoolcounselor.org/Join-Us>  
The membership levels and cost per year are as follows:

- NMSCA Member - \$50.00 Subscription period: 1 year No automatically recurring payments
- Retired Member - \$35.00 Subscription period: 1 year No automatically recurring payments
- Student - \$20.00 Subscription period: 1 year No automatically recurring payments

If you have any questions on renewing or joining, please contact NMSCA Membership Chair, Megan Goodman, MA, LMHC: [NMSCAMembership@gmail.com](mailto:NMSCAMembership@gmail.com)

If you have any other questions or would like to help out on the NMSCA Board please contact me at [NMSCAPresident@gmail.com](mailto:NMSCAPresident@gmail.com)

Thank you,  
Rhonda Harper, LMHC  
NMSCA President

## ASCA INFORMATION BEFORE YEAR END

### Board of Directors Call for Applications

Are you interested in running for a position on the American School Counselor Association Board of Directors? Applications are due Jan. 31, 2021. Review this [application form](#) in advance, and then [apply using this link](#). [View](#) the ASCA Board of Directors Policy Manual.

### School Reentry

These [resources](#) can help school counselors as schools continue working through reentry considerations.

### Race Conversations

The following ASCA resources can help school counselors ensure ethical, equitable, and inclusive school environments: links to [positions](#), [articles](#), [webinars](#), [research and guidance](#), as well as new ASCA [initiatives and programs](#).

### COVID Updates and Resources

[Get updates](#) on how the virus affects ASCA members and the school counseling profession, as well as [resources for members](#).

### Helping Students After Crisis

[Get resources for helping students](#) in the aftermath of a natural disaster. [Get resources for helping students](#) in the aftermath of a shooting.

### NMConnect



## NEW MEXICO LAUNCHES NM CONNECT

The state of New Mexico has launched **NMConnect**, a new phone app that provides free 24-hour crisis and non-crisis support and access to behavioral health professionals who can text or talk via phone with individuals needing a listening ear or referrals to longer-term support. The app links users to the New Mexico Crisis Access Line (NMCAL), which provides safety net services statewide.

*NMCAL is still available via phone 24/7 toll-free by calling 1-855-NMCRISIS (1-855-662-7474). [More information can be found at NewMexico.gov.](#)*