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NEW MEXICO
SCHOOL COUNSELORS'
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

COUNSELOR CONNECTION

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NM School Counselors' Community of Best Practice

THE SCHOOL COUNSELORS' ROLE IN SUPPORTING STUDENTS AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AFTER TRAGEDY

When a 16-year-old student was shot and killed by a 14-year-old near West Mesa High School in Albuquerque on Feb. 25, television crews captured the actions of the response team – school personnel, first responders and district and police administration. Behind the scenes were school counselors, social workers and support staff who are there to comfort, support, and, all too often, try to explain the unexplainable.

Counselors, we know you are there, and we stand by you.

The New Mexico Public Education Department, and those of us in the College and Career Readiness Bureau, are here to support your daily work, your professionalism, and the incredible job you do for students, parents, and even the school staff who may come to you for comfort amid an extreme tragedy. Know that you are appreciated every day.

For the counselors and staff at West Mesa High School, we send our deepest condolences for the loss of a student in your school family. For all the grief counselors, including contractors and others, who showed up in the days following the shooting to provide support, thank you.

School shootings, teen suicide, and addiction problems are situations that impact nearly every school and district. In Albuquerque, it was the second shooting death of a student in the last six months. It's the counselors who play a pivotal role in addressing grief for the entire school community.

(Continued on page 2)

2022 RMACAC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

It's finally here!

[Registration](#) for the [2022 RMACAC Annual Conference](#) is now LIVE!

Get ready for three days of spectacular sessions, professional development, and networking with college admissions colleagues at the Hotel Albuquerque in Albuquerque, New Mexico from April 25-27, 2022.

In addition to conference presentations, be sure to check out other conference events such as Pre-Conference Sessions, the College Counselor Fair, General Membership Meeting, and more on the [Annual Conference](#) webpage.

You can read more information about the conference schedule, registration rates, exhibitor opportunities, and COVID-19 information in the registration form. Early bird registration ends on **March 14, 2022!**

Make plans now to attend "RMACAC Rising," the Rocky Mountain Association for College Admission Counseling (RMACAC) 2022 Annual Conference!

THE SCHOOL COUNSELORS' ROLE IN SUPPORTING STUDENTS AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AFTER TRAGEDY (CONTINUED)

Leslie Kelly, Behavioral Health Program Coordinator for the PED's Safe and Healthy Schools Bureau, said there are resources and places to go when you need emotional and mental health support.

"We all need help sometimes, especially when a student dies," said Kelly, also a longtime school counselor.

"Those can be dark times for everyone involved. It also is a time for the adult professionals to assess their own mental health after helping so many people cope with what has happened. This is no time to forget about your own health."

One valuable resource to support you or students is the New Mexico Crisis Line staffed around the clock by licensed therapists. You can call them any time at 855-662-7474 or visit their website, [New Mexico Crisis Line](#).

[The Education Support](#) website also has a list of resources to help you address everything from daily work stress, burnout, health, and well-being. The site gives practical strategies for working educators. One of the key pieces of advice for anybody who helps students, families, and others address grief is to take the time to talk to someone else about how you are feeling.

We all have a role to play in ensuring our schools remain a safe place for learning. Counselors are there when something traumatic interrupts the learning. Thank you for all you do behind the scenes - when the cameras aren't rolling and the important work begins.

TAKE TIME FOR A MOMENT OF MINDFULNESS: THE IMPORTANCE OF SILENCE

Sometimes five minutes of silence is enough to recover your calm, balance, and peace. As school counselors, your days are filled with sound, including the conversations you have with your students and colleagues. However, a brief moment away from the noise and the endless conversations and suddenly our brain starts to work on another level. As numerous studies reveal, human beings also need silence to create new connections and brain cells.

[Exploring Your Mind](#) is a website that provides guided techniques to help professionals take a mindful approach to addressing stress in their jobs. Take a moment to see what five minutes of silence can do for your brain.

FEBRUARY 23 COUNSELORS' COMMUNITY VIRTUAL CONFERENCE RECAP

The 2022 School Counselors' Community Virtual Conference, *Re-Engage, Re-Connect, Re-Imagine, and Build Resilience in Your School Community*, was held on Wednesday, February 23. Dr. Steinhaus, Secretary of Education, kicked the morning off by welcoming counselors to the conference. He expressed his appreciation for school counselors and shared that he is committed to making sure counselors have the tools and support they need to continue the important work they are doing in schools around the state.

FISH! for Schools followed Dr. Steinhaus' welcome. In this energetic session, speaker J. Lynn Jones shared the importance of four simple practices that increase engagement, strengthen trust, and promote teamwork:

- Be There
- Play
- Make Their Day
- Choose Your Attitude

Based on preliminary survey results, counselors thoroughly enjoyed the interactive session and walked away with great ideas. As a reminder, the recording from this session is only available for two weeks per our agreement with the company. However, the FISH! Philosophy video is available for you to share with others for a full year.

It was difficult to choose between the highly informative and beneficial afternoon sessions, though fortunately all were recorded and can be accessed on the [resource site](#). We hope you'll go back and view the recordings and access materials from sessions you may have missed!

If you attended one or more sessions of the conference, we encourage you to complete the brief [post-conference survey](#). We appreciate your feedback as it guides planning for future conferences and professional learning opportunities.

[Conference Recordings and Materials](#)

[Post-Conference Survey](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 10

- NCPN Webinar – Join us at 9:00 a.m. for “The Counselor’s Role in Career Pathways.” [Learn More and Register](#)

MARCH 16

- NM School Counselors' Community Monthly Meeting – Join us at 3:00 p.m. for our monthly meeting. [Learn More and Register](#)

APRIL 4-5

- College Board 2022 Prepárate Conference - [Learn More and Register](#)

NCPN 2022 WEBINAR SERIES: THE COUNSELOR'S ROLE IN CAREER PATHWAYS

National Career Pathways Network (NCPN) invites you to join them at 10:00 a.m. CST/9:00 a.m. MST on Thursday, March 10 for their free webinar entitled, “The Counselor’s Role in Career Pathways.”

The role of the high school counselor/career navigator/college counselor has changed as schools and institutions have adopted career pathways. Panelists from secondary and postsecondary perspectives will describe their changing roles and responsibilities in this environment, including collaborating with workforce faculty and how it benefits their students and other stakeholders.

View additional information, including the list of speakers, and register for this free webinar by clicking [HERE](#).

MARCH WINNER!



Congratulations to a counselor from Central Consolidated School District!

The CCSD counselor was the February winner of a \$50 Amazon gift certificate for posting on one or more of the Community Collaboration boards on the NM School Counselors' Community **resource website**.

Each Thursday, we send out an email with a new Community Collaboration activity.

Participate to be entered in the drawing!

(Entries for the monthly drawing are limited to one per counselor per week. Only NM school counselors are eligible to win.)



2022 PREPÁRATE CONFERENCE APRIL 4-5, 2022

College Board is excited that this year's Prepárate™: Educating Latinos for the Future of America conference will be held in New York City on April 4–5! Don't miss your chance to join your colleagues in person to discuss educational and college access best practices and strategies for Latino students.

The conference highlights educator and access professionals' strategies for successful supports and outcomes for Latino students across the nation. The two-day program is shaped by educators working predominantly with Latino students and is part of College Board's commitment to educational excellence and equity for all students.

Be sure to [view the program](#), register before April 4, and join us in New York City!

[Register Today](#)

CONTACT US

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CLICK **[HERE](#)** TO VISIT WEBSITE

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[NM SCHOOL COUNSELORS COMMUNITY RESOURCE SITE](#)

ECHO FOR SOUTHWEST COLLEGE AND CAREER COUNSELING FOCUSES ON RURAL AND UNDERSERVED SOUTHWEST COMMUNITIES

Southwest College and Career Counseling (SWCCC), a program of Project ECHO® at the University of New Mexico, is a virtual professional development opportunity for educators and counselors in rural and underserved Southwest communities involved in college and career pathway planning for students.

SWCCC is designed for educators who:

- Engage in college and career counseling, especially those at high schools with **significant Native American enrollment**
- Will **commit to the duration of the program and implement strategies learned** in the professional practice to the extent possible
- Serve **rural and underserved communities** in New Mexico and Oklahoma.

The program connects educators with a community of learning made up of other professionals in the field. It also:

- Engages educators in expert led workshops
- Connects them with evidence-based resources and best-practices
- Provides case-based learning to develop solutions to relevant dilemmas of practice

Virtual sessions are bi-weekly, lasting 60-minutes each. Additionally, there is immersion training for all participants, who are expected to attend all sessions. The sessions and topics are aligned to the school calendar to make them as useful as possible. Upon completion of program requirements, participants will receive a stipend of \$500.

Sessions are held the first and third Wednesdays of the month. To complete an application and begin participating, follow the link for [SWCCC](#). For questions and more information, [view flyer](#) or contact: ECHO for Southwest College & Career Counseling at SWCCCecho@salud.unm.edu.

NMEAF's MONEY MONDAYS EXTENDED THROUGH APRIL 25

Every Monday from 3-6 p.m. students and/or parents can log into a virtual FAFSA session, Money Monday, offered by The New Mexico Educational Assistance Foundation (NMEAF). At Money Mondays, NMEAF has professionals from local universities and other volunteers there to help students and families complete the FAFSA or simply answer questions about students continuing their education beyond high school.

Please share the [website link](#) and flyers (linked to the right) with students and families!

NMEAF's MONEY MONDAYS EXTENDED THROUGH APRIL 25

SAVE THE DATE! FAFSA MONEY MONDAY "Virtual FAFSA Assistance" Time: 3PM – 6PM

Go to: <https://www.nmeaf.org/money-mondays>

2022 FAFSA Assistance

- March 7
- March 14
- March 21
- March 28
- April 4
- April 11
- April 18
- April 25

QR Code: FAFSA Money Monday Link

Logos: COLLEGE CONNECT, NEW MEXICO Public Education Department, ENLACE, New Mexico Educational Assistance Foundation

[English Flyer](#)

Anote la fecha!! FINANCIE SU FUTURO FAFSA MONEY MONDAYS NMEAFSA.ORG

FAFSA Lunes de Lana Time: 3pm – 6pm

Ayuda virtual para completar la solicitud de ayuda financiera para la Universidad o escuela técnica

Vaya a <https://www.nmeaf.org/money-mondays>

Ayuda en 2022

- Marzo 7
- Marzo 14
- Marzo 21
- Marzo 28
- Abril 4
- Abril 11
- Abril 18
- Abril 25

QR Code: Lunes de Lana

Logos: COLLEGE CONNECT, NEW MEXICO Public Education Department, ENLACE, New Mexico Educational Assistance Foundation

[Spanish Flyer](#)