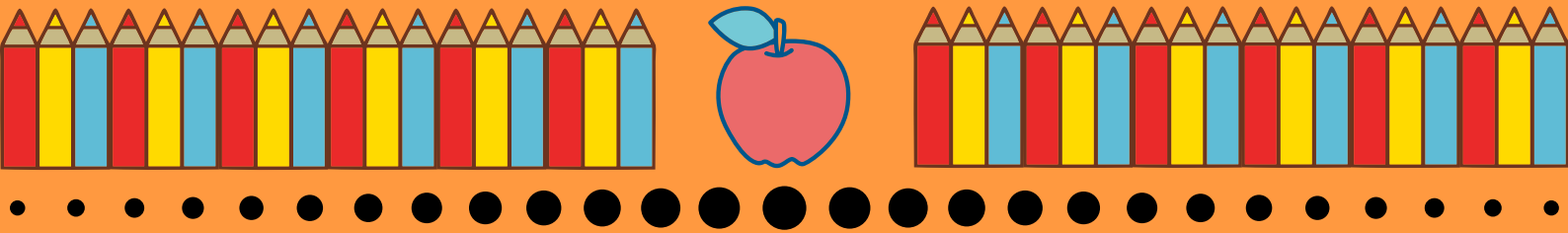




# THE ADVOCATE'S VOICE

## Forging The Path Together



This is a first in a series of Newsletters by NEA-NM that will uplift the voice of members in the field. The NEA-NM family wants to share up-to-date information about the novel Coronavirus or Covid-19 and its impact on New Mexican school communities. We also want to offer tools and guides to support teachers and support staff alike. In this time of uncertainty, NEA-NM strives to ensure its membership is at the table, working with stakeholders to navigate challenges before us and those still to come. From the onset of this outbreak in New Mexico, Governor Lujan-Grisham and the Secretary of Education Dr. Ryan Stewart have set an inclusive, collaborative tone. In this spirit, we will continue to advocate for students, public-school employees and the communities in which they live. We thank each member that has invested courage, time and resources to build the collective strength needed to lead in these times.

Mary Parr-Sanchez  
NEA-NM President

**Remember to send us stories of humanity from your corner of the world and keep safe!**

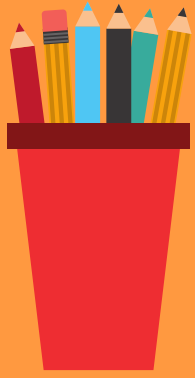
**IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER, JOIN US NOW!**

**JOIN US TODAY!**

**Your Voice is as important as ever**

*"Love, hope, fear, faith - these make humanity; These are its sign and note and character."*

- Robert Browning



# NEA-NM MEMBERS IN ACTION: NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Compiled by NEA- Las Cruces, CSEC, Belen  
& Santa Fe Locals



The good folks in Las Cruces setting an example in their community of dedication to their students during tough times. Check out [NEA-LC's Facebook](#) post!



Need more information about meals and COVID-19? [Click here](#)

Laura Vasquez, NEA-Belen Local Co-President (first from the right) along with Co President Royceann LaFayette (second from left), underscores the importance of having a collective voice. Sharing their experience, they stated “During this difficult first week of school closures, NEA- Belen and District Administration worked together to resolve member concerns. Originally, Belen staff was expected to report and work on site three days a week for a minimum of eighteen hours. With the overall objective of providing as much educational support as we can to our students, we were able to plan on employees working remotely whenever possible. Lessons are being developed electronically and/or in packet form which are being delivered daily with breakfast and lunch to all students. With the ever fluid changes coming from our Governor and the PED, we are continuing to meet to come up with thoughtful solutions for each situation.” Also pictured are Assistant Superintendent Rodney Wright and Superintendent Diane Vallejos. Not pictured are NEA-Belen Vice President Rhett Burt and Secretary Sharon Sena Bissell.

**Congrats NEA-Belen!**

## NEA-Santa Fe

has developed a plan to provide hands-on learning opportunities for their students while school is not in session. They are asking their partners and individual teachers to put together Curriculum To Go Bags as well as Art To Go Bags that will be distributed to families when food is distributed to them. They are asking their partners (such as the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum) to assemble activities and materials needed to complete an assignment/project along with directions and/or a student friendly lesson plan for the following groups: Early Childhood (Pre-K-kindergarten) Elementary School, Middle School and High School. One simple idea is a writing assignment that would include a journal and pencils.

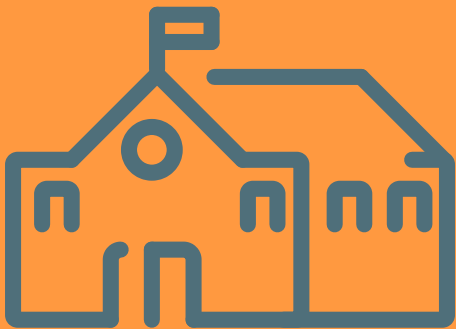
Visit [NEA-Santa Fe’s Facebook](#) Page.

Does your Local Association have a story to share about: organizing with members, partnering with your District for improving conditions, and addressing challenges during these times?

We would like to hear about it and share with your colleagues across the state.

Email NEA-NM State Organizer Marco Nunez at [mnunez@neanm.org](mailto:mnunez@neanm.org) with the heading: Stories from Field!

## Let's Talk School Closures



In light of school closures across the nation and students out of school, NEA has compiled a list of the most useful articles, links, resources, and webinars to help you through this challenging environment. Then, followed by some tips and answers to common questions you may have.

Teachers, as you plan for a variety of scenarios in response to the Covid-19 health crisis (and other possible threats) we wanted to share some of the ways our PBS Digital Innovator All Star educators support for engaging and effective distance learning.





# Employee Rights Watch



Drastic changes in working conditions for public school employees, during the shutdown, can lead to some confusion and frustration for many across the state. From orders to stay home versus reporting to work along with concerns around paid sick leave use to outstanding disciplinary matters, we will work with your Local Associations to ensure there is fairness and collaboration with School District Administrations and share guidance along the way.

Here are some to start:



**Hazard Pay:** Some employees get to work from home while others perform on-site services considered to be essential. The Central Consolidated Education Association (CCEA) leadership is concerned about equity and seeks to secure additional compensation or premium pay for these employees, hence the idea of hazard pay. They have initiated discussions with the District and, although have yet to agree on exact numbers, the district will provide extra pay. This effort is being replicated by several other Locals, including NEA-Santa Fe, either through formal contract re openers or good faith labor/management meetings.

**Discipline (Admin Leave) and Renewals:** In addition to statutory language in the Public Employee Bargaining Act or PEBA, NEA Locals have negotiated Due Process contract language to ensure consistent and fair processes address matters of employee discipline. For employees with outstanding and unresolved matters, please consult your Local Association. In the meantime, an Employee Rights Committee of NEA-NM is reviewing applicable statutory and Local contract language and will be scanning and sharing best practices soon. A similar analysis is underway around the processes governing employee contract Renewals.

**“Will I have to make up lost days due to the shutdown? Can I be compelled to report to work?”** : You don't have to make up missed days but you do need to be available during normal contract hours for your District (outside of your regularly scheduled Spring Break). The Secretary of Education, Dr. Stewart, has instructed Districts to work with Local Education Associations, where applicable, to work collaboratively in addressing working conditions in this new setting. Recognizing each school community's distinct character, it is as important as ever for public school employees to work through their Local Association to help inform ongoing and future working conditions. Read [PED's Alternate Work Expectations Letter](#)



Stay Informed and get the latest news on COVID-19

For the latest news about COVID-19 and resources from the National Education Association

For the latest news about COVID-19 cases in New Mexico

For a national, interactive map of coronavirus and school closures

Información sobre como contener el Coronavirus

To learn more about how you can help contain the spread of COVID-19

The Johns Hopkins University and Medicine website is a great source for tracking the international spread of COVID-19 and offers other great resources

# Get involved

**Grab and Go Lunches in NM:** According to Voices for Children, 2019 KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK, over 124,000 NM Children live in poverty. Beyond education, school lunches are integral in the development and health of our youth. It is why most Districts in the state and country continue to provide lunches. Please check with your Local and school District to see what is being in your back yard and what ways you can help.

**Volunteers Needed:** Food distribution centers across the state continue to need volunteers to help. If interested, visit the website: <https://www.rafb.org/find-help/find-food/> . At the bottom of the site, enter your zip code, and click Find Locations. A location for a food bank will appear along with a contact number. Some of the numbers listed might not work if those schools/businesses are shut down, but this the best option right now for routing volunteers.

**2020 CENSUS:** School funding is informed by Census results and we need your help. By filling out your form online, you also minimize contact for canvassers! Click on the link below to check this box off from your "To-Do" list!

Stuck at Home? Time to Complete Your 2020 Census Form  
Llene su formulario del Censo 2020

New Mexico Congressional Delegation calls on banks in New Mexico to temporarily suspend foreclosures and evictions. Click here for more information.

Please sign the petition to stop evictions during the COVID-19 Crisis.

## Join Us On Social Media

Like Us On Facebook

Follow Us On Twitter

Manage Your Membership On NEA 360

Download Our Mobile App For Apple

Download Our Mobile App For Android

## Additional Resources

NM PED

NM Governor

World Health Organization

US Dept of Education

Resources, tips and more for distant learning