

Welcome to the home of the Archers!



Important Info to keep on the fridge:

- School Phone: 559-4249
- School address: 933 Bradbury SE, 87102
- School secretary: Cindy Lujan
- Principal: Kathy Sandoval-Snider
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- Assistant Principal: Polly Azar
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- Registrar: Betty Delgado
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- Counselor: Jane Brandt
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It's time to "Take Aim"!

Hello folks! To those of you returning, I want to say welcome back, and to those who are new to our school...hopefully this newsletter will answer some of your questions, and probably be the instigator of many more.

This past year has been an exceptionally busy and productive one for the old Albuquerque Institute for Mathematics and Science. Last year, my first year at AIMS, we formalized our affiliation as the University of New Mexico's high school, changed the name of the school, changed the Charter, added a Middle School component, secured a new building (remember the lovely abode of the former High Tech High? Yikes!), and moved into it.

Hot on the heels of that activity, this year we developed formal partnerships with Sandia National Laboratories and the Advanced Materials Lab (complete with Mentorship's!), secured additional classrooms for our growing community, doubled our dual enrollment (in fact our students out-performed the traditional students at both UNM and CNM, with an grade point average of 3.8...and these kiddos don't take "basket weaving" if you get my drift! Our kids are taking academic coursework and they're doing great!), we

added an AP component to our coursework with all students participating, enjoyed three very complementary articles in the local media, as well as a beautiful article in the Mirage (thanks to Monica Kowal), and for the first time, our students represented Albuquerque at the International Science Fair in Atlanta, along with four other students from Albuquerque Academy and St. Pius! Whew!

We have been able to establish the reputation of the school and enrollment is booming! Our population registered for next year has doubled and we have a waiting list that is unbelievable! This all translates to a successful and financially secure school environment! As we look forward to our first graduating class at the end of May, 2008-2009 promises to be as busy and exciting as the last!



Mayor Chavez congratulates our science fair winners!

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Parking at UNM....Oh Boy!

It's no secret that parking at UNM is a experiment in patience! Although we discourage students driving their own vehicles for a variety of reasons (from ecological to down right economical), if your kiddo is insistent, then a trip to UNM Parking services is in order (you

might want to arm your children with some garlic and a wooden stake first!). UNM Parking is located on the northwest corner of Central and University. We have to obey the parking policies of the University, and as some unfortunate students from last year can tell you, UNM

will ticket and tow. Now keep in mind the city bus service is free to our students, and there are shuttles which go back and forth from our campus to the main campus. I made my very own 15 year old daughter utilize both the bus service and the

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So now that you've memorized the Charter!

One of the things unique to AIMS is the concurrent enrollment component. Concurrent (or as some call it "dual" enrollment) allows students to earn

both college and high school credit at the same time. In our case it's a requirement for attendance at our little slice of heaven known as AIMS.

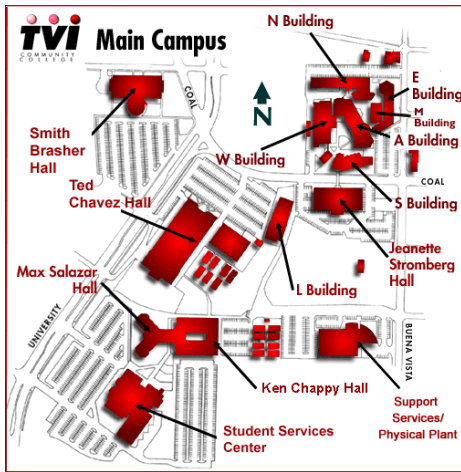
To go to UNM, students must have a 3.0 gpa and a recommendation from the Administration.

Unlike UNM, CNM requires the "Accuplacer" exam prior to signing up for a class. The "Accuplacer" is a very basic multiple choice exam that cov-

ers basic reading and math. Once taken, the test results are given immediately to the students and these scores are used to place kiddo's into classes. The "Accuplacer" test is given at the CNM Student Services Center, second floor, from 8 am to 4 pm, Monday thru Saturday. The test is administered at no charge and takes about an hour. No appointment is necessary...just walk in. But you must have those scores before you can register. For more information, go to www.cnm.edu and you can see class schedules and other registration information. Our Counselor Jane Brandt will be at CNM on July 24th from 8-2 to help our students register...but again...**you gotta have those accuplacer scores in your hand to do so!** You can take the

Accuplacer the same day, but it will be a pain! You can certainly register on you own, but it's a lot easier the first time around with our Counselor showing you the way! CNM will be finishing up their summer session on July 14th, but never fear, they will be open for registration on the 24th.

To see a list of classes for UNM, you can go to www.unm.edu. Make sure when you register to mark the appropriate box for dual enrollment or they'll charge you tuition instead of us! Either Ms. Azar or myself will be happy to help you with this process at any time! **And Remember! Starting the 10th grade year, students need to take dual enrollment classes....otherwise they will be short credits and this may affect their graduation! plans**



Students return for regular instruction on August 25th!

Parking!

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Rail Runner this summer (the idea of mortgaging my house for gas just did not appeal to me) and it was a real lifesaver. As for myself, I've been utilizing my big pink bicycle to bicycle to work whenever I can. ...kind of PeeWee Herman blended with the Wicked Witch of the West!

We do have some thirty minute parking for AIMS parents needing to come into the school. Its located in the lot immediately North East of the school, and they are clearly marked with signs saying AIMS Parking.

Students may not park there, as its reserved for our parents.

As for student drop off in the morning and pick up in the afternoon, we are asking parents to enter the park on Bradbury St from Avenida Cesar Chavez, drop their children off at the AIMS lot, and then continue on Bradbury to Baseheart to exit



Our Home Away From Home

the park. Now folks, last year we had some problems with parents speeding off and children madly leaping out of their way, barely avoiding a tragic accident. I know mornings are rough, but lets go slow and watch out for the children! UNM police will be out at the school during the first few weeks to make sure basic traffic laws are obeyed...like not parking in the fire lane!

So what about ID's? AIMS@UNM ID's are UNM I'D's and you need to get those at the Student Union Building in the basement. Generally there is no appointment necessary. Polly will be letting you know when you can start getting those ID's, however we urge you to get them as soon as she gives the "go ahead" as we want to avoid the UNM student rush!

Some Burning Questions and Flaming Answers!

What do I do if I need to get my child out of school early?

Children must be signed out by a parent if they are grades 6 or 7. Senior High students can only be dismissed by a verbal phone conversation with administrative staff or e-mail. No handwritten notes please!

What if there is a snow day?

We follow the APS decision: if APS calls an abbreviated day, then so are we and our school day begins at 10:00 am. If APS cancels school **due to snow**, then we do too. You must understand there is no one at the school before 7am or after 4pm, so although we certainly understand the inconvenience to parents these schedule changes may create, there will be no one to monitor your child or even let him into the building. Although frozen children can at times be easier to care for than warm and active ones, we would really rather we didn't have a student population of little "smurfs" due to freezing temperatures! Please, don't just drop your kids off and hope for the best!

How many absences can my child have?

Well of course the optimal answer here is "none", however the State defines truancy as 10 absences in a semester. Any more than that, regardless of reason, that student cannot be granted credit.

What if I need my child's transcript?

Our registrar Betty Delgado will be happy to help you.

Does AIMS ever cancel school to have Professional Develop-

ment Days?

Nope. Every day is an instructional day at AIMS (interesting concept isn't it?).

Do you have lunch service?

Sort of. Like many Charter Schools, we don't have a cafeteria. Additionally we don't qualify for Title 1 funds like the big high schools (that's the free and reduced lunch funds) because our population that qualifies for free and reduced lunch just isn't big enough. Now we've tried a number of single vendors to provide lunch and its always been a disaster. Children would bring their nutritious lunch from home and then decide they wanted the vendors lunch, but of course they had no money, so they'd "charge" it. Then I would have to get into a "no he didn't-yes he did" discussion with the parents as we debated whether or not the kid ate the dang lunch so I could get the schools money back! We always ended up in the hole at the end of the month. Yikes! Either that or the kids just plain hated the food, so the waste was appalling! So this year we are getting out of the "collection agency" business, and we're going to let the professionals take over! We are going to try a variety of vendors that the traditional schools use, to come in and sell food to the kids. They will be in charge of collecting cash. We'll get them to keep the cost down as much as we can as well as check to make sure the food is nutritious. As always, there will be a fridge and a microwave available for the kids that want to bring their lunch.

I'm mad as a hornet and I want to chew on that Principal for a

while!

Uh...see Ms. Azar! That's a joke...sort of! Actually, I'm always available to parents. My only caution is that I usually can't see you immediately if you just pop in....(I'm probably off calling the Dumpster Guy!). The best way to assure my undivided attention is to make an appointment. Our Executive Assistant is Mrs. Lujan, and she'll be happy to do so. Also I'm available the second Tuesday of the month, in the morning from 8:00 to 8:30 for **Coffee with the Principal!** This is an informal, pop in, sort of thing for parents to chat with me about whatever they wish. No appointment needed! Just grab a cup, and I'll provide the coffee and goodies. Now I always tell parents...I'll chat with you about anything you wish from the direction of the school to the latest episode of "Desperate Housewives" with two exceptions; I won't discuss another student or an instructor's performance. Both of those are confidential and protected under law. However, keep in mind this is a very small school, and with little exception, we pretty much know what's happening in the classrooms. I myself teach occasionally. I see and hear things first hand. One of the most counter-productive activities to a student's education is a rousing game of "lets you and him fight." and students are masters at it. Once they get any kind of inkling that the teacher is not supported by the family, all heck breaks loose. I can assure you all I and my administrative staff have nearly 50 years of educational experience between the two of us, and we take that role very seriously.



Mr. Sanders and Mrs. Kowal demonstrating their hula technique during Tiki Day

Can my kids participate in activities?

Absolutely! State Charter school law says that children may access the extra-curricular activities at their school in their geographical location. Just contact your local school for your enrollment area. Additionally, we do have some activities for the kids. Some are school wide, like the Rube-Goldberg activity, and some are outside of the school day. We'll let you know as these come up. Also we have the "Intensive" activities on Fridays...these are activities the teachers teach that are academic, integrated, and also in a special area of interest to the teachers and kids.

Can my student bring their electronic devices to school?

Dear Heavens No! Look folks, first of all the children are not taking care of these expensive items...they leave them all over the place! Additionally, they "borrow" from each other. Add to that an appalling practice of "bullying by text" to say nothing of taking clandestine "movies" of each other, and it points to a potential mess that no one could monitor! I mean, these kids can text IN THEIR POCKETS, WITHOUT LOOKING AT THE PHONE! I vow to you now...if any of these items turns up missing I will not disrupt the school in any way to search for it. Please! Leave these items at home!

So How's Being a Charter School Principal Different?

For about 15 years I was a principal in APS at the Career Enrichment Center. If the toilets clogged up, I called Maintenance and Operations, now I call a plumber. If the garbage didn't get picked up, I called the Facilities Department, now I call the Dumpster guy. Before, I had the time to casually think lofty thoughts about educational trends...now I run around like a rabid gerbil...glamorous hub!



Rube Goldberg Day

So What the Heck is a Charter School?

To many of you, new and returning, the concept of a Charter School may be a little foggy? Heck even I feel like that at times. Here, in a long drawn out manner that I am so famous for, is my concept of what a charter school is, and most importantly, isn't.

First some history...there probably isn't a person on the planet who won't say that the American Educational system is, shall we kindly say, "struggling"? Much of this though is a result of our own, "AIM" less design...ha! Get it? "AIM"less! (I'm my own best entertainment!) Anyway, there is no country in this world that expects as much from its educational system as Americans do. We Americans expect our schools to feed nutritious breakfast and lunch, provide physical and mental health care to students and families, teach our students in their native language, provide stimulating and fun activities before and after school, design individual learning plans for each student, provide therapists of every type from physical to speech, make at home visits (and while we're at it do some yard work and light housekeeping) and in our spare time, throw in a little instruction in math and reading, all while leaving "No Child Behind". Whew! In short, schools are expected to be everything to everybody. Talk about a set up for failure!

Then some folks got together and thought about what would happen if you had a small school with a very specific mission? Kiddo dances? Have a Charter School for dancers.

Child loves to write? Have a Charter School for Literature and the Arts. As a school of choice, everyone; parents, students and instructors, is on the same boat, with the same goals...Now that makes some sense. In the case of AIMS, our school is for students who love math and science, and have a common goal of attending college while still in high school, all in preparation of participating our growing community on a global scale. We do one thing, and we do it pretty darn well.

Although we operate independently of APS, they are still our Authorizing Agency, which means we have a contract with them to operate within the APS District. This "Contract" is the Charter document. I urge you to read this document, as it



Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish at the Ribbon cutting of AIMS@UNM

contains information about the school and its mission, as well as requirements of our students and their families! You

can find it at www.aims-unm.org.

We have our own School Board, known as the Governance Council, and they meet at the school the first Thursday of every month, at noon in our little conference room. You all are welcome to attend and let me tell you, it's a rip roaring good time fun! The Governance Council handles such pithy issues as how to get money for the school and changes to the Charter that should be considered (for example it's the Governance Council that formed our formal relationship with the

University of New Mexico).

What they don't do is handle personnel issues, children discipline issue, or operational issues of the school....that is the pleasure of Director....yup, that's me.

As a Charter School we do get public funding from the State just like APS, and the funding comes directly to us, with the exception of about 2% of our budget which goes to APS...just because. They don't tell us what they do with it!

The draw back to a Charter School is oddly the same as its major benefit...small size! Due to our small size we can't offer six sections of classes, at three different levels like the large high schools. This makes any scheduling change a problem. Additionally, remediation is tricky....I may have a student that needs semester 1 of algebra II and Semester 2 of world history because of an academic hiccup (what one of my instructors kindly calls an educational debt!...in other words the kiddo flunked the class!) That's almost impossible to schedule, and so summer school is in that students future. One of the things we're going to **try** to offer during the winter break is a "winter school" (summer school during winter break), for fee. This would provide a more immediate consequence for not performing well in a class. If we are able to offer them, we would charge a tuition that is a tad bit less than APS, to provide an incentive. Things like instructor availability and number of kids participating will determine if we can pull this off, but it certainly would reduce the frustration of trying to register for APS summer school!

Who Are These Folks?

Booming enrollment means more staff...and boy have we got some wonderful additions!

Mr. Hamilton joins us from the Career Enrichment Center, my old stomping ground. A fabulous teacher, Mr. Hamilton has a varied and exciting background in business, history and music! He will be teaching NM History and Government!

Mrs. Chiu will be helping Mrs. Bergman with our Chinese classes as well as our Computer Literacy classes. A native speaker of Chinese, Mrs. Chiu earned her master degree at the University of Nebraska!

Mrs. Budradge comes to us from the Salam Academy. Originally from Oman, Mrs. Budradge earned her advanced degrees in math and science from the Ministry of Higher Education in Oman, and has an

extensive teaching history there. She will be teaching mathematics in the middle school as well as providing us with instruction in Arabic...an exciting new addition to our classes!

Mr. Lebeck comes to us from La Cueva High School. Formerly their AP Science Teacher, Mr. Lebeck has degrees from UC Davis and the University of Hawaii! He will be teaching our Pre-AP Biology and Chemistry.

Mr. Christy will be teaching science and history to our middle school students. This is Mr. Christy's second career, his first as an environmental scientist in Oklahoma! His love of history compelled him to get his endorsement in history.

Ms Styers comes to us from the APS Alternative cluster. With credentials in Special Educa-

tion,. Educated in Georgia, Ms. Styers also has an extensive history as a teacher of English...and she will be doing just that with our middle school students!

Finally, we want to welcome **Cindy Lujan** as our Executive Assistant! She comes to us from Albuquerque High School, where I repeatedly tried to recruit her to the CEC! I was finally persuasive enough!

These folks will be joining myself, **Ms. Azar, Mr. Delmore, Mr. and Mrs. Kowal, Mr. Watje, Dr. VanTilborg, Dr. Owings, Mrs. Miller, Mrs. Bergman, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Weber and Mrs. Glasrud!** What a super bunch of professionals. I am very proud of this staff and the incredible opportunity they offer for the students of AIMS!

“Meet and Greet” for students and their families...August 21st, 4-6 on the front lawn of AIMS. You bring the kids...we’ll bring the Bar-B-Que!

Who Are Our Neighbors on the Science and Technology Park?:

UNM Manufacturing and Engineering

Lobo Energy

Science and Technology Corp

Center for High Technology Materials

Sandia National Laboratories

Fidelity Financial Services

UNM Hospital

True-Touch Technologies

Mesa del Sol

Avanca Medical Devices

PhDx Systems

Exagen Diagnostics

ARES Corporation

Advent Solar

EMCORE, and New Mexico Economic Development!

Is my child moving out?

When we send you your child's schedule, you will notice a "House" designation on the registration. Our Top Seniors will be leading "Houses" and assuming a leadership role with the school. These houses, initially named for the top twelve seniors, will be made up of approximately 15 students, grades six through twelve. Older students will be acting in an advisory role to the younger ones as well as being role models. Additionally, community service projects and student government will be conducted through the houses, all under the responsibility and supervision of the senior leadership. Each house will design its own insignia, and will be awarded "points" for their activities. Seniors will actually be given a grade

each semester for the ability to complete the leadership standards and benchmarks. As Senior Sponsors, Mr. Watje and Mrs. Kowal will be working with me to firm up the rubric and requirements. We will present all in detail prior to the start of school. First we need to find a sorting hat though!

Daily Schedule: 08-09

8:00-8:50	Period I
8:55-9:45	Period II
9:50-10:40	Period III
10:45-11:05	House Meeting and Advisory
11:10-12:00	Period IV
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:35-1:25	Period V
1:30-2:20	Period VI
2:25-2:45	House Meeting and Advisory
2:45-3:30	Tutoring, (AIMS student success activities)
3:30	Dismissal

Friday Intensive Schedules:

8:00-9:55	Intensive session I
10:05-12:00	Intensive session II

Student Dismissal at noon.

Important Dates:

July 24th –CNM Dual Enrollment Registration.

August 21-4 pm-6pm, Meet and Greet.

August 25th-Classes start

That Pesky Dress Code

Ahhh, my favorite topic in the universe....**dress code**. One of the really unique things about AIMS is its location. We are on a University Campus, smack dab in the middle of some of the biggest names in business and technology. What an incredible privilege...but its one that comes with some responsibilities as well. This is an adult environment and the tenants of the Science and Technology park are professional businesses. Its our duty and responsibility to no detract from that environment. Our students decorum and appearance certainly can be appropriate for the bright students they are, but they must present themselves as such...and that includes their mode of dress. Students need to be readily identifiable as AIMS students, otherwise the tenants of the park assume every kids is ours! Now one of the biggest complaints I hear as a Principal is that the dress

code isn't "uniformly" enforced (no pun intended). The staff and I spent hours of time debating with the children and their parents the finer points of the definition of collar, or what defines "baggy", or just how buttoned up a button down should be. Those of you returning from last year have fond memories I'm sure of my standing in the parking lot at O'Darkthirty, shoving out of code children back into the cars of their beleaguered parents for a clothing change! Black or white collard shirts were chosen for the simple reason that they were "black and white"....already the hours of argument are diminished! Additionally during the year, we will have the children design additional "AIMS" wear! Clubs, "Houses" and activities will design various logo's and we'll have those manufactured along with additional AIMS wear like hoodies, etc. A black

or white collard shirt, or any "AIMS Wear" is fine. PANTS (Beige or black) MUST FIT AT THE WAIST! No one wants to see a 4'5", 80 lb kid in pants made for a 6'4" 300 lb man! On Fridays, students may wear denims, with a dress code top or Red Lobo wear in honor of Lobo Red Friday! We will have the AIMS wear available for purchase at the meet and greet on August 21, along with examples of what is acceptable or not! For more detail, go to the www.aims-unm.org website and pull down the family-student contract. Now folks, I urge you to embrace your parental power here...I know its tougher than once my daughter has gotten in the car dressed like an insane rodeo clown. And yes



A fine demonstration of dress code!

there is much pouting and gnashing of teeth when you make them go in and change...its their job to test you, and our job to stay the course. Please don't make me be the pant police here. More than once I've put a student back into a parents car, only to have the parent in exasperation say, "I told him it was out of code!". I'll be out in the mornings checking the dress of our little charges and those not in code will be briskly put right back in your car. And no fair letting the kid off down the block hoping you can get away before I see! Lets get a united front here....everything is better when we adults stick together!