

Live Learn Lead



ALDO LEOPOLD CHARTER SCHOOL

WEEKLY UPDATE

December 19, 2019

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The junior topics in science class spent the night at the Bosque del Apache. In the evening they viewed the night sky with 9th-grader Allen as their expert tour guide. In the morning they got up before the crack of dawn to watch the mass ascension of migratory birds.



Your seniors, ladies and gentlemen



Front row: Addi, Jakob, Marisa, Carlos, Ezra, Katrina, Arianna, and Haley

Back row: Aji, Will, Kenya, Michelle, Ava, Jesse, Maiah, Toby, Anna, and Danny

“The Projects”

Since the school started in 2005, all high school students have been expected to present a project at the end of the school year. Previously, each class had a theme each student researched for their project. But at the end of the 2017-2018 school year, the high school teachers decided this part of our program needed to be revamped. What they came up with was to let students create projects based on something they are passionate about and to present it in a way that best expresses their topic. Last year, someone did a stand up comedy routine, someone else wrote and performed their own song, and there was a film about racial bias in the media. [Info for projects](#) was handed out before Thanksgiving and each student has been assigned a mentor. By now students should have submitted their [project proposal](#) to their mentor. If you have any questions about how you can best support your child through this challenging and enriching opportunity, a) ask them; and b) contact their favorite teacher.

It takes a village

Mr. Sherwood and his family left around 2 o'clock on Thursday. Miss Bailey had to pick Margaret up in El Paso on her way to Santa Fe. Harry (Business Manager), Jennifer (8th grade language arts and social studies teacher), Jamie Crockett (Governing Council member), Aji, Ava, and Katrina (seniors) left together in the brand new Suburban after school. Catalina was already halfway to Santa Fe. Siah (Special Education Director) missed her flight, ended up driving, and somehow made it to Santa Fe before the Suburban (that is how amazing she is). Hannah Wecks (Governing Council member) and her family met the Suburban people as they were leaving the Socorro Springs restaurant. In the Suburban, Harry and Jennifer (Jamie already knew this stuff) got schooled by the teenagers about the current slang ("Oh, *no* he *didn't* leave *me* on read!!"), listened to podcasts (did you know that in Greece, it is a practical tradition to exhume your family members after they've mostly decomposed to make room in the cemetery for the more recently deceased?) and music (we had a sweet sing-along to Don McLean's "American Pie" as we drove through Albuquerque), and played the car game "Contact" (Aji and Harry ruled this game!).



The next morning at the Jerry Apodaca Education Building across the street from the Roundhouse, Mr. Sherwood, Harry, Miss Bailey, Jennifer, Catalina, and Governing Council Chair A.J. Sandoval took their seats in front of the Public Education Commission. They spoke in the school's allotted 15 minutes (sadly, we didn't get to hear from A.J. at this time because the others used it all up). After that the three seniors took turns during the eight minutes given for public comment. Each spoke confidently, eloquently, and

passionately about their experience at Aldo from middle school through high school.

Next it was the commissioners' turn to make comments and ask questions. The chairwoman, Patricia Gipson, lauded the school for getting kids outside, particularly the school's ambitious backpack program. She was also impressed that we take middle school students out in public *at all* and with such success. Harry and Miss Bailey answered questions about our low (but still above-average) math scores versus our very high science scores. Harry also responded to concerns about the most recent audit. Commissioner Chavez (the commissioner who represents our district) turned to statistics about the population of Silver City, where Hispanics represent over 60 percent of all students, how the population of the Silver schools reflects this makeup, and how ours does not (our student body is 28% Hispanic). He questioned the staff about why our school doesn't more closely represent the cultural makeup of our town. After a response from the staff, Commissioner Caballero took this topic up with firm intensity. He insisted that we must put more effort into reaching out to the Hispanic community about what we do at our school if we are truly going to do right by the public tax dollars that we use to run our school. A.J. Sandoval told the commissioners that when he was in high school here in Silver City, he thought this school was only for white kids. But as an 8th-generation Silver City resident, he recognizes the long-standing cultural divide that is difficult to bridge even with the most vigorous marketing campaign. He said that he is proud to represent Aldo and committed, as the GC chair, to put more

effort into reaching out to the Hispanic community. Senior Katrina explained the legacy standard of many of Silver City's parents, who want their child to go to the same school that they went to. Siah spoke about the importance of diversifying our staff. Commissioner Caballeros's insistence that we fix this glaring problem inspired the staff and council members present to focus our efforts on this imbalance that has existed since the school began in 2005.

Finally, as we looked on, the commissioners voted unanimously to renew our charter for another five years and we all breathed a sigh of relief.



It is better to give

For several years now, the middle school has had a whole-school gift exchange. Almost all of the staff and students will give something to someone else. This may come as a shock, but middle school students are actually really sweet, kind, and thoughtful, and this little annual event is evidence of that. When students drew a name from the basket, to assist the giver, that name came with the person's preferred color, food, and hobby. We set a \$10 limit, and encouraged homemade gifts (um...teachers, besides Mz. Phillips, like cookies, just saying). The exchange happens on Thursday afternoon.

Time change

If you are the parent of a middle school student, you get to set your alarm clock 10 minutes later starting January 6! You are welcome. Middle school will start at 8:30 and your cherubs will be ready for pick-up at 3:40.

Committees

Thu., Dec., 19.....5:30pm.....[Governing Council](#)

Thu., Jan., 9.....5:30pm.....[Governing Council](#)

Tue., Jan., 14.....4:30pm.....[Risk Management](#)

Calendar

Dec. 21 - Jan. 7.....[Winter Break!](#)

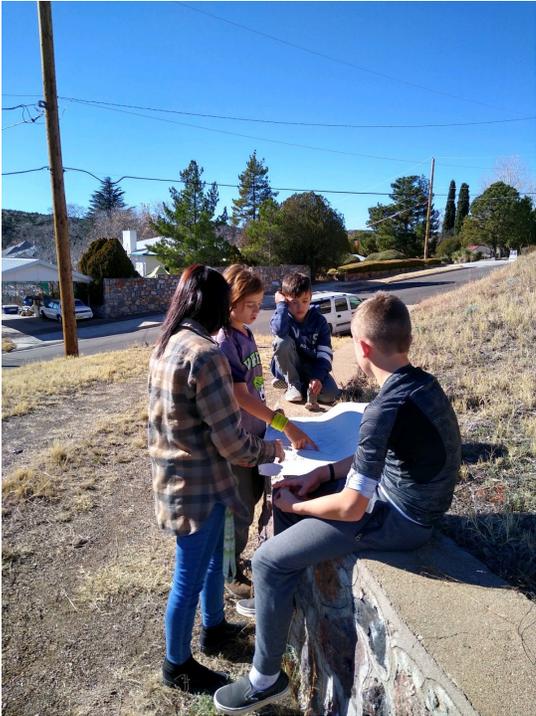
Mon., Jan. 6.....Staff In-Service, No Students

Tue., Jan. 7.....First day of the second semester

Fri., Jan. 17.....[Last Day Internship Sign-up](#)

Thu., Jan. 23 - 24.....Ski Trip

Last week's middle and high school worked together to design the school's new garden on West Street.



*******Happy New Year! See you on Tuesday, January 7, 2020!*******