

Live Learn Lead



These ducks and chickens kept the middle school company at the Mimbres River

ALDO LEOPOLD CHARTER SCHOOL

WEEKLY UPDATE

February 4, 2019

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Things change

Instead of Student-Led Conferences the **high school** will have an **open house** for any parents who would like to meet with their child's teacher(s). Also, Cathie will be contacting parents of **students who are failing a class for mandatory conferences** with this (these) teacher(s). Middle school SLC schedule remains the same: Thursday, February 6 + Friday, February 7. Most parents have contacted Andrea (way to go, Parents!), but if you haven't, *call now* for your **FREE half hour with your child's teacher!** The point of SLCs is for students to share with their parents what they are doing in school, their strengths and weaknesses as a student, and goals that they have for the rest of the semester. Believe it or not, for some students this is very nerve-wracking.

Giving back



We are 75 students strong in the middle school, so sometimes we split the group in half to reduce our impact. This past Friday half went to a small farm on the banks of the Mimbres river to learn about soil, the carbon cycle, and biochar and to do a little work to say “thanks for letting us come to this beautiful place.” The other half of the middle school spent the day at the Commons. Students helped prepare for the bi-monthly Saturday food distribution, worked on the compost pile, and learned about the importance of pruning trees.



This is how you put the *Community* in *Community Orientation*!



From student reporter Yureau: 9th Grade CO learned how Silver City businesses get their money and how many times a dollar travels around to business to business. We visited the Future Forge, Syzygy Tile, Power And Light Press, The Silver City Co-Op, and Binary Circuits. No CO this week because of the high school open house (see above). On Friday the 14th the 9th graders are going to the Wolf Sanctuary and hiking to mini-waterfalls near Gomez Peak to learn more about watersheds.

How many of us are there?

The **9th graders** will spend next **Monday, February 10-Wednesday, February 12** at [Winter Count](#) in Florence, Arizona. Students, Pete, Orien, and Maddy will leave the school at **8:30 am on Monday and return around 6:00 pm on Wednesday**. This primitive skills gathering has become an Aldo tradition. The ninth graders will be bringing some select upperclassman with them as guides on this experience which includes camping, eating all together, workshops on sandal-making, knapping, antler ring making, and par fleche containers. There are many free workshops available for students, and meals are included in the fee (you choose what works best for your family: full-fare=\$75; standard=\$65; bare-bones=\$30; subsidized bare-bones=\$12.50). There are some workshops that require a materials fee and there are vendors who sell jewelry and tools related to primitive skills. If your child is interested in either of these, they will need to bring their own money. Go to the website to see the [letter](#), [permission slip](#), and [packing list](#).

Projects

High school students should be working on their independent, annual project for an average of **2 hours each week**, *out of their own time*. Based on student's meetings with their mentors, they should know what they need to be working on. Feel free to ask staff members if there are questions about projects.

It's going downhill

The high school Outdoor Club is sponsoring a two-day ski trip to Sunrise Ski Resort in Greer, Arizona for students who passed *all* their classes last semester. The bus will leave the high school at **4:00 am Thursday, February 13 and will return around 9:00 pm on Friday, February 14**. The \$130 trip fee includes: skis or snowboard, lessons (required if you are new to the slopes), helmet (mandatory even if you are [Lindsey Vonn](#)), lift ticket, room at the lodge for the night (there will be 3-4 to a room. If you don't want to share a bed, bring a sleeping bag and pad with your name on them), and your share of the gas. Since this is an optional trip, there are no subsidies. **You must bring:** your phone for regular check-ins with your safety team; waterproof pants, mittens, or gloves; warm jacket; and wool or acrylic socks (multiple layers of sock are not okay--they bunch up and that causes blisters). **You should consider bringing:** sunglasses or goggles (highly recommended); and a bathing suit for après ski hot tubbing. **Also** (you need so much stuff to go skiing): moolah for food, and lodge food is *not* cheap, so pack a breakfast for the bus on Thursday and some snacks for both days. Plus \$50-\$75 for lunch and dinner on Thursday and breakfast, lunch and dinner on Friday. [Letter and Permission slip](#) can be found on the website.

No knives are good knives

When I was a kid, carrying a pocket knife was part of getting dressed (rural Vermont upbringing), but times have changed. Knives are not allowed at school, you guys. The only exceptions are camping trips, or in a class that allows you to have a knife during class (pretty sure financial literacy doesn't). In the latter case you must have permission from the teacher and this teacher will store the knife until the end of the day after their class. If you are in either of these situations, the only knife that is even allowed is one with a blade of two inches or less.

What is going on at the middle school

S.O.S(chool)

Changes to New Mexico's school funding formula pose a dire threat to our school. For several years, legislators (including our own Howie Morales, who sponsored such bills at least twice) tried to eliminate small-school funding for charter schools. We were able to fight off those cuts both because they were blatantly unfair and because Governor Susana Martinez supported charters.

Unfortunately, these efforts succeeded last year due to the election of a new Governor and to our opponents' use of a new strategy. Instead of cutting this vital source of funding from charter schools only, legislators voted to cut small-school funding from both charter schools and districts. Then, to quell the protests from school districts, the legislature invented a new way to fund rural districts, mostly making up for the cuts--except not for charter schools.

This year, the changes cost us \$131,825. Next year, you can double that. By the time the phase-out is complete, we will have lost \$658,000 -- about 35% of our budget. This is equivalent to 9 full-time teachers/counselors. At the same time, small non-charter schools in very small districts are receiving enormous increases in their funding, since they still receive small-school funding and now also get the new rural-district funding. No one has offered any rationale for shifting all this funding from charters to small district schools.

Please write NMPED Secretary Ryan Stewart, the Governor's office, and our legislators and give them the facts about our future. *They have been told that the new sources of funding will make up most of what we're losing -- emphasize to them that you know this is not true for charter schools like Aldo.* You could suggest your representatives support House Bill 147, introduced by Rep. Javier Martinez (D-Albuquerque). This bill would stop the phase-out of small-school funding after two years. Unfortunately, the Governor has not included this bill in her list of legislation to be considered this year, so it is currently on-hold in the House Rules Committee. There is still time, but not much! Urge her (through Secretary Ryan and her Policy Advisor, Stephanie Rodriguez) to add HB 147 to her "call" as soon as possible.

Address your email to ryan.stewart@state.nm.us and stephanie.rodriquez3@state.nm.us.

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Members/Legislator?SponCode=HMARR> Rep. Rudy Martinez

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Members/Legislator?SponCode=HDOWR> Rep. Rebecca Dow

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Members/Legislator?SponCode=HMARI> Rep. Javier Martinez (to thank him)

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Members/Legislator?SponCode=SRAMO> Sen. Gabe Ramos

https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Standing_Committee?CommitteeCode=HEC Education Committee

<https://www.governor.state.nm.us/contact-the-governor/> Governor's office

Important note: Frankly, the odds are against HB 147 this year. But it is very important to show the Governor that we are aware of what is happening, holding her accountable, and not going to go away. Next year we will be back, and we need our representatives to see that we are passionate in defending our school!