

Leadership is a Benefit to Public Education

*By Gregory Ewing, Ed.D., Superintendent of the Las Cruces Public Schools
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I assumed the position of Superintendent of the Las Cruces Public Schools on December 5, 2016. From my first day on the job, many individuals throughout the city and county reached out to me with warm messages and many offers of support and assistance. Among the very first to welcome me to this great state and community was Dr. Garrey Carruthers, Chancellor of New Mexico State University. He invited me to lunch on the university campus. That afternoon he spent a couple of hours telling me about the university, his experiences in the Reagan Administration and his tenure as New Mexico's 27th Governor. As one who grew up during the Reagan administration, I asked many questions and it was one of the most sincere and enjoyable meetings I can remember attending in many years. We both left that lunch with a promise to meet monthly, either in his office or over a meal.

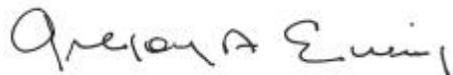
That tradition has continued for my last nine months and many initiatives have begun with the help of NMSU and Dr. Carruthers' staff:

- Planning for training for LCPS teachers who instruct English Language Learners with the support of four NMSU graduate courses offered for ESOL (English to Speakers of Others Languages) teacher certification endorsement by the faculty in the NMSU College of Education;
- Planning for district-wide leadership academies for aspiring leaders to become seasoned school principals. The academies will provide information, training and research provided by tenured faculty in the NMSU Department of Educational Leadership;
- Early plans are in development for a cohort of district staff that hold a master's degree and desire additional studies in leadership with a cognate area in ethnic studies/restorative justice to begin advanced university course work leading to the Ph.D. or Ed.D. degrees;
- Development of an LCPS Equity, Ethnic Studies, and Restorative Justice Division with the ultimate goal of an ethnic studies course requirement for students. LCPS administrators have started conversations, planning, training, and implementation in concert with NMSU professors in the Criminal Justice and Educational Leadership departments, as well as College of Education and Arts and Sciences faculty;

- The school district has initiated International Welcome Centers in each of the comprehensive high schools. Planning includes translation, transcript review, graduation coaching and career and life planning. Each of these centers are receiving assistance from professors in Chicano Programs, Educational Leadership, Criminal Justice and Education;
- NMSU administrators asked about recruitment and retention of future students and began discussions of required admission requirements, learning needs and a request to have access to LCPS students considering a future education at either NMSU or Doña Ana Community College. Vice Presidents of Admissions and professors from Student Success Programs began immediate planning with district officials on enrollment in NMSU or DACC programs after high school graduation.

These are but a few of the initiatives in which Chancellor Carruthers has provided assistance during the last nine months of my tenure. Although a great deal of work has taken place, there is much more to be done.

I look forward to many more lunch meetings with Dr. Carruthers where our conversations continue to enrich a symbiotic relationship between public education and higher education. Collaboration is an expectation of both of our organizations. And certainly, it is a trait of an outstanding leader.



Dr. Gregory Ewing
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Las Cruces Public Schools