

Early College Academy & Career Enrichment Center

Family News

December 5, 2025



DECEMBER FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE:

CEC Final Exams happen Dec. 10th through 12th during classes. CEC classes will not meet after December finals; CEC classes resume Jan. 8th.

ECA Final Exams happen Dec. 18th and 19th; any early finals must be approved by Mr. Arguelles or Ms. Thomas. ECA classes resume Jan. 6th.

ECA LOTTERY FOR 2026-27 SY

ECA has held our initial lottery! Congratulations to the 55 students, including 6 ECA siblings, who were selected in our 9th grade lottery. We have also accepted two upper grade transfer students for 2026-27. Families should receive emails this week.

SCHEDULE CHANGES • Due December 8th

Students request requesting a 2nd semester ECA schedule change should download the schedule change request form from their grade level Google classroom, complete the form, and email it to Ms. Faulds at alicia.faulds@aps.edu no later than Dec. 10th.

PRE-REGISTRATION HAPPENING IN JANUARY!

ECA: Time to choose your classes for next year! When we return in January, our 9th, 10th and 11th grade ECA students will begin important pre-registration activities for the 2026-27 school year. Through our amazing Advisory program, students will engage in guided transcript and credit review, examine their next-step plans and future goals, and learn how their course choices will continue to advance them on the path to success. ECA students will review both the ECA and CEC course catalogs with their Advisory teacher using tools and supports crafted by our Counselor and Administrative Team, and submit their course requests for both ECA and CEC courses by late January. This will give our team ample time to review requests, communicate with students and families, and build a master schedule for the 2026-27 school year in accordance with district timelines.

ECA Catalog: <https://cec.aps.edu/eca/eca-course-catalog>

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Meanwhile, our 12th grade students will continue to receive guidance around college admissions, financial aid, graduation and more.

WINTER BALL • December 13

Our famous **Winter Ball is coming on Saturday, Dec. 13th, 7:00-10:00 PM!** Dress to impress and dance beneath the aurora borealis with our theme: Northern Lights. Open to all CEC students as well; tickets are \$15 for single or \$20 for a pair. Tickets include entry and free snacks and drinks. [Buy tickets through School Pay.](#)

ECA freshmen and sophomores can run for Winter Ball Court. Underclassmen should run now, as they are ineligible for prom court. Sign up to run on the [Google Form](#).

ECA parents, come see our class-vs-class soccer games on Tues., Dec. 9 and Wed., Dec. 10, from 12:45 to 1:15 PM, and cheer on your student! Parents - want to help out? [Sign up on the form.](#)

COMING EVENTS:

- Dec. 10-12 **CEC Finals** (CEC classes conclude for the semester Dec. 12).
- Dec. 13 **Winter Ball** (7:00-10:00 PM)
- Dec. 18-19 **ECA Finals**
- Dec. 19 **End of 2nd quarter grading period**
- Dec. 22-Jan. 2 **Winter Break** (SCHOOLS CLOSED)
- Jan. 6 **Classes resume for ECA students**
- Jan. 8 **Classes resume for CEC students**
- Jan. 12 **ECA-CEC Booster Club meeting** (*virtual – see link on page 2*)
- Jan. 19 **Martin Luther King Jr. Day – NO SCHOOL**

All proceeds from this dance go to fund ECA and CEC student activities.

Early College Academy
WINTER BALL
 RUN FOR COURT

Northern Lights

BUY YOUR TICKET NOW

QR Code

Saturday, December 13, 2025
 at ECA & CEC
 7 PM - 10 PM

CEC students are welcome!

Tickets:
 Singles: \$15
 Doubles: \$20
 StuGov Single: \$10

QR Code

<p><i>Monday</i></p> <p>Car Smash Day</p> <p>Smash the car to relieve stress!</p>	<p><i>Tuesday</i></p> <p>Ugly Sweater Day Spirit Game Round 1</p> <p>Wear your ugliest sweater! Spirit Game Round 1: Freshmen vs Sophomores Juniors vs Seniors</p>	<p><i>Wednesday</i></p> <p>Pajama Day Spirit Game Finals</p> <p>Wear your pajamas! Spirit Game Finals: Winners vs Winners</p>	<p><i>Thursday</i></p> <p>Summer Vacation</p> <p>It's summer vacation! Sunglasses, hawaiian shirts, swim suits, leis, beach balls, and hats!</p>	<p><i>Friday</i></p> <p>Assembly Day Make Snowflakes</p> <p>Winter Ball Court assembly day! Cut a paper snowflake and add to the positivity.</p>
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CAR SMASH FUNDRAISER!

Relieve stress at this fundraiser happening at ECA starting Monday, Dec. 8!

ECA STUDENT PERFORMS!

ECA 9th grader Elodie Sacks is performing in the Nutcracker at the Kimo!

CAR SMASH

STARTS MONDAY DEC. 8
 SAFETY GEAR PROVIDED
 \$1 PER SWING
 \$10 LIGHTS & MIRRORS
 \$20 GLASS AND WINDOWS

SPONSORED BY:
 ADVANCED DIESEL PERFORMANCE

ADVANCED DIESEL PERFORMANCE

THE NUTCRACKER

KiMo Theatre

Saturday	Dec. 13th	2pm
Saturday	Dec. 13th	7pm
Sunday	Dec. 14th	2pm
Saturday	Dec. 20th	2pm
Saturday	Dec. 20th	7pm
Sunday	Dec. 21st	1pm*

ABQtickets.com

* Additional ticket charge includes attendance to BRT's Nutcracker Tea following the performance.

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BRT
 BALLET REPERTORY THEATRE
 OF NEW MEXICO

nma
 new mexico arts

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS
 A great nation deserves great art

ECA/CEC BOOSTER UPDATE

Check out the [Booster Club Web Page](#) – see what we do and find out how to be a part! [Please use this link](#) to share your name and email with our Booster team so we can keep you in the loop.

Cookies needed! Each year, we celebrate our wonderful ECA/CEC staff by baking or purchasing cookies for a festive staff cookie exchange. Cookies can be dropped off at the office anytime December 8, 9, or 10 or before 9:00 AM on December 11. Visit our web page to sign up to bring cookies! Too busy to bake? Donate funds for us to purchase teacher appreciation items on your behalf through the PayPal link on our web page. Be sure to indicate “cookies” in the comments.

Winter Ball Volunteer Opportunities! Please [click here](#) to sign up to support Mr. Allen with the Winter Ball on December 13th.

Please join us for the **ECA-CEC Booster Club meeting Monday, January 12, 2026 at 5:30** on Google Meet: <https://meet.google.com/rif-sybb-ibi> (Our meetings are usually the first Monday of the month, but this one was pushed back because of Winter Break.)

Please use the links on our web page to connect with us. We know December is a busy month, and we are so grateful for your support.

Tania Hopkins, ECA/CEC Booster President

HAPPENING IN OUR CLASSROOMS:

Chinese Class Student Exchange (Virtual)

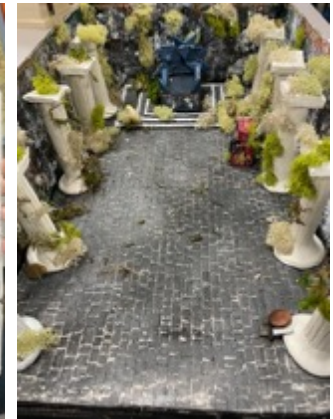
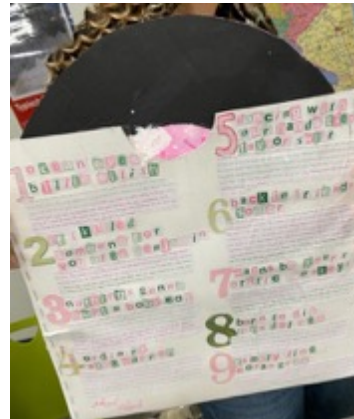
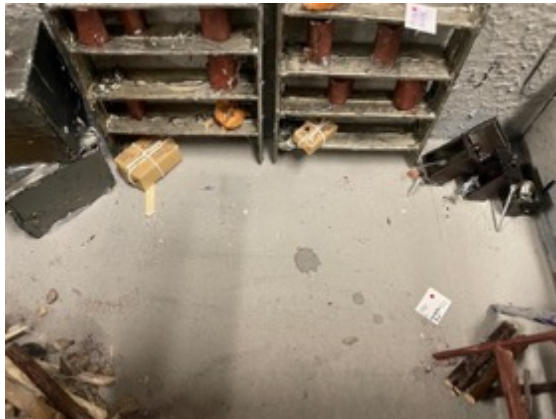
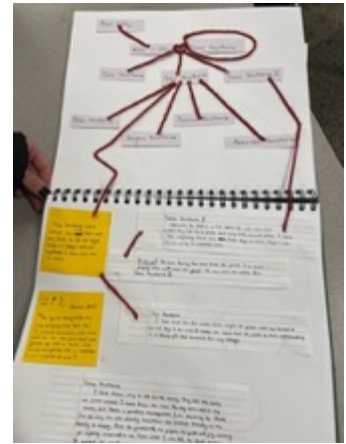
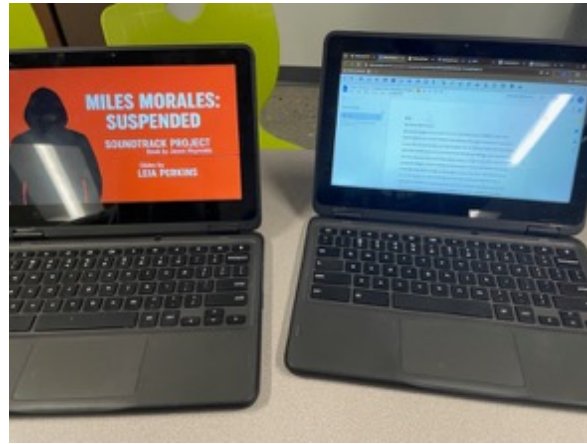
Students from Ms. Hsu’s CEC Chinese class and Hualien Senior High students had their first meeting of the school year on Nov. 12 at 5:30 pm (Nov. 13 at 8:30 am Taiwan time). Thirty Hualien students (with their principal and two teachers) and 7 CEC students attended this meet. Students from both cities enjoyed the meeting and some of them will start a "postcard exchange." The next meeting will be in the spring.



Hualien students provided bilingual feedback for CEC students' videos.

Freshmen Demonstrate Learning in ELA Class

Dr. Soto's 9th grade English Honors students recently completed an amazing interdisciplinary multi-media project to demonstrate their learning. Students let their creativity shine as they sought to bring their independent reading projects to life, and enjoyed a peer-review gallery walk as part of their culminating activity.



CEC TURNS 50! ECA CELEBRATES 20 YEARS!

Did you attend ECA or CEC? Please fill out the [Alumni Contact Information Form](#) to tell us your story, and get connected with fellow alumni and your favorite teachers, receive invites to events, and keep up-to-date with all the cool things happening at ECA and CEC.

Our big celebration will be on March 19th, 2026 for the "CEC 50 ECA 20 Anniversary Block Party". Want to make a donation to help the celebration? You may donate on the CEC/ECA Anniversary Fund [Donation Schoolpay form](#), or contact Mr. Allen (francis.allen@aps.edu) or Principal Arguelles (505-252-0225) if you wish to arrange for a larger donation. Thank you!

Help spread the word!

Don't forget to use #CEC50 and #ECA20 as well as @aps_eca and @aps_cec on social media to tell your stories!



Career
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50th Anniversary sponsored by



Security Hardware Solutions, LLC



Salubrio
Natural Healthcare

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JOHNSTONE
SUPPLY



COUNSELOR'S CORNER

◆◆◆ [For ALL Grade Levels and Families](#) ◆◆◆

Below are some highlights. Check the Class of 2026 Google Classroom for more student opportunities!

◆ FOR MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS SUPPORT:

- **NM Crisis & Access Line:** 1-855-NM CRISIS (622-7474). Call toll-free anytime 24/7/365.
- **NM Peer-to-Peer Warmline** (talk to someone your age): 1-855-466-7100 (call toll-free from 3:30 - 11:30 PM daily or text 6 - 11 PM daily).
- **24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-8255
- **Agora Crisis Center:** 505-277-3031 Toll Free 855-505-4505
- **The TREVOR Project National Hotline 24/7** 1-866-488-7386
- **Crisis text line:** Text Home to 741741

If you feel that your child needs to speak with a therapist right away but they do not have a regular therapist or their therapist is on vacation, you may consider the Cimarron Clinic with "walk-in" hours. The Cimarron clinic provides walk in therapy for adolescents (adults, too, at different times): Monday, Tuesday and Friday 9-11am and Wednesday and Thursdays 2-4pm. Their website link is:

<https://sharenm.org/university-of-new-mexico-hospital/unm-childrens-psychiatric-center-cimarron-clinic>

◆ **2026 UNM Health Professions Symposium • April 11, 2026**

This is the largest healthcare job symposium in the state - truly a fantastic opportunity for students in the 9th-12th grades to come and learn all about how to get into a career in healthcare! HPS 2026 is an all-day, 100% free event with lunch provided. It will be held on April 11th, 2026 at Domenici Hall on UNM's North Campus. The event involves people from across healthcare who come and hold information sessions to inform students about the path to healthcare jobs as well as what the day-to-day looks like. This event is a fantastic networking opportunity for anyone who wants to go into healthcare. For more information, visit the website at: <https://hps.unm.edu/> The registration deadline is March 31, 2026. To register, sign up on the [Google Form](#).

▶▶▶ [For Seniors and Families](#) ◀◀◀

▶ **FAFSA TIME!**

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the 2026/27 College school year is OPEN! If you and a parent/guardian have not filled it out yet, it's not too late! Most colleges have a financial aid priority deadline (UNM's financial aid priority deadline is January 31, 2026.) Filling out the FAFSA is not a requirement for families but it is highly recommended whether you believe your student will qualify for federal financial aid or not.

Frequently Asked Questions About the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid, commonly known as the FAFSA, is an application students fill out to be considered for federal financial aid. Filling out the FAFSA is the only way to apply for federal financial aid.

1. **Who should fill out the FAFSA?** Every eligible student should consider filling out the FAFSA for the first time in their last year of high school. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) provides assistance in paying for college.

Federal financial aid is available for U.S. citizens and eligible noncitizens (like permanent residents and individuals who meet certain noncitizen criteria).

You (the student) should complete the FAFSA, but your parent/guardian will also need to create an account to provide some of the required information. The application is free, and resources exist to help you fill it out. You should complete the FAFSA every year you plan to attend college.

2. **Can undocumented students complete the FAFSA?** Undocumented students, including students with temporary protected status and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students, aren't eligible for federal aid. You may be eligible for financial aid from your state, college, or a scholarship provider. Reach out to the financial aid office at the colleges you're considering. Explore alternatives to federal student aid. For additional information, check out these frequently asked questions.
3. **When should I fill out the FAFSA?** Complete your FAFSA as early as you can to ensure you don't miss your chance to receive financial aid. The federal deadline for completing the FAFSA is June 30. However, many states and colleges have their own priority deadlines that may be much earlier and some types of financial aid are limited. Colleges may award these funds on a first-come, first-served basis. Visit your college's website to see what their deadlines are. Find out your state's deadline.
4. **How do I fill out the FAFSA?** Complete the FAFSA online by logging in with your Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID at studentaid.gov. An FSA ID is a username and password used by students and parents to complete and sign the FAFSA. If you haven't created an FSA ID yet, create one at studentaid.gov. Most families completing the FAFSA will consent to share their federal tax information directly from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). This data exchange between the IRS and the FAFSA makes completing the application easier and reduces the number of questions you must answer.

5. **How do I create an FSA ID?** Students who are eligible for and applying for federal financial aid and parents who are required to be listed on the FAFSA need to create FSA IDs.

To create an FSA ID you'll need:

- Your Social Security number (if you have one).
- Your date of birth.
- Your full legal name (written exactly as it appears on your Social Security card).
- An email address you have access to.
- A mobile phone number (optional).
- A mailing address.

A Social Security number, mobile phone number, and email address can only be associated with one FSA ID. This means you can't make multiple accounts for yourself, and if you share an email or phone number with someone, only one person can use that information to create an FSA ID.

6. **What information does the FAFSA require?** If you're considered a dependent student, completing the FAFSA with your parent(s) information, you need to provide:
 - General demographic information.
 - High school and college information.
 - Federal income tax returns.
 - Current bank statements.
 - Records of investments and other assets.
7. **Do I need my parent(s) to fill out the FAFSA?** Most students are considered dependent when completing the FAFSA, meaning that parental information is required. Your dependency status determines whose information must be included when you fill out the FAFSA. If you're considered an independent student by the FAFSA, you won't be required to provide parental or guardian information.
8. **How do I submit the FAFSA?** After filling out the FAFSA, you and your parent(s), if parental information is required, must sign and submit the application. If you complete the FAFSA online, you must sign the form with

your FSA ID. If you complete a paper FAFSA, you must sign the paper form and mail it to the address listed. The FAFSA will take a few days to process if signed and submitted online. Processing will take longer if you mail in a paper form.

9. **What happens if I don't complete the FAFSA?** If you don't complete the FAFSA, you won't be able to receive federal financial aid. You may also be ineligible for certain types of college scholarships and state aid. If you can't complete the FAFSA due to missing information or difficulty with the form, contact your college financial aid office for additional help.
10. **What happens after I submit the FAFSA?** It may take a few weeks for your selected schools to receive your FAFSA information after you submit it. Keep an eye on your email to ensure you don't miss any important notifications from schools.

The New Mexico Assistance Foundation (NMEAF) is an organization that works with APS seniors and families for guidance on filling out the FAFSA. This is the only site that you need to get ready to complete your FAFSA. I suggest that you review the NMEAF information on the FAFSA first and then it should only take you and other contributors 20-60 minutes to complete! Visit the NMEAF website:

<https://www.nmeaf.org/plan-pay-for-college/fafsa-fund-your-future/prep-for-fafsa/>

They also offer a \$500 Scholarship. It's a "No Brainer" scholarship that you should all apply for. It's simple.

<https://www.nmeaf.org/plan-pay-for-college/scholarships/fafsa-scholarship/>

For more FAFSA Topics & Resources to help you pay for college go to the link below on the **College Board Big Future website!** <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/get-help-paying-for-college/fafsa/faq>

Alicia Faulds, M.A., LMHC
ECA/CEC School Counselor
Work cell (505) 967-9525