

**Early College Academy &
Career Enrichment Center**
Family News
November 1, 2025



BOOSTER CLUB MEETING • October 6th

Please join us for the **ECA-CEC Booster Club meeting Monday, November 3rd at 5:30** on Google Meet:
<https://meet.google.com/rif-sybb-ibi>

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.

ECA LOTTERY FOR THE 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR

ECA's Lottery Admissions Process has been updated!

Families, if you have younger students who will be high school age for 2026-27, and you are interested in sending them to ECA, **please submit a request through the district's [Transfer Portal](#) before Nov. 25th.** Siblings of current ECA students receive early consideration for enrollment.

If you know someone who is interested in sending a first-time attendee to ECA, please share the Transfer Portal link with them. <https://www.aps.edu/schools/transfers>

Families will need to have, or create, an active ParentVUE account to submit their request.

More information is available on our website at:
<https://cec.aps.edu/eca/apply-to-eca>

*Join us for our **ECA Open House on Wednesday, November 5th to learn more!***

**EARLY COLLEGE ACADEMY
OPEN HOUSE**

ECA OPEN HOUSE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH 5:30P-7:00P
Parents and students interested in finding out more about the best high school in NM, please come by for this great event!

COMING EVENTS:

- Nov. 3 **ECA-CEC Booster Club Meeting (5:30 PM)** *See link at left*
- Nov. 4 **Election Day (SCHOOLS CLOSED)**
- Nov. 5 **ECA Recruitment Open House for 2026-27 applicants (5:30-7:00 PM)**
- Nov. 11 **Veterans' Day (SCHOOLS CLOSED)**
- Nov. 13 **"Whirlwind" College Tour for ECA 11th/12th (Chaperones needed!)**
- Nov. 15 **Holiday Craft Fair (9:00 AM-4:00 PM)**
- Nov. 17 **Last day to sign up for Club Z SAT Prep**
- Nov. 18 **CNM Dual Credit Presentation and Application Workshop with Ms. Faulds, 3:00-4:30 pm in Lecture Hall**
- Nov. 22 **SAT Test Prep with Club Z! (8:00 AM-12:00 PM)**
- Nov. 24-25 **Family/Teacher Conferences (no classes)**
- Nov. 26-28 **Thanksgiving Break (NO SCHOOL)**
- Dec. 1 **ECA-CEC Booster Club Meeting (5:30 PM)**
- 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)**

ECA will hold our Admissions Lottery on Monday, December 1st at 9:00 AM. That's much sooner than in years past, and gives ECA and families time for shadowing, orientations, document transfers and more during the Spring semester.

CEC/ECA HOLIDAY CRAFT & GIFT FAIR

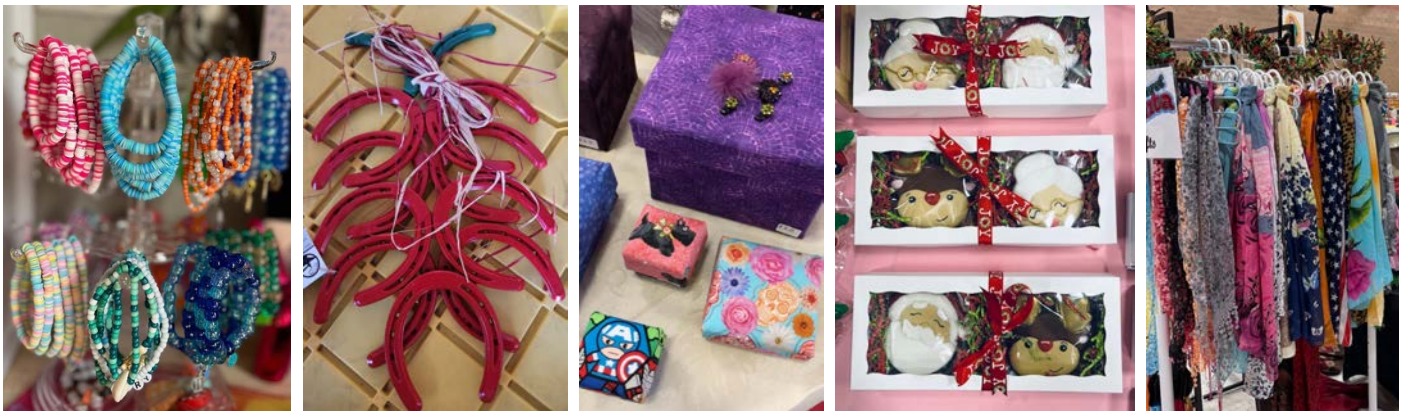
The Holiday Craft & Gift Fair is back for our 3rd year!

Mark your calendar for Saturday, November 15th and come shop and support local artists and crafters! We expect more than 50 vendors with a great selection of gift items for your holiday shopping.

Are you an artist or crafter with work to sell? [Visit our web page](#) to get more information and find out how to sign up for a booth.

Are you an ECA or CEC student artist or crafter? Your booth could be FREE!

Please email CECcraftfair@gmail.com with questions.



EMPOWERING GIFTED LEARNERS AT ECA

By Ms. Gina M. Marselle, Gifted Education Sponsor Teacher

At Early College Academy, we believe that gifted education is not a one-size-fits-all experience; it's a journey tailored to each student's strengths, interests, and goals. As the Gifted Education Sponsor Teacher, I'm honored to guide that journey. I'll be working with students who hold an IEP for Gifted and following a mentor/monitoring model.

With over 23 years of experience in Albuquerque Public Schools (most of them devoted to gifted education), I bring a passion for nurturing creativity, critical thinking, and leadership in every learner. I hold a Master of Arts in Education with an emphasis in Curriculum and Leadership, focusing on gifted education and the humanities, and I am a Level III Instructional Leader for grades 6–12. Besides advocating for students, I consider myself a lifelong learner who loves photography, poetry, nature, and advocating for animals. I love spending time with my family, and I love Sunday dinners with everyone at the table.

Please know that my door is always open to students and families. I truly value the partnership between home and school. Truly, it's the foundation of every student's success. Together, we can create a gifted program that honors the whole child, celebrates curiosity, and empowers students to reach their fullest potential.

Did You Know?

- Gifted education focuses on exceptionality, not just high achievement—supporting students who think, learn, and create differently.
- The monitoring model provides individualized support to students, offering 15 minutes per week depending on student needs.
- Gifted IEPs outline goals and services tailored to each student's strengths and needs.
- Collaboration between home and school is one of the strongest predictors of gifted student success.

- ECA’s gifted program emphasizes the whole child—academic growth, creativity, leadership, advocacy, and emotional well-being.

Meet Beowulf: Ms. Marselle’s Service Dog

Supporting Access and Inclusion

You may have seen a calm, focused German Shepherd walking alongside Ms. Marselle on campus. His name is Beowulf, and he’s not just a loyal companion. Beowulf is a trained service dog who assists Ms. Marselle as part of her ADA accommodations (Americans with Disabilities Act).

Service dogs are working animals specially trained to perform tasks that support individuals with disabilities, helping them lead safe, independent, and active lives. Beowulf’s presence on campus reflects our commitment to inclusion, understanding, and accessibility for all members of the ECA community.

While Beowulf may look friendly (and he is!), it’s important to remember that he is on duty when he’s with Ms. Marselle. To ensure his focus and safety, please avoid petting, calling, looking him in the eyes, or distracting him while he’s working.

Ms. Marselle and Beowulf are a team—and their partnership reminds us that respect, empathy, and awareness make our school community stronger.



Service dog facts! Did You Know?

<u>Fact</u>	<u>Description</u>
Protected by Law	Service dogs are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), allowing them to accompany their handler in public spaces, including schools.
Not Pets	Service dogs are working animals, trained to perform specific tasks that assist with a disability.
Only Two Questions	People may legally ask only: (1) “Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?” and (2) “What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?”
No Certification Required	There is no official registry for service dogs; proof of training or ID is not required under the ADA.
Don’t Distract	Talking to, petting, or trying to interact with a service dog can interfere with their work and put both handler and dog at risk.

Together, Ms. Marselle and Beowulf embody the message: “Be Like Wulf GSD”—be kind, loyal, positive, and an advocate for self and others.

Gina Marselle

Gifted Education Sponsor Teacher

Office: A105 | Extension 45523 | marselle@aps.edu

NEEDED IN THE HEALTH OFFICE

The Health Office is seeking donations of clothing for students who need a change of clothes while at school. Occasionally we have students who need a change of clothes due to health-related events. Items such as sweatpants and loose fitting tops in various sizes are particularly helpful. Thank you in advance!



FOOD RESOURCES:

Our School Nurse, Naomi Brown, has received information about businesses around the community that are providing food, and has compiled them into a document here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1eanViSpmtt617OsXKErN4JRsn0L0_u6coVBSuzFmfW8/

APS Activities is holding a Food Drive this Saturday, November 1st at the Berna Facio Complex:

APS ACTIVITIES PRESENTS

DRIVE OUT HUNGER

BENEFITING THE MCKINNEY VENTO PROGRAM

NOVEMBER 1, 2025 9AM-3PM

APS BERNA FACIO COMPLEX
3315 LOUISIANA BLVD

An illustration of two hands holding a green and white can. The can has a label that reads "Help Feed APS Students!".

WHAT WE NEED?

CHEESE OR PEANUT BUTTER CRACKERS, BEEF JERKY, APPLESAUCE, PUDDING, FRUIT CUPS, GRANOLA BARS, CEREAL BARS, SINGLE SERVE SOUPS, RAMEN NOODLES, PACKAGED NUTS, TRAIL MIX, FRUIT SNACKS, PASTA, PEANUT BUTTER, POP TARTS, INDIVIDUAL PACKETS OF OATMEAL, RICE, BEANS, & PLASTIC UTENSILS. WE WILL ACCEPT ANY NON PERISHABLE DONATIONS

FALL FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE:

CEC Classes will complete Fall Final Exams Wed. Dec. 10 through Fri. Dec. 12 during regular CEC class sessions.

ECA Classes will complete Fall Final Exams Thur. Dec. 18 (Pds. 1/3/5) & Fri. Dec. 19 (Pds. 2/4/6).

Early final exams must be approved by ECA/CEC Administration at least two weeks in advance.

CEC Child Development students observe early childhood classrooms at UNM

Miskee Blatner's CEC Child Development students went to UNM Children's Campus to spend a day doing observations in early childhood classrooms from infants through preschool. Students practiced using developmental checklists to apply what they were learning about the developmental domains and ages & stages. This was such a valuable learning opportunity for these future educators!



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!



50th Anniversary sponsored by



Security Hardware Solutions, LLC



EXOMIND



COUNSELOR'S CORNER

◆◆◆ For ALL Grade Levels and Families ◆◆◆

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

◆ **2025 Hispanic Scholarship Fund College Camp at UNM • Nov. 1**

The 2025 Hispanic Scholarship Fund College Camp is coming to UNM on Saturday, Nov. 1 from 8 AM to 1 PM.

This FREE event for 6th–12th grade students & parents is hosted by the Hispanic Scholarship Fund. College Camp is a bilingual, half-day college prep program designed to help families prepare, plan, and pay for college — no matter where you are in the journey!

- Grade-level student sessions
- Parent sessions in English or Spanish
- Info on applications, scholarships, & financial aid
- Light breakfast, lunch, and PRIZES! 🎉
- All backgrounds are welcome!

Space is limited! Register online now to secure your spot! <https://www.hsf.net/college-camp-new-mexico-2025>

◆ **Scholarship for Exchange Program to GERMANY! (Deadline to register is Nov. 3rd)**

Each year the CBYX program offers 210 young Americans the opportunity to live with a host family and attend high school in Germany for an academic year. Here are some key facts about the program:

- **Fully-funded scholarship** sponsored by the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Jointly funded by the German Bundestag and the U.S. Congress.
- Academic merit, as well as motivation, curiosity and flexibility are key components to a competitive application.
- **Previous German language experience is not required.** Participants become fluent in German.
- Alumni can connect with a global network of other State Department program alumni upon completion from the program.
- This is also an excellent gap year program for those between high school and college!

Students who are U.S. Citizens born between February 1, 2008 – August 1, 2011, with a GPA of 2.5 or higher (on a 4.0 scale) are eligible to apply. Seniors who meet our age eligibility requirements are also welcome to apply as a “gap year” prior to beginning college.

Please visit our website and see the attached “quick facts sheets” that provide additional information about the CBYX program. The online application can be completed at www.usagermanyscholarship.org and the submission deadline is **Monday, November 3, 2025.**


If you have questions about the CBYX Scholarship, please e-mail us at cb@ciee.org – we are happy to help!


◆ **UNM School of Engineering Open House • November 8, 11 AM – 2PM**


The UNM School of Engineering Open House is your chance to explore what it means to be a Lobo Engineer! 🛠️

A LOT of you are thinking about going into Engineering as a career. YOU SHOULD GO TO THIS! This isn't just learning about UNM but learning about ALL the different types of Engineering careers there are!!!

- 📍 Centennial Engineering Center – UNM Main Campus
- 🎓 Degree program info
- 🔬 Tour research labs
- 👋 Meet student orgs
- 💰 Get scholarship & financial aid guidance
- 🗨️ Talk with advisors & explore career paths

 Free parking in Lots A, B, C, P + Cornell & Yale structures

 Building #112 on the campus map

Not sure what kind of engineer you want to be? No problem — we'll help you figure it out. 

 Questions? Call (505) 277-4354

<https://ess.unm.edu/programs/future-students/soe-open-house.html>

◆ “Whirlwind” College Tour Trip • November 13, 7:45 AM-9:30 PM

This is a reminder for **JUNIOR AND SENIOR** families that our annual Whirlwind College Tour is Thursday, November 13th! It will be a very full day with lots of amazing information, two college tours and free food! Our first stop is in Socorro, NM at New Mexico Institute of Technology and Mining. Our final stop is Las Cruces at New Mexico State University. The bus is FULL. I have posted the final list of students attending in the Class of 2026 and Class of 2027 Google Classrooms. Juniors and Seniors, please check that list.

>>>Students going on the college tour, if you are unable to attend for any reason, please let me know ASAP as I have alternate students who are ready to take your seat.

I STILL NEED ONE MORE CHAPERONE FOR THIS TRIP. If you are a parent of a student attending the college tour and would like to volunteer as a chaperone, please let me know ASAP. Chaperones will need to complete an APS background check. The day will be 7:45 AM to 9:30 PM, so it's a commitment if you have to work the next day but if you are up for it, let's go!

◆ FREE SAT Prep on ECA Campus • Nov. 22, 8 AM-12 Noon (Deadline to register: Nov. 17)

Last year, we had our first opportunity to work with Club Z to provide our **Sophomores and Juniors** with an awesome SAT practice opportunity and we are able to offer it again this year! The best practice for the SAT is to take a practice test. The best way to take a practice test is in a timed simulated environment. ECA students will have this opportunity on Saturday, November 22nd. This is such a great opportunity to practice for the SAT with expert prep and feedback for FREE:)

By registering, you will receive your score immediately after completing the exam and gain instant access to Z-Prep, Club Z! Tutoring Services' online preparation platform.

- A full-length SAT practice test administered under real testing conditions.
- Immediate scoring upon completion.
- 30 days of online access to our study program.
- Video tutorials explaining every question and answer, led by expert tutors.
- A free follow-up session to review the results, discuss a personalized improvement plan, and share key insights to help you visualize your academic and career development.
- This program offers a quick and accurate evaluation of your current level and provides the tools you need to start improving right away.

You will be committing to two events, one virtual Q/A for you and your parents on Thursday, November 20th from 7-8pm and then the actual SAT test simulation on SATURDAY, November 22nd from 8am to Noon. We think this is the perfect time to practice on a Saturday as it is right before parent/teacher conferences and Thanksgiving Break. So, you lose a Saturday but you have the next week of school OFF:).

If you want to take advantage of this awesome prep opportunity, sign up in the google form! Remember that SAT scores, even if not needed to get into the college of your choice, are often used for scholarships. Right now at NM Tech, a high SAT score can earn you HUGE bucks in scholarships (just one example)!

If you or your parents have a question about these events, please reach out to Club Z as they are hosting these events: Luz Del Carmen Said, email: ldelsaid@clubztutoring.com

[LINK TO THE CLUB Z SAT PRACTICE TEST GOOGLE FORM TO REGISTER](#)

ECA Sophomores and Juniors, your deadline to register for this opportunity is Monday, November 17th.

◆ CNM Dual Credit Workshop on ECA Campus • November 18, 3:00-4:30 PM

Every year, one of the most common requests that I receive as the ECA school counselor is information about applying for dual credit classes, rules, deadlines etc. I post information throughout the school year in grade level google classrooms and offer a once a year, on campus CNM dual credit presentation and workshop for all ECA students and families. This year, the **CNM dual credit presentation and workshop will be on Tuesday, November 18th from 3pm to 4:30pm in the ECA Lecture Hall.** Remember that it is an ECA graduation requirement for our graduates to have 6 courses of a combination of AP and dual credit classes. It is important for students and families to understand the risks and benefits of taking dual credit classes in high school. The in-person presentation on November 18th will be for CNM dual credit information and their registration process. ECA students can take college classes while in high school for FREE, with books paid for by APS during the Fall, Spring or Summer college term. So, mark your calendars and come down to the campus for this very important presentation!

▶▶▶ For Seniors and Families ◀◀◀

▶ TOP TIER COLLEGES THAT COVER 100% OF FINANCIAL NEED

Don't forget that there are over 75 colleges that offer 100% of financial aid based on a families demonstrated need (from the FAFSA). Below is the link to a great article from the "College Essay Guy" that explains and lists the colleges. If you are from a low-income family and assumed that you could not afford to attend a top-rated college, that is FALSE! List of Colleges: <https://www.collegeessayguy.com/blog/colleges-that-offer-complete-financial-aid>

▶ FAFSA TIME!

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) opened on October 1st for the 2026-27 college year. I encourage EVERY senior family to fill it out if your student will be attending college next fall regardless of income.

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>

Take care and Happy Fall to everyone!

Alicia Faulds, M.A., LMHC
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