

LA CUEVA STRONG



LCHS CULTURE OF CARE & STUDENT SUCCESS GUIDE

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

2026 – 2027



EXCELLENCE

Where excellence
is a habit.



ENGAGEMENT

Participation
creates possibility.



BELONGING

Every student
every day.

SUPPORT  INSPIRE  EMPOWER

Principal's Message

Dear Bear Families,

Welcome to another exciting year at La Cueva High School. Whether your family is joining us for the first time or continuing a proud Bear tradition, we are honored to partner with you in your student's educational journey.

At La Cueva, we believe every student deserves to be challenged, supported, and known. Our commitment to Excellence, Engagement, and Belonging guides every decision we make and reflects our belief that strong relationships are the foundation of student success. We have a dedicated Bear Success Center designed to help students overcome challenges and access support whenever they need it.

This guide is designed to help you understand the opportunities, expectations, and support systems available to your student. We encourage you to stay connected through ParentVUE, our weekly Family WALC, and regular communication with teachers and staff.

Thank you for trusting us with your student. Together, we will continue building a school where every Bear has the opportunity to thrive. Once a Bear, Always a Bear.

Darrell Garcia, Principal

Five Things Every Family Should Know

- Read the Family WALC every Sunday.
- Check ParentVUE each week.
- Encourage involvement in at least one activity.
- Communicate concerns early.
- Never hesitate to ask for help. We're here to support your student.

Welcome to La Cueva High School

Whether you are joining the Bear family for the first time or continuing a proud tradition, we are excited to partner with you throughout your high school journey. At La Cueva High School, we are committed to providing students with an exceptional educational experience that prepares them for success in college, career, military service, and life.

Our mission extends beyond academics. We strive to develop students who are confident, resilient, compassionate, and prepared to contribute positively to their communities. Through rigorous learning opportunities, meaningful relationships, student involvement, and a strong culture of support, we work to ensure that every student has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

The LCHS Culture of Care and Student Success Guide serves as a resource for students and families. Within these pages, you will find information about the values, expectations, supports, opportunities, and partnerships that help make La Cueva High School a place where students can thrive academically, socially, emotionally, and personally.

This guide is built upon our commitment to Excellence, Engagement, and Belonging. These three principles guide our work, shape our culture, and support our vision of developing graduates who embody the [APS Profile of a Graduate](#). They serve as the foundation for how we learn, lead, support one another, and build community.

At La Cueva High School, student success is a shared responsibility among students, families, teachers, counselors, coaches, sponsors, administrators, and support staff. Together, we create the conditions that allow students to grow, persevere, discover their passions, and prepare for a successful future.

Thank you for being part of the La Cueva community. We look forward to partnering with you throughout the year as we continue to build a culture where every student has the opportunity to excel, engage, and belong.

What It Means to Be a Bear

Being a Bear means becoming part of something larger than yourself.

La Cueva High School is more than a place where students attend classes and earn credits. It is a community built on shared experiences, meaningful relationships, high expectations, and a tradition of excellence that spans generations. Every student who walks through our doors becomes part of a legacy shaped by those who came before and strengthened by those who will follow.

Being a Bear means taking pride in your school, your actions, and your contributions to the community. It means understanding that every interaction, every decision, and every effort helps shape the culture of our campus. Whether in the classroom, on the field, on the stage, in the community, or in the halls of our school, Bears are expected to represent themselves and their school with integrity, respect, and responsibility.

Being a Bear also means recognizing that success is not achieved alone. We learn from one another, support one another, and grow together. We celebrate accomplishments, help others through challenges, and understand that strong relationships are at the heart of a thriving school community.

At La Cueva High School, we believe every student has unique talents, strengths, and aspirations. Our responsibility is to help students discover those strengths, pursue their goals, and develop the knowledge, skills, and character necessary to succeed beyond high school. We challenge students to think critically, act responsibly, contribute positively, and embrace opportunities that help them grow as learners and leaders.

Being a Bear means showing resilience when faced with adversity, demonstrating character when no one is watching, and treating others with dignity and respect. It means understanding that mistakes are opportunities to learn, growth requires effort, and every member of our community deserves to feel valued and supported.

Most importantly, being a Bear means belonging to a community that believes in you. A community that will celebrate your successes, support you through challenges, and encourage you to become the very best version of yourself.

The lessons learned, relationships formed, and experiences gained at La Cueva High School extend far beyond graduation. Long after students leave our campus, they remain connected through the values, traditions, and shared experiences that define what it means to be a Bear.

Once a Bear, Always a Bear.

Excellence, Engagement, and Belonging

At La Cueva High School, our commitment to student success is rooted in three core values: Excellence, Engagement, and Belonging. These principles guide our decisions, shape our culture, and influence the experiences we strive to create for every student.

Together, these values help define what it means to be a Bear and serve as the foundation of our Culture of Care and Student Success Framework. They reflect our belief that students thrive when they are challenged to achieve at high levels, encouraged to actively participate in their school community, and supported by meaningful relationships and a strong sense of connection.

Our Commitment

Excellence

Excellence is a commitment to growth, effort, and continuous improvement. At La Cueva High School, we challenge students to pursue their highest potential while recognizing that success looks different for every learner. Excellence is demonstrated through perseverance, responsibility, curiosity, and a willingness to learn from both successes and setbacks.

We are committed to providing rigorous academic opportunities, meaningful learning experiences, and the support necessary for students to achieve their goals and prepare for life beyond high school.

Engagement

Engagement is the active participation in learning, school life, and the broader community. Students who are engaged are more likely to develop meaningful relationships, discover personal interests, strengthen leadership skills, and find purpose in their educational journey.

We believe learning extends beyond the classroom. Through athletics, activities, performing arts, leadership opportunities, service learning, advisory, and career exploration, students develop the experiences and skills that contribute to personal growth and future success.

Belonging

Belonging is the belief that every student deserves to feel valued, respected, connected, and supported. A strong sense of belonging contributes to academic success, positive relationships, emotional well-being, and school connectedness.

Through our Culture of Care, restorative practices, counseling supports, and student success systems, we strive to create an environment where every student knows they are an important part of the La Cueva community. We are committed to building a school culture where students feel safe to learn, grow, contribute, and be themselves.

Through student feedback surveys, La Cueva students consistently identify strong relationships, perseverance, and social awareness as strengths within our community. We also recognize opportunities to continue strengthening student belonging and connectedness. Our Culture of Care and Student Success Framework reflects our commitment to listening to student voice and continuously improving the student experience.

APS Profile of a Graduate

The work we do at La Cueva High School is aligned with the APS Profile of a Graduate, which outlines the knowledge, skills, and dispositions students need to be successful in an ever-changing world.

While academic achievement remains important, preparing students for life after graduation requires much more than earning credits and passing classes. Students must be equipped to think critically, communicate effectively, collaborate with others, adapt to new challenges, and contribute positively to their communities.

The APS Profile of a Graduate serves as a guide for helping students develop these essential skills and habits. Through their experiences at La Cueva High School, students are encouraged to become:

- Effective communicators who can express ideas clearly and listen to understand others.
- Critical thinkers and problem solvers who can analyze information, make informed decisions, and adapt to challenges.

- Collaborative contributors who work effectively with diverse groups and value multiple perspectives.
- Responsible and resilient individuals who demonstrate perseverance, integrity, and accountability.
- Lifelong learners who embrace curiosity, innovation, and continuous growth.
- Engaged citizens who contribute positively to their communities and understand their responsibility to others.

Excellence, Engagement, and Belonging are not separate from the APS Profile of a Graduate—they are the pathway through which these outcomes are achieved. By fostering high expectations, meaningful participation, strong relationships, and comprehensive support systems, La Cueva High School seeks to develop graduates who are prepared not only for their next step after high school, but for a lifetime of success, leadership, and contribution.

These commitments guide our work, shape our culture, and reflect our belief that every student can achieve great things when provided with opportunity, support, and a community that believes in them.

Student Success at La Cueva

At La Cueva High School, we believe every student has the ability to succeed. Student success is not defined by a single grade, test score, award, or accomplishment. Rather, success is the result of growth, perseverance, meaningful relationships, active engagement, and a commitment to continuous learning.

Our responsibility as a school community is to provide students with the opportunities, support systems, and learning experiences necessary to help them discover their strengths, overcome challenges, and prepare for life beyond high school. Through strong partnerships among students, families, teachers, counselors, coaches, sponsors, administrators, and support staff, we work together to create the conditions that allow every student to thrive.

How We Define Success

Success at La Cueva High School extends beyond academic achievement. While academic excellence remains important, we believe true success reflects the development of the whole student.

A successful Bear is a student who:

- Demonstrates growth and perseverance when faced with challenges.
- Takes ownership of their learning and personal development.
- Builds positive relationships with peers and adults.
- Contributes positively to the school and community.
- Engages in meaningful learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom.

- Develops the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary for success after high school.
- Pursues goals with purpose, integrity, and resilience.
- Understands the importance of responsibility, empathy, and service to others.

Success looks different for every student. For some, success may be earning college credit, completing an industry certification, excelling in athletics or the arts, serving in student leadership, improving attendance, overcoming personal obstacles, or discovering a future career pathway. Regardless of the path, we believe every student deserves the opportunity to grow, achieve, and reach their full potential.

Our goal is that every graduate leaves La Cueva prepared to navigate the opportunities and challenges of college, career, military service, and life while embodying the qualities outlined in the APS Profile of a Graduate.

Our Culture of Care Philosophy

At La Cueva High School, we believe that strong relationships, high expectations, meaningful support systems, and shared accountability create the foundation for student success. Our Culture of Care philosophy is grounded in the belief that students are most successful when they experience a sense of belonging, connection, consistency, and support within the school community.

A Culture of Care is not a separate program or initiative. It is the collective way we approach teaching, learning, student support, relationships, and behavioral response across our campus. This philosophy guides how we build community, support student growth, respond to challenges, and create learning environments where all students can succeed.

We recognize that academic performance, attendance, behavior, and student well-being are interconnected. When challenges arise, our focus is on understanding the root causes, providing appropriate support, maintaining accountability, and helping students remain connected to school and supportive adults.

Through counseling services, restorative practices, the Bear Success Center, advisory, academic interventions, student activities, athletics, performing arts, and strong family partnerships, we strive to ensure every student has access to the support systems necessary to be successful.

Our commitment to a Culture of Care reflects our belief that every student deserves to feel:

- Safe
- Valued
- Respected
- Connected
- Supported
- Challenged to grow

By fostering meaningful relationships, maintaining high expectations, and providing comprehensive support systems, we create a school community where students are empowered to learn, lead, persevere, and succeed.

Student success is not something we achieve alone. It is the result of a community working together to help every Bear reach their fullest potential.

Student Supports

At La Cueva High School, we believe every student deserves access to the support, guidance, and resources necessary to thrive academically, socially, emotionally, and personally. Student success is strengthened when students feel connected to trusted adults, have access to meaningful support systems, and know where to turn when challenges arise.

Our student support systems are designed to help students navigate academic challenges, develop important life skills, strengthen relationships, explore future opportunities, and remain connected to school. Through counseling services, the Bear Success Center, advisory, and academic supports, we work to ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed.

Counseling Supports

The La Cueva High School Counseling Department is committed to supporting the academic, social-emotional, and postsecondary success of every student. Counselors partner with students, families, teachers, and support staff to help students navigate challenges, achieve their goals, and prepare for life after high school.

Each student is assigned a counselor who serves as a primary point of contact throughout their high school experience. Counselors work closely with students to provide guidance, encouragement, advocacy, and support as they progress toward graduation and beyond.

Counseling services include:

- Social-emotional support and problem-solving
- Academic planning and course selection
- Graduation monitoring and credit review
- College and career exploration
- Postsecondary planning and application support
- Scholarship and financial aid guidance
- Goal setting and decision-making
- Referrals to school and community resources
- Crisis response and student support services

In addition to grade-level counselors, students have access to specialized support services, including:

- A College and Career Readiness Counselor who supports all students with postsecondary planning.
- Crossroads Counseling services focused on substance use prevention, intervention, and family support.
- The Health and Wellness Team, which collaborates to support students experiencing health, mental health, social-emotional, or other barriers to success.

The Counseling Department believes that every student should have access to trusted adults, meaningful support systems, and opportunities to explore their future goals. We encourage students and families to reach out whenever questions, concerns, or challenges arise.

Bear Success Center

The Bear Success Center (BSC) is a unique support system designed to help students overcome barriers, remain connected to school, and continue making progress toward their goals.

The BSC works collaboratively with students, families, teachers, counselors, and administrators to provide:

- Academic support and intervention.
- Attendance support.
- Restorative conversations and problem-solving.
- Emotional regulation and reflection opportunities.
- Peer tutoring and academic assistance.
- Student success planning.
- Support during challenging situations or transitions.

The goal of the Bear Success Center is to help students learn from challenges, strengthen accountability, and remain engaged in their learning while receiving the support they need to be successful.

Advisory

At La Cueva High School, we believe that every student deserves to be known, supported, and connected. Advisory serves as an important part of our Culture of Care and Student Success Framework by creating dedicated time for relationship-building, student support, personal growth, and future planning.

Beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, students will participate in advisory groups designed to strengthen connections and foster a sense of belonging. General education students will be assigned to advisory classes based on their graduation cohort, while special education students will participate in

advisory with their sponsor teacher. This structure is designed to create consistent relationships and ensure that every student has access to trusted adults who can support them throughout their high school journey.

At its core, Advisory is about connection. It provides students with opportunities to build meaningful relationships with peers and staff, strengthen their connection to the school community, and develop the skills, habits, and mindsets necessary for success both during and after high school.

Through Advisory, students will:

- Build relationships with peers and trusted adults.
- Develop a stronger sense of belonging and connection to the La Cueva community.
- Engage in activities that support personal growth and self-reflection.
- Explore college, career, and postsecondary opportunities.
- Develop and refine their Next Step Plan.
- Learn skills that support academic success, goal setting, and decision-making.
- Strengthen communication, collaboration, and leadership skills.
- Explore topics connected to wellness, character, and personal responsibility.
- Reflect on their progress and plan for their future.

We believe every student should have at least one trusted adult in their corner, someone who knows them, supports them, celebrates their successes, and helps them navigate challenges. Advisory helps create those connections and ensures that students are supported by a network of caring adults throughout their time at La Cueva High School.

Advisory is designed to ensure that no student goes through high school without at least one adult who knows them well, checks in regularly, and helps connect them with opportunities for success. By strengthening relationships, promoting student voice, supporting postsecondary readiness, and building community, Advisory helps students develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to thrive as Bears and beyond.

Academic Supports

La Cueva High School offers a variety of academic supports designed to help students achieve their goals and reach their full potential.

Academic supports may include:

- Teacher office hours and classroom support.
- Peer tutoring opportunities.
- Academic intervention and progress monitoring.
- Credit recovery options.
- College and career readiness support.

- Advanced Placement, Dual Credit, Career Technical Education, and Visual Arts pathways.
- Counseling and academic planning services.

Students are encouraged to seek support early and take advantage of the many resources available throughout the school year. Asking for help is a sign of strength, and we believe every student can succeed when provided with the appropriate support, encouragement, and opportunities to grow.

At La Cueva High School, student supports are designed to help students overcome challenges, discover their strengths, build confidence, and prepare for a successful future.

Biliteracy and Global Readiness

La Cueva High School is proud to be a Bilingual Multicultural Education Program (BMEP) school, reflecting our commitment to preparing students for success in an increasingly interconnected world.

We believe that developing multilingual skills, cultural understanding, and global perspectives helps students become more effective communicators, leaders, and contributors in their communities and beyond. Through language learning and multicultural experiences, students gain valuable skills that prepare them for college, careers, and life.

Students have opportunities to pursue advanced language study, earn the New Mexico Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy, participate in Advanced Placement (AP) language courses, and engage in experiences that celebrate diverse cultures and perspectives. As our program continues to grow, La Cueva High School remains committed to expanding opportunities that promote biliteracy, cultural competence, and global readiness.

By embracing language, culture, and diversity, we prepare Bears to thrive in an ever-changing world while honoring the unique backgrounds and experiences that strengthen our school community.

Excellence

At La Cueva High School, excellence is a habit. Excellence is not defined by perfection, but by effort, perseverance, growth, and a commitment to doing one's best. We believe every student has the ability to achieve at high levels when supported by strong relationships, meaningful opportunities, and a willingness to embrace challenges.

Excellence requires students to take ownership of their learning, demonstrate integrity, and consistently engage in behaviors that support academic success. Through rigorous coursework, personalized support systems, and high expectations, we encourage every student to pursue their goals and prepare for success beyond high school.

Academic Expectations

Academic success begins with a commitment to learning. Students are expected to attend class regularly, participate actively, complete assignments, seek support when needed, and take responsibility for their academic progress.

At La Cueva High School, students are encouraged to:

- Attend class prepared and ready to learn.
- Participate actively in classroom learning experiences.
- Complete assignments and assessments to the best of their ability.
- Advocate for themselves and seek help when challenges arise.
- Monitor academic progress regularly.
- Set goals and work consistently toward achieving them.
- Demonstrate respect for the learning environment and the educational experiences of others.

Families play an important role in supporting academic success by maintaining communication with teachers, monitoring student progress in ParentVUE, and encouraging strong study habits and consistent attendance.

Through a partnership between students, families, and school staff, we strive to create a culture where academic growth, achievement, and lifelong learning are valued and celebrated.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of meaningful learning and personal growth. At La Cueva High School, students are expected to demonstrate honesty, responsibility, and ethical behavior in all academic work.

Academic integrity means:

- Completing your own work.
- Giving proper credit to the ideas and work of others.
- Using technology responsibly.
- Demonstrating honesty during assignments, projects, assessments, and classroom activities.

Students are expected to submit original work and follow teacher expectations regarding collaboration, research, technology use, and artificial intelligence (AI) tools. The use of AI-generated content is permitted only when explicitly authorized by the teacher and in accordance with assignment expectations.

Acts of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, or misuse of technology, undermine the learning process and may result in academic and disciplinary consequences.

More importantly, academic integrity reflects the values of responsibility, trustworthiness, and accountability that contribute to success in school and beyond. We encourage students to view mistakes as opportunities for learning and growth while maintaining a commitment to honesty and ethical decision-making.

Attendance Matters

Regular attendance is one of the strongest predictors of student success. Students who attend school consistently are more likely to achieve academically, remain connected to school, participate in activities, develop positive relationships, and graduate prepared for their future goals.

Every day matters.

When students miss school, they miss important learning experiences, classroom discussions, opportunities for collaboration, and connections with peers and teachers. While occasional absences are unavoidable, maintaining consistent attendance should be a priority for all students and families.

Students are expected to:

- Attend school every day unless illness or other legitimate circumstances prevent attendance.
- Arrive to class on time and prepared to learn.
- Communicate with teachers regarding missed work and assignments.
- Take responsibility for making up missed learning opportunities.

Families can support attendance by:

- Prioritizing school attendance whenever possible.
- Scheduling appointments outside of school hours when feasible.
- Monitoring attendance through ParentVUE.
- Communicating attendance concerns early.
- Partnering with school staff when challenges arise.

La Cueva High School works collaboratively with students and families to address barriers to attendance and provide support when needed. Through proactive communication, intervention systems, counseling supports, and attendance monitoring, we seek to ensure that every student remains connected to learning and school.

Because attendance is more than being present, it is about being engaged, connected, and positioned for success.

Engagement

At La Cueva High School, we believe students are most successful when they are actively engaged in their learning and connected to their school community. Engagement extends beyond attending classes and completing assignments. It is about discovering passions, building relationships, developing leadership skills, and participating in experiences that contribute to personal growth and lifelong success.

Students who are engaged in school are more likely to feel connected, develop a sense of purpose, strengthen their academic performance, and build the skills necessary for success beyond high school. Whether through academics, athletics, performing arts, clubs, activities, leadership opportunities, or service, every student is encouraged to find ways to become involved and contribute to the life of our school.

Our goal is for every student to find their place, discover their strengths, and develop the confidence to pursue their goals both during and after high school.

Athletics

Athletics play an important role in the La Cueva experience by promoting teamwork, discipline, perseverance, leadership, and school pride. Participation in athletics provides students with opportunities to challenge themselves, build lasting friendships, and develop skills that extend far beyond competition.

Student-athletes represent La Cueva High School with integrity, sportsmanship, and a commitment to excellence. Through participation in athletics, students learn the importance of preparation, accountability, resilience, and working toward a common goal.

We encourage students to explore athletic opportunities and become active participants in our proud tradition of Bear athletics.

Performing Arts

The performing arts provide students with opportunities to express creativity, develop confidence, and engage in collaborative experiences that enrich both the individual and the school community.

Through music, theater, dance, and other creative pursuits, students learn discipline, communication, collaboration, and artistic expression. Participation in the arts encourages innovation, critical thinking, and appreciation for diverse perspectives and experiences.

The performing arts are an important part of the La Cueva tradition and contribute significantly to the vibrant culture of our school.

Clubs and Activities

La Cueva High School offers a wide variety of clubs and activities designed to help students explore interests, develop new skills, and connect with peers who share similar passions.

Participation in clubs and activities allows students to:

- Build friendships and connections.
- Explore personal interests and talents.
- Develop leadership and teamwork skills.
- Serve their school and community.
- Strengthen their sense of belonging.

Whether students are interested in academic organizations, cultural groups, service organizations, special interest clubs, or student government, there are opportunities for every student to become involved and make meaningful contributions to the school community.

Student Leadership

Leadership opportunities at La Cueva High School empower students to serve others, influence school culture, and contribute positively to the community.

Leadership is not limited to formal titles or positions. Every student has the ability to demonstrate leadership through their actions, decisions, and contributions to the school community. Whether through student government, clubs, athletics, performing arts, service projects, or daily interactions, students are encouraged to lead with integrity, empathy, responsibility, and purpose.

By developing leadership skills, students gain confidence and prepare themselves to make meaningful contributions throughout their lives.

Service and Community Involvement

We believe that engagement extends beyond our campus and into the broader community. Service opportunities help students develop empathy, civic responsibility, and an understanding of how they can positively impact the lives of others.

Through volunteerism, community partnerships, service projects, and school initiatives, students have opportunities to contribute to causes they care about while developing important leadership and citizenship skills.

Service reinforces the idea that being a Bear means not only striving for personal success but also helping others succeed and strengthening the communities in which we live.

Finding Your Place

One of the most important goals at La Cueva High School is helping every student find a place where they feel connected, valued, and involved. We encourage students to explore new opportunities, step outside their comfort zones, and become active participants in the life of our school.

Research consistently shows that students who participate in athletics, activities, performing arts, leadership opportunities, and service are more likely to feel connected to their school community and experience greater success both academically and personally. We believe involvement matters, and we encourage every student to find at least one way to become engaged during their time at La Cueva.

If you are unsure where to begin, we encourage you to speak with your counselor, teacher, coach, sponsor, Activities Director, or Athletic Director. There is a place for every student at La Cueva High School.

Engagement is about more than participation. It is about building relationships, discovering passions, developing confidence, and creating experiences that shape who we become.

The more connected students are to their school community, the more likely they are to thrive academically, socially, emotionally, and personally. We encourage every Bear to get involved, stay connected, and make the most of the opportunities available throughout their high school journey.

Belonging

At La Cueva High School, we believe that every student deserves to feel seen, valued, respected, and connected. A strong sense of belonging is essential to student success and is closely linked to academic achievement, attendance, engagement, well-being, and positive relationships.

Belonging is more than simply being present at school. It is knowing that you are an important part of the community, that your voice matters, and that there are adults and peers who care about your success.

Through our Culture of Care, restorative practices, student support systems, and family partnerships, we strive to create a school environment where every student feels welcome, supported, and empowered to grow.

Culture of Care

At La Cueva High School, our Culture of Care is built upon the belief that strong relationships, high expectations, meaningful support systems, and shared accountability create the conditions necessary for student success.

A Culture of Care is not a program or initiative. It is the way we approach teaching, learning, student support, and relationship-building throughout our campus. It influences how we celebrate successes, respond to challenges, support students through difficulties, and build a positive school community.

Our commitment to a Culture of Care includes:

- Building positive relationships between students and adults.
- Creating safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments.
- Supporting students academically, socially, and emotionally.
- Maintaining high expectations while providing meaningful support.
- Helping students learn from mistakes and continue moving forward.
- Ensuring every student has access to trusted adults and support systems.

We believe students are most successful when they feel connected to school, supported by their community, and confident that they belong.

Restorative Practices

Restorative practices are an important part of how we build and maintain a positive school culture. These practices focus on strengthening relationships, addressing conflict in productive ways, repairing harm, and helping students learn from their experiences.

Restorative practices are based on a simple belief: strong relationships create stronger communities.

At La Cueva High School, restorative practices may include:

- Relationship-building activities.
- Classroom community circles.
- Restorative conversations.
- Reflection and problem-solving opportunities.
- Mediation and conflict resolution.
- Reentry conversations following significant incidents.

Restorative practices are not intended to eliminate accountability. Rather, they help students understand the impact of their actions, take responsibility for their choices, repair relationships when appropriate, and develop skills that contribute to future success.

Our goal is to help students remain connected to learning, supportive adults, and the school community while fostering responsibility, growth, and accountability.

Student Wellness and Support

Student well-being is an essential component of success. Academic achievement, social-emotional wellness, attendance, engagement, and positive relationships are closely connected.

La Cueva High School provides a variety of supports designed to help students navigate challenges, build resilience, and maintain a healthy connection to school.

Student wellness supports may include:

- School counseling services.
- Bear Success Center interventions and support.
- Academic support and tutoring opportunities.
- Attendance and engagement interventions.
- Restorative support systems.
- Crisis response and referrals to community resources.
- Student mentoring and relationship-building opportunities.

We encourage students to seek support whenever they need it. Asking for help is a sign of strength, and every student deserves access to the resources necessary to succeed.

Family Partnerships

Families play a vital role in creating a sense of belonging and supporting student success. We believe strong partnerships between school and home help students thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

At La Cueva High School, we are committed to maintaining open communication, building collaborative relationships, and working alongside families to support students throughout their high school experience.

Families can support student success by:

- Monitoring ParentVUE regularly for grades, attendance, and teacher communication.
- Reading the Family WALC each week for important school updates and information.
- Communicating concerns early so we can work together to provide support.
- Encouraging regular attendance and engagement in school activities.
- Celebrating effort, growth, and achievement.
- Partnering with teachers, counselors, and administrators when challenges arise.

When schools and families work together, students benefit from a stronger network of support and a greater sense of connection to their school community.

At La Cueva High School, belonging is a shared responsibility. Together, we create a school community where students feel connected, supported, and inspired to reach their full potential.

Supporting a Positive Learning Environment

At La Cueva High School, every student contributes to the culture, climate, and learning environment of our school. Student expectations are designed to support academic success, strengthen relationships, maintain safe learning environments, and help every student thrive.

Our expectations are grounded in the values of Excellence, Engagement, and Belonging. We believe students are most successful when they take ownership of their learning, treat others with respect, and contribute positively to the school community.

The expectations outlined below are intended to promote responsibility, accountability, and a positive educational experience for all members of the Bear community.

Personal Technology Expectations

Technology can be a powerful tool for learning when used appropriately. At La Cueva High School, we encourage the responsible use of technology while maintaining learning environments where students are fully engaged, focused, and connected to their teachers and classmates.

To provide a consistent, secure, and equitable learning experience, students are expected to use their APS-issued Chromebook as their primary instructional device during the school day. APS-issued Chromebooks ensure compatibility with district instructional platforms, provide access to required educational resources, and allow students to receive technical support when needed. Personal laptops and other computing devices should not be used during instructional time unless specifically authorized by school staff.

Consistent with Albuquerque Public Schools procedures and school expectations, personal technology devices should only be used during instructional time when authorized by the teacher for educational purposes. This includes cell phones, earbuds, headphones, smartwatches, smart glasses, AI-enabled wearable devices, and other personal technology capable of communicating, recording, or accessing digital information.

Students are expected to:

- Bring their fully charged APS-issued Chromebook to school each day.
- Use their APS-issued Chromebook as their primary device for classroom learning.
- Follow teacher directions regarding technology use.

- Keep personal technology devices put away during instructional time unless permission has been granted.
- Use technology responsibly, ethically, and in ways that support learning.
- Respect the privacy of students and staff by not recording, photographing, or sharing others without permission.
- Help maintain a classroom environment where everyone can learn without unnecessary distractions.

Our approach to technology use is rooted in student engagement, academic integrity, equity, and respect for others. By establishing consistent expectations across our campus, we create learning environments where students are present, connected, and able to fully participate in their educational experience.

Repeated violations of school or classroom technology expectations may result in progressive interventions, parent communication, and additional consequences consistent with APS procedures and La Cueva High School expectations.

Hall Pass and Restroom Expectations

Students are expected to remain in class during instructional time unless they have permission from their teacher to leave.

To ensure student safety and accountability:

- Students must have a valid hall pass when outside the classroom during instructional time.
- Students should sign out and sign back in when leaving class.
- Only one student should be out of the classroom on a pass at a time.
- Students should use passes responsibly and return promptly.

These expectations help maintain safety, maximize instructional time, and ensure students are where they are expected to be throughout the school day.

Attendance and Tardies

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential components of student success. Students are expected to attend school every day, arrive on time, and remain engaged throughout the school day.

Consistent attendance helps students:

- Build positive relationships with teachers and peers.
- Stay current with coursework.
- Participate fully in learning experiences.
- Develop habits that contribute to future success.

Students and families are encouraged to monitor attendance through ParentVUE and communicate with the school when concerns arise.

Academic Integrity

Integrity is a core value of the La Cueva community. Students are expected to complete their own work, demonstrate honesty in all academic activities, and give proper credit to the work and ideas of others.

Academic integrity includes:

- Completing original work.
- Following teacher expectations.
- Using technology responsibly.
- Properly citing sources.
- Using artificial intelligence (AI) tools only when authorized by the teacher.

Students who engage in academic dishonesty may be subject to academic and disciplinary consequences. More importantly, academic integrity helps students develop the character, responsibility, and ethical decision-making skills necessary for success beyond high school.

Behavior Expectations

La Cueva High School is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment for all students and staff.

Students are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity and respect.
- Follow reasonable directions from school staff.
- Contribute positively to the learning environment.
- Resolve conflicts appropriately.
- Demonstrate responsibility for their actions.
- Support a school culture where everyone feels safe and valued.

When concerns arise, the school utilizes a combination of restorative practices, student supports, interventions, and progressive consequences designed to help students learn, grow, and remain connected to the school community.

Bullying Prevention

Every student has the right to learn in an environment that is safe, respectful, and free from bullying, harassment, intimidation, and discrimination.

Students are encouraged to:

- Treat others with respect.
- Report concerns to a trusted adult.
- Support peers who may be experiencing difficulties.
- Help create an inclusive and welcoming school environment.

La Cueva High School takes reports of bullying seriously and investigates concerns in accordance with APS policies and procedures. Maintaining a culture of respect and belonging is a shared responsibility among students, families, and staff.

By embracing these expectations, students contribute to a positive school culture where learning, growth, and belonging can flourish for everyone.

Important Contacts and Resources

At La Cueva High School, we believe that strong communication and access to support are essential to student success. Whether you have questions about academics, attendance, activities, athletics, student support services, or school events, our staff is committed to partnering with students and families throughout the high school experience. The resources listed below can help students and families stay informed, connected, and engaged throughout the school year.

Administration

The administrative team supports the overall operation of the school and works collaboratively with students, families, teachers, counselors, and support staff to promote a safe, positive, and successful learning environment.

Principal

- Darrell Garcia - darrell.garcia@aps.edu

Assistant Principals

- Dr. Heather Bassett, Curriculum and Instruction - heather.bassett@aps.edu
- Melanie Tapia, Student Success - melanie.tapia@aps.edu

- Brian Hubbell, Buildings/Grounds and Special Education - hubbell_b@aps.edu

Dean of Students

- Trey Saxon - trey.saxon@aps.edu

Counseling and Student Supports

9th Grade Counselor

- Bethany Headley - bethany.headley@aps.edu

10th - 12th Grade Counselors (Based on Student Last Names)

- Bernice Ulibarri (Student Last Names: A-Do) - bernice.ulibarri@aps.edu
- Leslie Burgess (Student Last Names Dp-Li) - leslie.burgess@aps.edu
- Kelly Joiner (Student Last Names Ll-Ri) - kelly.joiner@aps.edu
- Megan Goodman (Student Last Names Ro-Z) - megan.goodman@aps.edu

College & Career Counselor

- Debra Chandler - debra.chandler@aps.edu

Crossroads Counselor

- Christine Loidolt - loidolt@aps.edu

Bear Success Center (BSC)

Dean of Students

- Trey Saxon - trey.saxon@aps.edu

Lead Student Support Resource Teacher

- Eric Orell - orell_er@aps.edu

Lead Special Education Resource Teacher

- Candice Begay - candice.begay@aps.edu

Student Life and Engagement

Athletics

Questions regarding athletic programs, eligibility requirements, schedules, participation opportunities, or athletic events should be directed to the Athletic Department.

Athletic Director

- Brandon Back - back_b@aps.edu

Activities and Student Leadership

Questions regarding clubs, student organizations, student leadership opportunities, dances, assemblies, and school activities should be directed to the Activities Office.

Activities Director

- Catherine Casaus - casaus_c@aps.edu

Performing Arts

La Cueva High School offers a wide variety of visual and performing arts opportunities, including:

- Band: Gabriel Velasco - gabriel.velasco@aps.edu
- Orchestra and Guitar: Rebecca Simons - rebecca.simons@aps.edu
- Choir and Piano: Katherine Green - katherine.green@aps.edu
- Drama: Alex Harden - alexander.harden@aps.edu

Students and families interested in participating in performing arts programs are encouraged to contact the appropriate program director.

Attendance Office

Regular attendance is one of the strongest predictors of student success. The Attendance Office partners with students and families to support consistent attendance, address concerns, and ensure accurate attendance records.

The Attendance Office can assist with:

- Reporting student absences
- Excusing absences
- Attendance questions and concerns

- Attendance records and verification
- Early student check-outs
- Attendance-related support and intervention

Families are encouraged to notify the school as soon as possible when a student will be absent and to communicate attendance concerns early so that appropriate supports can be provided.

Students and families may also monitor attendance through ParentVUE throughout the school year.

Attendance Contact Information

- Email: lacuevaattendance@aps.edu
- Attendance Website: lacueva.aps.edu/our-school/attendance

Families are encouraged to communicate attendance concerns as early as possible so the school can provide support when needed.

Health Office

The Health Office supports the health, safety, and well-being of students throughout the school day. The school nurse partners with students, families, healthcare providers, and school staff to help ensure students can fully participate in their educational experience.

The Health Office can assist with:

- Student health concerns and illness
- Medication administration and documentation
- Management of chronic health conditions
- Medical accommodations and health plans
- Immunization requirements
- Health screenings and referrals
- Emergency health needs

Families are encouraged to communicate any significant health concerns, medical conditions, allergies, or medication needs to the Health Office as early as possible to ensure appropriate supports are in place.

Health Office

- Amanda LaCasse - amanda.lacasse@aps.edu
- Nina Morales - nina.morales@aps.edu
- Phone: 505-823-2327 ext. 33190
- Health Office Website: lacueva.aps.edu/our-school/nurse

ParentVUE

[ParentVUE](#) is the primary tool families use to monitor student information and academic progress.

Through ParentVUE, families can:

- Monitor grades
- Review attendance
- View class schedules
- Access teacher information
- Receive important updates

Families are strongly encouraged to review ParentVUE regularly throughout the school year.

ParentVUE: https://nm-abq-psv.edupoint.com/PXP2_Login.aspx

Family WALC

The Family WALC (We Are La Cueva) serves as the primary communication tool for sharing important information with families.

The Family WALC includes:

- School news and updates
- Upcoming events
- Academic information
- Student celebrations
- Athletics and activities updates
- Important reminders and announcements

The Family WALC is distributed each Sunday morning at 8:00 a.m. Families are encouraged to review it weekly to stay informed and connected to the school community.

School Website

The [La Cueva High School website](#) provides current information regarding:

- School news
- Athletics
- Activities and clubs
- Counseling services
- Calendars and events

- Academic programs
- Student resources

Families are encouraged to utilize the website as a primary source of information throughout the year.

Website: <https://lacueva.aps.edu>

Quick Links

- **ParentVUE & StudentVue** - https://nm-abq-psv.edupoint.com/PXP2_Login.aspx
- **LCHS Website** - <https://lacueva.aps.edu/>
- **Athletics Website** - <https://lacueva.aps.edu/athletics/athletics>
- **Activities Website** - <https://lacueva.aps.edu/activities/clubs-activities>
- **Counseling Website** - <https://lacueva.aps.edu/our-school/counseling>
- **Attendance Website** - <https://lacueva.aps.edu/our-school/attendance>

See Something, Say Something

Maintaining a safe and welcoming school is a shared responsibility. At La Cueva High School, we encourage students, families, staff, and community members to speak up if they see or hear something that could affect the safety or well-being of our school community.

If you become aware of a potential safety concern, threatening behavior, or anything that seems out of the ordinary, report it immediately to a teacher, counselor, administrator, School Resource Officer, or another trusted adult. Every concern is taken seriously and reviewed in partnership with Albuquerque Public Schools and law enforcement when appropriate.

Students and families may also submit information through the [Crime Stoppers Tip Form](#). Reporting concerns early helps us respond quickly, provide support when needed, and maintain a safe learning environment for everyone.

Remember: If you see something, say something.

Staying Connected

Student success is strongest when students, families, and school staff work together. We encourage families to:

- Monitor ParentVUE regularly.
- Read the Family WALC each week.
- Communicate concerns early.

- Encourage attendance and participation.
- Support academic progress.
- Stay engaged in school events and activities.

At La Cueva High School, we believe every student has the potential to achieve great things. Through our shared commitment to Excellence, Engagement, and Belonging, we strive to create a school community where students feel supported, challenged, and inspired to reach their full potential. Thank you for partnering with us as we work together to ensure every student experiences success and leaves La Cueva prepared for whatever path lies ahead.

Once a Bear, Always a Bear.

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