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~ Note from Executive Director, Christy Takacs ~

As we wrap up the month of April, I'd like to highlight several important procurement opportunities currently underway at ACES. We are actively managing two Requests for Proposals (RFPs): one for Bulk Food and Related Services and another for Case Management Support for Exceptional Student Supports. These solicitations reflect our continued commitment to providing high-quality, cost-effective solutions that meet the evolving needs of our members and partners.

Looking ahead, our next upcoming solicitation will be for On-Call Preventative Maintenance and Related Construction Services. We encourage interested vendors and participating agencies to stay connected for updates and timelines through our procurement portal through [BeaconBid](#).

I also want to remind everyone that our [website](#) is a valuable resource for accessing information about ACES services and about awarded contractors and their current contracts. We encourage you to visit regularly to explore available cooperative purchasing opportunities and services.

*As always, **ACES is here to support you** in any way we can. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our team for assistance, guidance, or questions. We are proud to serve our members and appreciate the opportunity to support **your** important work.*

Finish Strong: Why Ending the School Year Matters Just as Much as Starting It

Fred Parker, NMACES Operations Manager

Every July/August, school leaders across our state charge into a new year like it's the opening scene of an action movie—fresh notebooks, sharpened pencils, updated handbooks, and enough optimism to power a small city. Starting strong matters. But here's the truth seasoned leaders know, how you end the school year is just as important as how you begin it.

For charter school leaders, the final weeks of school are not simply about countdowns, field days, and locating that one missing laptop. They are about stewardship, reflection, gratitude, and setting the runway for next year's

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for the upcoming year.

The End-of-Year Balancing Act

While everyone else sees graduation caps and summer plans, you see:

- Finance deadlines
- Staffing decisions
- Curriculum Decisions
- Facility repairs
- Safety reviews
- Transportation closeout
- Technology inventory
- Nutrition program compliance
- Health records and medication procedures
- Family communications
- And at least three people asking, “Can this wait until next year?” (Answer: usually no.)

The end of the year is where great leaders quietly win. It is when systems are tightened, lessons are captured, and future headaches are prevented.

Be Proud of What You’ve Built

Before diving into next steps, pause long enough to acknowledge something important:

- You made it through another school year.
- You lifted new programs.
- You managed budgets that never felt large enough.
- You navigated staffing needs, student needs, family needs, and the occasional tracking down of anonymous complaints and Facebook commentary.
- You did work and solved problems most people never saw to protect your team and the mission of your organization.
- You led.

That deserves reflection—and pride. Too often school leaders move straight from exhaustion into planning mode without recognizing what was accomplished. Take inventory of wins, growth, resilience, and impact. Your school community is stronger because of the work you and your team did this year.

Gratitude Is Operational Leadership Too

Strong leaders know culture is not fluff—it is infrastructure. Take time to celebrate:

- **Staff** for showing up daily with heart and grit
- **Students** for growth, effort, and joy
- **Families** for trust and partnership
- **Board members and partners** for support and leadership
- **Yourself** for carrying responsibilities few fully understand

A handwritten note, staff luncheon, student celebration, family thank-you message, or sincere public recognition can carry tremendous weight. Never miss the chance to remind people of your appreciation of the hard work they

End-of-Year Operational Checklist Items:

Finance

- Close purchase orders and reconcile accounts for all funds
- Review cash flow for summer months
- Finalize calendar and budget adjustments and next-year assumptions
- Prepare for audit readiness, files and supporting docs
- Gather next fiscal purchase needs and information to be ready for July
- Complete any grant requirements and meet deadlines

Facilities

- Summer repair list prioritized
- Deep cleaning schedules confirmed
- Preventive maintenance planned
- Capital projects ready to launch or solidify summer work plans

Technology

- Address all Student Information System data entries
- Device collection and inventory
- Account cleanup and permissions reset
- Summer upgrades and cybersecurity checks

Human Resources

- Complete intent letters, separation, and staffing plans
- Exit procedures for departing employees
- Summer onboarding for new hires
- Recognition for staff contributions
- Prepare a letter for staff outlining important summer information and critical dates for the start of the next school year

Safety & Security

- Update emergency plans
- Inspect cameras, locks, radios, access systems
- Review incident trends and lessons learned

Student Nutrition

- Meal program reconciliation
- Summer program planning if applicable
- Vendor/service readiness for fall

Health Services

- Medication closeout procedures
- Student health records updates
- Immunization follow-up lists

Curriculum & Instruction

- Review academic performance data, growth trends, and set goals with your team
- Identify successful instructional strategies to replicate
- Finalize intervention plans for students
- Confirm curriculum materials and pacing for next year
- Build professional development priorities
- Align leadership goals to academic outcomes

Transportation

- Fleet inspections and maintenance
- Route review and evaluations for next year
- Vendor performance evaluation

Community Communications

- Celebrate year-end wins publicly
- Share summer resources
- Communicate key dates for next year across multiple platforms, including enrollment, registration, and lottery information

Then... Find Time to Rest Like It's Your Job

Because for a leader, it is. Recovery is not laziness. Rest is not optional. Renewal is strategic. Your school needs a healthy, clear-minded, energized leader in July/August—not one running on fumes, leftover potluck casseroles, and graduation cupcakes. Carve out real time this summer to rest physically, mentally, and emotionally. Step away. Laugh. Sleep. Read something unrelated to compliance. Be present with family. Reconnect with yourself beyond the title.

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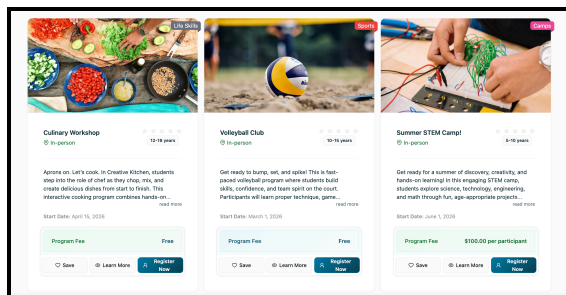
A great school year does not end when students leave campus. It ends when leaders close it with intention, gratitude, and care. So, finish strong, celebrate well, rest deeply... Then come back ready to lead again.

And, if no one has told you lately:

*****Thank you for your work, tireless dedication, and commitment to the students and families of New Mexico.*****



ACES CONTRACTED VENDOR!



Calling all Charter Admin, Event Coordinators, and Registrars!

With many of you having incredible summer programming coming up, we want to help take the organizational and administrative burden off your plate!

ACES partner [Schola](#) is proud to support New Mexico Charter Schools by inviting you to use [Assembly](#), a platform designed to make it easy to run your programs from start to finish. With Assembly, you can manage registration, payments, and communication all in one place, so you can spend less time on admin and more time on impact.

Whether you're running summer programs, after-school enrichment, or school events, Assembly helps you stay organized and makes it easier for families to participate.

And if you're experiencing challenges with full-time student enrollment, Assembly and Schola's enrollment platform, [ScholaOne](#), are purpose-built to complement each other. Assembly gives you visibility into which families are most engaged in your programs (and should be activated for testimonials and referrals), which are least engaged (a potential signal for attrition risk), and which program participants aren't currently enrolled students, turning your programming into a pipeline for new leads. ScholaOne then provides the year-round enrollment infrastructure to convert that interest into enrolled families.

Once you create your account, the Schola team will jump in to help make sure you are set up for success on the platform. Have questions about **Assembly** or want to learn more about **ScholaOne**? Reach out anytime to kayla@schola.com for support.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH COMMUNICATION

At NMACES, we value the relationships we've built with our schools and vendors. These partnerships are essential to ensuring high-quality service and support for students and staff across our network.

We understand that, at times, challenges may arise—whether it's a vendor not meeting expectations or a school environment presenting unforeseen obstacles. What's most important is how we respond. We encourage open, timely communication from both our schools and vendors when things aren't going as planned. The sooner we're aware of concerns, the sooner we can work together to resolve them constructively and effectively.

Please know that we are here to help! Whether it's through mediation, clarification of expectations, or additional support, our role is to facilitate solutions and maintain strong, productive partnerships. **If something isn't working, don't wait—reach out.** We're committed to supporting success on both sides of every agreement.

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