



Welcome to School Year 2021-2022!!! We are so glad you are here - both our new and returning families. The Taos Academy staff has been working hard to prepare for a fantastic new year supporting both students and families in an environment of educational excellence. Our theme for the coming school year is “ReBuilding Relationships” - this is not only the cornerstone of personalized learning, but also the first “R” in our work to incorporate Restorative Justice practices into our learning model. You will be hearing more on both of these throughout the school year as we work to come back together as a learning community even stronger than before.

Our goal is to work closely with students and families to build relationships in all aspects of our TA community. Watch for opportunities extended to families for training, support for community opportunities, and to participate and support TA schoolwide activities. We are excited to have you join our learning community!!

Preparations for reentry: As we move into our full student and staff reentry, it will be important to stay aware of changing guidance to be sure we are all staying safe and healthy at TA.

Masks: All Taos Academy students and staff will wear masks when in indoor spaces and instructional areas. No masks will be required during outdoor activities (recess, walking, breaks, outdoor lunch, PE, etc).

Entry Protocols: As students and staff come onto campus each morning, they will be asked to do a temperature check at our entry kiosks. Any student with an elevated temperature over 99.9 degrees will be sent home immediately.

Distancing: TA students and staff will be asked to maintain social distancing of at least an arm’s length away.

Other: There will be hand sanitizing stations in each classroom.

Below is a list of our staff for the 2021-22 school year. We welcome new staff members in joining the TA team. All staff members at Taos Academy have been actively working on curriculum, new schedules & exciting new classes. We look forward to offering another year of innovative, engaging learning environments for all our students.

Administration

Dr. Traci Filiss – Executive Director/Superintendent
Elizabeth LeBlanc - Director of Teaching and Learning/Principal
Amy Lucero - Administrative Secretary/Registrar/GO TO
Michelle DeHerrera - Administrative Assistant/Registrar
Cruz Duran - STEM Secretary/Nurse assistant

Pamela Rodriguez– Assistant Business Manager
Jose Espinoza – Maintenance/ Facility Manager
Kenneth Shannon–Technology Administrator
Warren Kelly- Dean of Students (Restorative Practices) / Testing Support / ELD Coordinator
Jamie Lucero-Martinez –STEM & Community Coordinator/District Testing Coordinator/Events
Coordinator/ Parent Advisory/Equity Council

Special Education

Jeanette Henshaw - Special Education Coordinator
Jourdan VanCulin - HS/MS Special Education Teacher, HS SpeEd Case Manager, MS Plus/SSL
Patricia Kravitz - MS Special Ed Teacher & Case Manager, PE & Health Teacher, Sports Coordinator
[Karin Moulton](#)- Gifted Teacher
Sally Blair- CALT, Academic Special Education Student Support,

Early College High School/College Link

Kelci Pike - Early College HS Coordinator/UNM Liaison; 21st Century Teacher
Erica Olson-Hensley - College Link Advisor
Robin Shawver – College Link Advisor

21st Century and Academic Support Teachers:

Miguel Santistevan - 21st Century Teacher > Sustainable Leadership and Media / CTE
Lee Shawver - 21st Century Teacher > SmartLab / CTE
Patti Kravitz - 21st Century Teacher > PE, Health and Wellness
Billy Pepper - 21st Century Teacher > PE, Health and Wellness
Tim Martinson - Math support teacher
Gayle Densow - Literacy support teacher
Megan Jenkins - Student success lab support teacher
Giovanna Paponetti - Student success lab support teacher

Academic Advisors:

Julian Cisneros - Advisor / Math Enrichment Teacher
Lisa Joseph - Advisor / ELA Enrichment Teacher/ MS Plus Coordinator
Estelle Laure - Advisor / ELA Enrichment Teacher
Tami Martinson – Advisor / Rosetta Stone Coordinator / MS Edge Curriculum Coordinator
Patricia Meagher - Advisor / ELA Enrichment Teacher
Billy Pepper - Advisor / Math Enrichment / Health & PE Teacher
Cal van Willigen - Advisor / Math Enrichment Teacher / E-Sports Coordinator
Jason Weisfeld – Advisor / Math/Science Enrichment Teacher/Internship & Work Study Coordinator
Leo DeGeest - Math Specialist
All teachers may be reached via email using first initial and last name@taosacademy.org - for example:
alucero@taosacademy.org



READ CAREFULLY

Parking Lot Flow & Safety Rules

HINT: Traffic is low at 7:50 or 4:10. Come after 4:00 if you prefer not to wait in line! Otherwise please follow the processes below:

REMEMBER: 7:45 to 8:00 Drop Off & 4:00 to 4:15 Pick Up in designated section only. All traffic is one way and enters through the west and exits through the east.

Drop off - Students 1st period class:

- **MAIN BUILDING:** turn left into the front drive along the sidewalk only. Pull down to the end space along the sidewalk. Students may not walk across parking lots. No parking in front lanes.
- **STEM & MULTI PURPOSE GYM:** Stay straight to the back of the main building and drop off along the turf. Pull to the end of the turf.
- **SSL:** Stay straight to the back of the main building and drop off along the sidewalk on the left.

Pick Up-

- **5th and 6th in the back by STEM building along the turf.** Stay straight and continue to the back of the building. Stay to the right. Pull up to cones at the end of the turf.
- **7th front of main building** - Pull forward into the farthest space along the sidewalk and wait in car for students. No parking in the front of the building.
- **8th in the back of Main building** –Stay straight and continue to the back of the building. Stay to the left. Pull up to cones past the safe areas.
- **9th grade front of main building** - Pull forward into the farthest space along the sidewalk and wait in car for students. No parking in the front of the building.
- **10th, 11th, 12th** - Stay straight and continue to the back of the building to the end of the sidewalk.
- **STEM:** Stay straight and continue to the back of the building. Stay to the right and pick up along the turf. Pull up to cones.

Parking: All visitors masked indoors.

- Stay straight or turn right (west) into visitor parking. First day overflow and special events parking to the south and east of the building.
- **Safe Zones** are marked with orange/yellow cones for students to wait for their parents. Students must be dropped off or picked up along the sidewalk or turf (safe area) ONLY. Move to the end of the sidewalk to allow others in behind you. Students may not cross the parking lot for any reason. Traffic is one way, the outside lane is for flow only.
- Students may not cross the parking lot for any reason during drop off or pick up times.
- Student walkers/bike riders will be released at 4:10 to avoid conflict with traffic.
- HS students may park on the East side of the school with appropriate paperwork addressed in policy.
- **All students leaving early must be signed out by their parents**

New Family ORIENTATION:

Friday, August 13th 9:00 to 1:00 - On Campus

All new students and families are asked to attend this very important orientation and training session.

TA Fall Semester: Starting Dates and Times

HIGH SCHOOL ORIENTATION (including College Link):

Monday, August 16th – Thursday, August 19th

Monday 8/16 & Tuesday 8/17 - School starts at 8am and concludes at 4pm for all TA High School students this week. Students will participate in orientation activities, get started in their coursework, check their Next Step Plans, and meet their fellow students and teachers.

College Link students will meet their CL advisers, be set up in Edgenuity classes, create their schedules, and register for all UNM classes.

HS LEADERSHIP DAYS

These are required school days - as we stated earlier, Taos Academy is built on relationships and these trips offer students and teachers the chance to learn and get to know one another outside of the school environment. Parents and/or students are responsible for transportation and lunch. **All trips require a permission slip signed by a parent or guardian.** Permission slips and gear lists are linked below and hard copies are available at the front office.. link

Wednesday 8/18 - High School Leadership Days

- **Grades 9 AND 10** will be participating in the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps Challenge Course and on-campus team building activities. (8:00 am - 3:00 pm, drop-off and pick-up at Taos Academy Campus) **BRING WATER & LUNCH.**
 - [Permission Slip Link Here](#)
 - [Gear List link here.](#)
- **Grade 11** will meet at 9:00 am at the Rio Grande Visitor's Center in Pilar for rafting the Rio Grande with Los Rios River Runners. Pick up time is at 1:30 at the same place. **Parents and/or students will be responsible for transportation to and from Pilar - BRING LUNCH - lunch is not provided.**
 - [Permission Slip link here](#)
 - [Directions and Gear List links here](#)
- **Grade 12** will be engaging in individual advisory meetings at Taos Academy from 8-4 to get set up in Edge classes, set weekly schedules and complete UNM registrations as needed. Students are also encouraged to work on Edgenuity course work from home.



Thursday 8/19 - High School Leadership Days

- **Grade 12** will meet at 9:00 am at the Rio Grande Visitor's Center in Pilar for rafting the Rio Grande with Los Rios River Runners. Pick up time is at 1:30 at the same place. **Parents and/or students will be responsible for transportation to and from Pilar - BRING LUNCH - lunch is not provided.**
 - [Permission Slip link here](#)
 - [Directions and Gear List links here](#)



- **Grades 9, 10 and 11** will be engaging in individual advisory meetings at Taos Academy from 8-4 to get set up in Edge classes, set weekly schedules and complete UNM registrations as needed. Students are also encouraged to work on Edgenuity course work from home.

Friday 8/20: No School - work on Edgenuity from home!

Monday 8/23 – Thursday 8/27 – High School students will NOT be attending TA campus this week. However, they are required to stay current with their pacing calendar for all digital coursework in Edgenuity. Students are encouraged to attend the **Student Success Lab** at Taos Academy Monday through Thursday from 8-12. The assignment calendar will be in effect during this time.

COLLEGE LINK and DUAL CREDIT: *UNM classes begin the week of August 23*, and all College Link and Friday Early College Program students are required to attend their college classes beginning this week. College Link students who have printed their UNM schedules and attended their first class can come to TA beginning August 19 to order UNM textbooks or if they have questions regarding their UNM classes.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ORIENTATION: **Monday, August 23rd – Thursday August 26th**

Monday 8/23 - School starts at 8am and concludes at 4pm for Middle School Students only this week. Students will participate in orientation activities, meet their fellow students, and begin coursework.

Tuesday 8/24 - School starts at 8am and concludes at 4pm for Middle School Students only this week. Students will participate in orientation activities, meet their fellow students, and begin coursework.

MS LEADERSHIP DAYS

Wednesday and Thursday 8/25- 8/26 - Proposed local hiking site Orilla Verde Recreation Area.

Each family is responsible for their own transportation (pick up and drop off).

Directions: 16 miles south of Taos on State Highway 68, turn right onto New Mexico 570 at the Rio Grande Gorge Visitors Center. Continue down the road to both Rio Bravo and Taos Junction Campsites which will both be on the left side of the road.

The schedule is as follows:



- **Wednesday, August 25**
 - **5th & 6th grade-** students work from home on Edgenuity
 - **7th & 8th grade: Cisneros and Meagher's Advisories-** Students meet at **Rio Bravo Campground** Group Shelter in Pilar **from 11:00am to 5:00pm** for hiking and team building activities. From 5:00 pm to 7:00pm we invite all parents to join us for a potluck dinner. We will be providing a spaghetti dinner. Cisneros' advisory please bring side dishes and salads. Meagher's advisories please bring desserts and beverages.
 - Students bring sack lunch, decent hiking shoes, rain gear, warm layers, sun hat, sunscreen, and plenty of water!
 - **7th & 8th grade: Weisfeld and Pepper's Advisories-** Students meet at **Taos Junction Campground** Group Shelter in Pilar **from 11:00am to 5:00pm** for hiking and team building activities. From 5:00 pm to 7:00pm we invite all parents to join us for a potluck dinner. We will be providing a spaghetti dinner. Weisfeld's advisory please bring side dishes and salads. Pepper's advisories please bring desserts and beverages.
 - Students bring sack lunch, decent hiking shoes, rain gear, warm layers, sun hat, sunscreen, and plenty of water!
- **Thursday, August 26**
 - **7/8th grade** students work from home on Edgenuity
 - **5th and 6th grade - Van Willigen and Joseph's Advisories -** Students meet at **Rio Bravo Campground** Group Shelter in Pilar **from 11:00am to 5:00pm** for hiking and team building activities. From 5:00 pm to 7:00pm we invite all parents to join us for a potluck dinner. We will be providing a spaghetti dinner. Van Willigen's advisory please bring side dishes and salads. Joseph's advisory please bring desserts and beverages.
 - Students bring sack lunch, decent hiking shoes, rain gear, warm layers, sun hat, sunscreen, and plenty of water!
- **Friday, August 27: No School**

ALL STUDENTS:

Beginning the week of August 30th, ALL students will attend TA on their regularly scheduled days. Middle school students attend campus on Monday and Wednesday from 8-4; high school students attend Tuesday and Thursday (8-4). College Link lab times will be scheduled around their UNM class schedule.

***** Looking ahead, September 6th is Labor Day and the school is closed. During this week only, Mid School Students will attend Wednesday (9/8) and Friday (9/10).**



What to bring and expect for the first day:

Just bring YOU! Preferably on time and ready to rock! The school day begins at **8:00am** and concludes at 4:00pm. Students are required to be **in the building at 8:00am** or they will be marked tardy. **Please do not drop students off before 7:45.** See below for further parking lot flow requirements.

In addition, please be sure to bring school supplies, WATER BOTTLE (labeled with the student's name), earbuds, lunch, snack, and the **SIGNED STUDENT HANDBOOK (last page only)**. For the first day, students are asked to bring all personal items in their backpacks and meet in the Gym in the MultiPurpose Building at 8:00. Masks are used inside.

Our first week of school is dedicated to testing, placement and orientation to the systems and operations of Taos Academy. Students will rotate throughout the day between testing, discussions and activities. Lunch will be from 12:00 to 1:00. The discussion will focus on the handbook and general operations of the school. Safety, organization and responsibility are key topics of discussion to ensure a positive learning environment. Students will begin their Edgenuity coursework during orientation week.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Student Success Lab will be offered for our high schoolers from 8-12 Monday through Thursday, starting August 23th. Please take advantage of our open computer lab staffed with tutors and get your Edge on! This is a great opportunity to get a jump start on the academic year. After August 30th, 2021, SSL will only be offered Mondays and Wednesdays from 8-12. Middle school students are encouraged to take advantage of our MidPlus Enrichment Program.

Friday Virtual Homework Hotline will be offered from 8-12 starting Friday, September 17th.

Student Success Planning:

All students with a GPA of lower than 2.0, credit recovery, a failure in more than two core academic classes in the prior semester and/or not meeting proficiency in any academic area, will be put on a Student Success Plan. Students and families will work with the advisor to create a plan for increased student achievement and success here at TA. This may include required attendance at SSL or MS+, Friday Virtual Homework Hotline, and/or additional STEM class attendance to boost engagement and student skills.

At the 9 week mark, an appropriate placement meeting will be scheduled by the advisor with the parent, student, curriculum coordinator and director to discuss success at TA and continued enrollment.



Special Education Students: Please contact Jeanette Henshaw to ensure we have a current IEP & Evaluation paperwork for your child. As these materials are received, we will be developing a Transfer IEP and contacting you to set up the meeting. Any questions, concerns or to set up a meeting prior to the Transfer IEP please contact Jeanette Henshaw. Thank you for your support & welcome to Taos Academy! The Special Education team looks forward to working with you and your child! With thanks (your Special Education Team),
Jeanette Henshaw, Patti Kravitz, Jourdan VanCulin, & Sally Blair
Please contact Jeanette Henshaw for more info: 575-751-3109 x 104
jhenshaw@taosacademy.org.

**Introducing
TA FLEX Academy!!!**

Virtual courses and programming designed for each student and family.

For more information, contact the school or visit our website at taosacademy.org.

110 Paseo del Cañon West, Taos, NM 87571
Phone: 575-751-3109 | Fax: 575-751-3394

New in SY21-22! Taos Academy is offering a totally virtual model, called FLEX Academy. Students and parents who are interested in this flexible learning option can contact Ms. Elizabeth LeBlanc at eleblanc@taosacademy.org to learn more.

MS+

The **MS Plus enrichment program** is offered from 8-4 Tuesdays and Thursdays starting August 31st for **grades 5-8**. Attendance is voluntary and not bound to an 8:00 am arrival UNLESS a student is on a Student Success Lab contract. There are fees associated with some of the voluntary scheduled activities

and field trips - these will be communicated in advance to students. Alternative activities will be provided for those not attending.

TA staff and community volunteers provide a program based on the needs of participating students. Program components include an incentive program that rewards students for meeting behavioral and academic goals, field trips, support for student coursework, anti-bullying workshops, and collaboratively developed activities that provide a rich environment for students to interact with each other and staff. Parents are encouraged to contact Ms. Joseph at ljoseph@taosacademy.org with questions about the Middle School Plus enrichment program. We welcome your ideas and support.



MS STEM+Art Institute classes are for 7 weeks and will begin the week of August 31st. Classes will be announced at orientation, August 18th and will be first come first serve with a \$10 materials fee required at signup. Please contact Jamie Lucero-Martinez jlucero-martinez@taosacademy.org for more information.

HS STEM+Art Institute classes are for a full semester and will begin the week of August 30th. Classes will be announced on August 18th and will be first come first serve with a \$20 materials fee required at signup.

Scholarships are available for students. Please email Karin Moulton kmoulton@taosacademy.org expressing your need.



NEW: All HS students will receive an invitation to the Internship Google Classroom. If you are new to TA, email Mr. J Weisfeld to request an invite to the classroom. All forms and information will be done in this classroom and are editable. In order to begin an internship, each student **MUST** accept the invite and submit all digital forms to this classroom. No more paper forms please!

Past, pending internships will be added to the Internship Classroom.

Taos Academy's Internship Program gives elective credit to high school students who are volunteering in the community, participating in a sports program, or gaining job experience. In order to receive credit, students must have the business or organization they are working with fill out these three forms and documentation or hours:

1. "Memorandum of Understanding"
2. "Internship Responsibilities"
3. Fall and Spring progress reports (2 per semester) **New**** a supervisor-signature and total hours have been added to the progress report. Students no longer have to provide this on a separate piece of paper.**

The first two forms are due within the first few weeks of each semester to the Internship Program Coordinator, Jason Weisfeld and will be submitted to the Internship Classroom. The forms are available in the Internship Google Classroom in Doc format. The Internship Handbook can be found on the TA website.

The "Memorandum of Understanding" is signed by TA's director and by the business at which the student is interning. This document is an agreement between the school and the business and it protects the business while students are participating in the internship.

The "Internship Agreement" is a form that details the volunteer, sports, or job opportunity. It must be signed by the student, mentor, coach or job supervisor, the coordinator of the TA Internship Program, the parent, and TA's director.

The Progress Reports are dated and must be completed by the supervising party-2 for each semester of internship credit and must include a supervisor signature (digital signatures and initials ok during Covid) and total hours to date.

All parties must provide their contact information for the form to be considered complete.

Internship credit can be given for work and volunteer activities for High School students. Paperwork is required and is available with Jason Wiesfeld's internship Google Classroom. A .5 credit requires 100 hours and a full (1) credit requires 200 hours.

If a form is missing or incomplete, a student will not receive credit for their internship. Contact Mr. Weisfeld at jweisfeld@taosacademy.org if you have any questions.



College Link students are required to attend school August 16-17. Leadership trips are on August 18th for Juniors and August 19th for seniors and attendance is mandatory. New students are required to attend the New Student Orientation on Friday, August 13th - there will be a presentation on College Link and Dual Credit at the orientation. CL students are also required to schedule additional 1:1 advisory meetings as needed on Wednesday, August 18th and Thursday, August 19th to complete their obligations for UNM registration, TA course set-up, and weekly schedule sign-up with their advisers.

- **Juniors and Seniors** – UNM applications will be filled out Monday, August 16th. The completed application with parent signature is due the next morning, Tuesday August 17th. We want CL students to get into their chosen classes. **College Link students need to go to UNM and take the ACCUPLACER exam before August 16th.** Please bring the results to TA on the first day of school. Students may not register for UNM Math or English classes until this exam is successfully completed. This placement test determines your placement in ENGLISH COMP and MATH classes at UNM.
- **UNM Classes begin the week of August 23th. UNM textbooks will be ordered this week. Please make an appointment with Ms. Pike to order textbooks.**



TECHnology Update:

Welcome back from the TACS TECH Team! As we begin the year, we all need to get back in the habit of success. One important aspect of success at TACS is regularly checking your school email. Remember, we are your technology support for your Google Accounts. If you need your password reset, contact the following staff members for assistance via email or calling the school:

Amy Lucero
Cruz Duran
Kenneth Shannon

alucero@taosacademy.org
cduran@taosacademy.org
kshannon@taosacademy.org

If you are meeting with your student's advisor, they can also reset parent passwords.

On August 9th, we will hold our yearly parent success training. Mostly new parents and students attend the session but we cover material which is important for all returning community members. Attached is a refresher guide for logging into your TACS Gmail. See link below.

Logging into TACS Gmail

Finally, I want to remind everyone we have a limited supply of loaner computers available. We check out loaners every semester and we are thrilled to have the ability to provide excess computers for students to work on at home. Please, contact [Kenneth Shannon](mailto:kshannon@taosacademy.org) directly to check out a loaner for the current semester. If you have old devices at home, please consider donating them to TACS. If possible, we will refurbish the computer as a loaner for our students. If not, we will ensure the device is recycled properly.

E-Sports

If you are interested in joining our esports program for the 2021-2022 School Year contact Cal van Willigen (cvanwilligen@taosacademy.org) directly by email! Keep an eye out for more general info to come!

GET INVOLVED!

Parent Advisory/Equity Council

Parents interested in joining the parent advisory council are invited to attend an initial meeting on Tuesday, August 31st at 5:30.

If you have any questions feel free to call or email the contacts below:

Amy Lucero - Administrative Secretary: 751-3109

alucero@taosacademy.org

Jamie Lucero-Martinez - Community Coordinator - jlucero-martinez@taosacademy.org



WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!! Look forward to seeing you all!!



8/13- New Student/Parent Success Training from 9 am - 1 pm

8/09- Governing Council Meeting 5:30

8/16 -8/17 – High school students in grades 9 through 12 attend TA campus for orientation and leadership activities. College Link students are required to attend.

8/23 - 8/24 – Middle School students in grades 5-8 attend TA campus for orientation and leadership activities.

8/30 - STEM Arts begins

8/30 - MS Plus begins

8/31 - Parent advisory/Equity Council meeting 5:30-7:00.



9/6 – Labor Day - No School

9/10 - School Day for Middle School Students

9/13 - Governing Council Meeting 5:30

9/24 - Teacher In Service - No School/No SSL

9/28 - Parent Advisory

9/30 -San Geronimo Cultural Awareness Day (school day for HS)

If you have any questions feel free to call or email the contacts below:

Amy Lucero alucero@taosacademy.org 751-3109

Michelle DeHerrera mdeherrera@taosacademy.org 751-3109