



Welcome back, TA Community - We hope that everyone had a restful, gratitude-filled Fall Break! We are approaching the end of the first semester and the TA teachers and staff would like to say CONGRATS to our students for their hard work. As our students are completing their classes, please remember to take some time to celebrate your accomplishments as a family. As our mission states, we are a community of learners and it takes this entire community (including parents, students, teachers, and advisors) to support an environment for excellence in learning. THANK YOU ALL!!!

THANKS
FOR
BEING
AWESOME



STEM Arts Theatre Performances

On Wednesday, **December 6th, 2023**, Taos Academy STEM+Arts presents "The Nutcracker in a Flash" and "The Wonderful World of Romance." Doors open at 5 pm and performances begin at 5:30 pm in the Main Cafeteria.

Celebration of Learning:

Friday, December 8th, 2023 4:30-6:30 pm. Taos Academy will be hosting our Celebration of Learning evening. Please join us to celebrate our students' hard work in an evening filled with food, music and displays of student projects. This is also a great time to talk with teachers about upcoming school activities, assignments and final exams.



FINAL EXAMS: As a reminder, all final exams must be taken here on the TA campus in our proctored setting. Students should be working over these next few weeks to make sure that they have:

- complete notes for all classes
- 100% of coursework up to the final completed
- ALL projects, lab reports, essays, and performance tasks done

Your final exams will not be opened until all of the above is in place, so please plan ahead now! Final exams will be held here at TA on Monday, Tuesday, & Wednesday (December 18-20). Get ready for a strong finish!!!

WINTER ACTIVITY DAYS

Please review the option that best suits your needs and goals and let us know your choice by signing up [HERE](#) if you have not done so already.. As a reminder, these are required instructional days on our school calendar - and a super fun way to start the second semester!

1) **In-Town Option:** Wednesday, January 10 - Friday, January 12th from 8:00 am to 4 pm. Drop off and pick up is at Taos Academy each day. Join us for a rotation of skating and swimming at TYFC, bowling at Gutters, and fun and games at school (plus get ahead in your classes!). Please fill out the waiver below for the Town of Taos. Cost: \$7

2) **Fitness Option:** Wednesday, January 10 - Friday, January 12th from 8:00 am to 4 pm. Drop off and pick up is at High Altitude Health and Fitness each day. Students must be 14 or older and must sign up for a minimum of one class/day at HAHF. Please fill out the waiver below for HAHF. Cost: \$10

3) **Skiing/Snowboarding at TSV:** Monday, January 8 - Friday, January 12th. If you have a pass and gear, please simply show up and check in with our TA chaperones when you arrive, during the day, and before you leave. If you need a pass and gear, TSV's school program includes a lift ticket for each of the five days, rental gear, and a mandatory half-day lesson that students must commit to attending each day. Please fill out the needed forms and pay using this link [before](#) Dec. 15th: Cost: \$165.

You must register your child for the ski program via this JotForm link:

<https://form.jotform.com/taosnowsportsschool/TA-2024-SGP-SP>

(If you are applying for a scholarship, please first reach out to Ms. E or Miss Pike for a different registration link!)

4) **NEW THIS YEAR! Snowshoeing Club:** Wednesday, January 10 - Friday, January 12th from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at locations around our community, TBA as we get closer to the dates and depending on snow conditions. Pick-up and drop-off will be at the trailhead for each trip. Limit of 12 intrepid students! Equipment will be provided. Cost: Free.

5) **Free Ride Option:** If you already have a pass at any other ski area in our region, your own gear, and a responsible adult who will vouch for you, you can also ski or ride at the area of your choice for these three days. Send a picture of your pass to document these days!

*** **SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE FOR ALL ACTIVITIES** - please do not let financial concern get in the way of you and the activity you want to do! Just email Ms. E or Ms. Pike (eleblanc@taosacademy.org or kpike@taosacademy.org)



STEM+Arts Institute classes end December 8th, 2023. New classes will be announced January 15th and will begin January 22nd, 2024. There will be absolutely no registration prior to January 15th. Please join us for the showcase evening Friday, December 8th from 4:30-6:30 pm!



Special Education: Wow, this semester has flown by! All of our ancillary services will end this semester the week before finals on December 12th and will begin again the week after Winter Activities on January 15th. Goal Progress notes will be sent home in January with Fall Transcripts. If you have any questions or concerns or need extra support going into finals please reach out to us.

Have a great finish to your semester and a wonderful December break. Sincerely - Sarah Bradley and Jeanette Henshaw



**National Honor Society
and
National Junior Honor Society News**

The Taos Academy chapter of the National Honor Society has been meeting regularly this year. We will be participating in a very fun, merry event as we wind up this semester:

Saturday, December 2 - Town of Taos Yuletide Tree Lighting and Farolito lighting
Taos Plaza 3:30 - 7:00 pm

Members will be helping decorate the plaza, light the farolitos, and work with the town of Taos to kick off the Christmas season!



Student Advisory Council - The November blood drive was a success. 21 units were donated. Thank you to all who donated. Up next: Town of Taos Tree Lighting and Farolito Lighting on the Taos Plaza. Saturday, December 2, 2023 from 3:30 - 7:00 pm.

It is not too late to join the Student Council. Students may reach out to **Jamie Lucero-Martinez** or Melissa Montoya about participating. Next meeting is December 5th at 12p.m.



Most College Link students have met with Ms. Kelci Pike and Mrs. Meagher to go over their spring schedules, graduation requirements, and any other additional information they were looking for at this time.

All students taking dual credit courses need to submit their applications for the Spring 2024 semester **before December 15**. Both students and parents **MUST SIGN** the application forms as well as the UNM Contract and return them to us before the deadline. The first day of UNM classes is January 15th, 2024.

As we approach the end of this first semester, it is imperative that students (and parents) are aware of their academic status. **SENIORS** are nearing the end of their high school tunnel, so there's no wiggle room. Credits needed for graduation have to be in order and on target to be completed so that they graduate in May.

Please make sure to read your emails and note upcoming events like Cap and Gown orders, assessments, etc.

College and Career Planning Information

Seniors, please apply to colleges as soon as possible. Deadlines are coming up in December and January.

Reminder to ask for letters of recommendation ahead of time. Teachers and staff are happy to write letters for you but please give them as much time as possible and a minimum of 2 business days.

College Entrance Exams - The majority of colleges and scholarships do not require college entrance exams, however, we are seeing some as test optional. In order to take the exams you must register and pay on your own. Taos High School has testing sites for both ACT and SAT. NOTE: 11th graders will be required to take the SATs in the spring, this exam will be held at Taos Academy. Ms. Angelina Vialpando is available to help with registration and provide fee waivers for eligible students, stop by the counseling office or email avialpando@taosacademy.org



Seniors, please apply to colleges as soon as possible. Once accepted you will have the opportunity to apply for scholarships at the specific colleges you are accepted to.

Complete the FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid –Most colleges and many scholarships require you to have completed the application. Filling out the application: Reach out to Angelina Vialpando if you need help with this application avialpando@taosacademy.org

School Counselor tip: Apply for 1-2 scholarships per month.

Visit the Scholarships page on the Taos Academy Website regularly as you will find the most up-to-date scholarship info: <https://www.taosacademy.org/Scholarships.aspx>



Families are invited to attend TA Community Council meetings to learn about our Community School, Parent Advisory, and Equity Council. You may attend in person or with the google meet. Training for parents is offered at the beginning of the meeting starting at 4:15 from TA teachers. Your children are welcome to attend with you. If they are students, they may participate in the meeting, work on Edgenuity, or use a computer for an educational game.

*** Starting in our January meeting we will offer STEAM-based education in collaboration with TWIRL for children ages 3-10 to participate in during the meeting. Please let me know if you would be interested in having your child attend these TWIRL activities while you attend our TA Community Council Meetings. Lisa Joseph, Community School Coordinator at ljoseph@taosacademy.org.

Look for the January 31st meeting agenda to be distributed before the meeting. Review the minutes from the last meeting at the end of this newsletter.



Check out this amazing [STEMARTS internship/apprenticeship opportunity](#) for girls (click the link for more info).



**OPEN CALL
APPRENTICESHIP FOR GIRLS
FROM NORTHERN NEW MEXICO**

Become part of the international STEMarts creative team and get paid to develop valuable workforce skills in art, science and technology.

DEADLINE TO APPLY:
December 15, 2023

PROGRAM PERIOD:
Jan 15- Dec 15, 2024

\$1000 STIPEND

AGES 14-19

**APPLY TO BE ONE
OF FIVE WINNERS**

APPLY @ www.stemarts.com

December progress reports are due December 7th and are to be turned in to the Internship Classroom in digital form. If students miss this date, they might not receive credit for this semester. Those of you that turned in your October Progress Report on time and turn in your December progress report on time, will receive an A.

If students are interested in starting an internship, they must meet with Mr. Weisfeld to see if they qualify. If they do, they will be invited to the internship classroom and will be given the required paperwork. In order to begin an internship, each student MUST accept the invite and complete the paper forms. Then the student will take photos or scan the complete forms that will be turned in to this classroom as PDF assignments. Paper forms will then be kept by students/families as a record. No paper forms will be turned in and no emailed forms will be accepted.

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.

its the most
DECEMBER
wonderful time of the year

- 12/08- Celebration of Learning**
- 12/11- Governing Council**
- 12/13- 12/20 Finals Week**
- 12/21 - Teacher In-Service (No School)**
- 12/21 - 01/10 Winter Break**



- 1/08-1/9 - Teacher in Service (No School)
- 1/08 – Governing Council Meeting
- 1/10-1/12 -Winter Activities (1/08 - 1/12 for TSV participants)
- 1/15 In-School MLK Day Observance
- 1/31 – Parent Advisory/Equity Council Meeting

If you have any questions feel free to call or

email: Amy Lucero –Admin. Secretary: 751-3109 alucero@taosacademy.org

TA Community Council MEETING 4:15-5:30

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

Taos Academy: On Campus and Virtual

110 Paseo Del Canon West Taos, NM

575-751-3109

Taos Academy Community Council Meetings are held the fourth Wednesday of each month. The TA Community Council is a forum for community input, parent voice and family participation. The mission of the committee is to help move the organization forward with strategic planning, quality assurance, and family service. Please review the norms, roles and agenda to further understand the structure of the meeting.

Thank you for your partnership!

[Join with Google Meet](#)

meet.google.com/mqi-rcyk-hug

[Join by phone](#)

(US) +1 470-241-4954 PIN: 422 662 315#

Meeting Norms: Respect time, come with solutions, win-win, champion a committee and help spread information and resources to students and families.

- **Community Schools goals**- Increase collaboration with our community partners.
- **Parent Advisory goals** - Parents sharing ideas and concerns, championing a committee, finding a place in the school where you can contribute, encouraging other parents to participate.
- **Equity Council goals** - Bridging the gap for servicing subgroups and the needs for equity in educational opportunities. Cultural responsiveness is part of the process for this group and working on a positive school culture.

TA Community Council Meeting Info:

Meeting Agenda:

4:15 Attendance - Lisa Joseph, Elizabeth LeBlanc, Jamie Lucero-Martinez, Nicole Sanchez-Pacheco, Antonette Sanchez,, Jason Weisfeld , Ben Mortensen, Billy Pepper , April Deherrera, Dorota Whitney, Tom Duke, Tami Martinson, Mark Richert, Gwen Thibedeau, Melissa Montoya, Grace Burden(Student), Ty Burden, Samantha Gonzales(GC), Michelle Cho

4:15-5:30 Discussion items:

- **Community Schools:** Review of Key Practice 3 and presentations from our Community Partner Taos Education Collaborative and Outdoor Education SWIFT
 - For upcoming meetings: childcare and STEM activities presented by our partners at Twirl and will be available for meetings starting in January at ljoseph@taosacademy.org
 - Taos Education Collaborative - The TEC is an area nonprofit whose mission is to connect ALL Taos students to positive, enriching out-of-school time activities; their Community Connector is Julia Okanee and her role is to support students and families in connecting with the activities and resources in our community. There is also an Activities Fund to help offset costs for families in need. Her contact information is julia@taosedcollab.org and we will share this resource out with TA families and in our December newsletter.
 - Recharter Meeting on December 12th at 9:30 AM in Santa Fe at Mabry Hall - please contact Ms. E at eleblanc@taosacademy.org or Ms. Lisa Joseph for more details if you would like to attend or represent on behalf of the school (you may have the opportunity to speak about why TA works for your family and child, but you are not obligated to do so!)
- **Parent Advisory:** Outdoor Ed SWIFT - to discuss winter activities days and this part of our school
- Winter Activity Days:
 - 1) TSV Skiing/Snowboarding: Monday, January 8 - Friday, January 12th.** TA teachers will be onsite at 8 am til 4 pm. If you have a pass and gear, please simply show up and check in with our TA chaperones when you arrive, at least once during the day, and before you leave. The first day, there will be a safety talk with the TSV ski patrol. Reminder that TFK's only takes credit cards, so bring a lunch, snacks, and/or cash for Bumps or other area options. Sunscreen and hydrate:)
Drop Off and Pick Up will be at the shuttle drop off near the ice skating rink - remember you MUST check out with a TA teacher before leaving the mountain!
***If you do NOT have a TSV pass or gear, the school program includes 5 days of lift tickets with lessons and rental gear. Please register your child at the JotForm below. Cost: \$165.
 - 2) In Town Program for Middle Schoolers: Wednesday, January 10 - Friday January 12th from 8:00 am to 4 pm.** Drop off and pick up is here at Taos Academy each day - students will have a fun day at TA on Wednesday, will walk to Gutters for bowling on Thursday, and to TYFC for skating AND swimming on Friday. Students will leave the activity at 3:30 for the walk back to school, so please plan any early pickups before that time and remember you MUST come in and get your child and check out with a TA teacher. Cost: \$5/game for Gutters, \$2 for TYFC
 - 3) In Town Schedule for High Schoolers: Wednesday, January 10 - Friday January 12th from 8:00 am to 4 pm.** Drop off and pick up is here at Taos Academy each day - students will walk to Gutters for bowling on Wednesday, and to TYFC for skating AND swimming on Thursday. Friday is a Fun Day at TA. Students will leave each activity at 3:30 for the walk back to school, so please plan any early pickups before that time and remember you MUST check out with a TA teacher before leaving. Cost: \$5/game for Gutters, \$2 for TYFC

4) Fitness Option at High Altitude Health and Fitness: Wednesday, January 10 - Friday January 12th, open and staffed by TA teachers from 8:00 am to 4 pm. Pick a class and workout time and remember to check in and out with TA teachers as you enter and leave. Cost: \$10. Age minimum of 14 years and up.

5) NEW! Snowshoeing Club ❄️ Wednesday, January 10 - Friday January 12th, times and location TBA. Explore new areas in and around Taos with our intrepid TA teachers, have fun, and learn a new skill all at the same time. All levels welcome!

6) Free Ride Option: On your own!! Just remember to send a picture of your pass to document these days.

- STEM Director's Report
 - Celebration of Learning December 8th, 2023 - 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm. Music, food, Capstone presentations, 21st Century projects on display - come celebrate our students' successes.
 - Theatre Performance December 6th, 2023 5 pm.
 - Quarter 3 and Semester 2 STEM registration and start dates
 - Classes end on the 8th with the final performances
 - Registration opens on the 15th of January - there are limited spaces!
 - HS begins on January 22nd and MS begins on January 23rd
 - Scholarships are available!
- **Equity Council:**
 - Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Framework Inventory Discussion
 - How is our mission validating and affirming the culture and language of our underserved students and communities? Bilingual Seal!-Cultural language connection. Presentations from professionals in the community.
 - Do we have mission/vision-driven outcomes for our underserved student populations and all students to become holistically healthy, secure in their identity, and grounded in their community values?
 - What does success look like? Ethical, responsible, inclusive, personal fulfillment, student input, idea of open clubs: diversity, equity, CTE classes, STEM classes, student led conferences. Trained stewards of the land: Green Leadership class is how this is addressed. CPR/ Medical field opportunities- Nurse April, Internship opportunities- out in the community. Grow your own teacher program- TA has hired graduates as instructional assistants and Tech. Early College High School opportunities- Free College. Nutrition lessons? Where are they offered?
 - **Next Meeting Agenda Items**

TA Community Council MEETING 4:15-5:30

Wednesday, January 31, 2023

- Food and child care may be available. More to come.

-Review of Key Practice 4: Rigorous and Community Connected classroom instruction through Professional Development SWIFT presentation

Community Schools

Lisa Joseph -Community School Coordinator
SBLT/CS SWIFT Representative-rotational
Presentation on one of the Six Key Practices
Community Partner Collaboration report

Parent Advisory

All TA community welcome

Equity Council

Traci Filiss Executive Director
Jamie Lucero-Martinez - Program Lead
Cruz Duran,- Multilingual Learning,
Tami Martinson - Economically Disadvantaged
Elizabeth LeBlanc - Disabilities Tanya Martinez-Gurule
Other needs - student representation by HS SAC Rep. - Angel Valencia

Focusing Questions:

- Are we aware of the ways in which our equity lens is impacted by our individual, institutional, and systemic biases?
- Does the work resulting from our equity lens foster improvement at all of the following levels: individual, institutional and systemic?
- Do we have structures in place to ensure that the work resulting from the equity lens is collaborative and transparent across the institution?