



News Release

CONTACT: David Moore, 505.667.7251, david.moore@lanl.gov

New initiative to boost teacher, student success in Pojoaque

Los Alamos National Laboratory, Pojoaque Valley School District and New Mexico Highlands University collaborate on innovative teacher education program

LOS ALAMOS, N.M., September 27, 2018—Los Alamos National Laboratory, Pojoaque Valley School District and New Mexico Highlands University officially launched the region’s first professional development school at a PVSD board meeting September 26.

“The value of education and the critical role it plays in the future success of both Northern New Mexico and Los Alamos National Laboratory cannot be overstated,” said Terry C. Wallace, Jr., the Laboratory’s director. “Given this, we’re very excited to collaborate with our K-12 and higher education partners to bring a new approach to teacher professional development to Northern New Mexico. By helping to support our educators, we also support our students—and we all benefit.”

The goal of the Regional Partnership School (RPS) is to combine Pojoaque Valley Schools, Laboratory, and Highlands expertise and resources to support improved teaching and learning (particularly in the crucial grades 4-8), leading to better outcomes for teachers and students. It is also intended to be a model of innovation for New Mexico educators and policy makers.

The RPS will be the first program in the state that strategically combines a school district, a university teacher education program and a major employer. Four education specialists from the Laboratory will be supporting the initiative, which is being implemented across PVSD's existing intermediate school, sixth grade academy and middle school.

"I'm delighted Pojoaque can be a part of this innovative development," said Jon Paul Romero, president of the PVSD Board of Education. "Our students deserve this."

The partners have spent the last year developing a plan which coordinates professional development for current in-service teachers and pre-service teachers from NMHU's School of Education, giving future teachers, current teachers and education leaders the opportunity to continuously improve their craft.

Implementation of the plan starts this school year, with the five-year program following the professional development school approach that has enjoyed success across the country. In this model a school becomes a center of excellence in teacher development in much the same way as a teaching hospital fosters the development of doctors and medical research.

"New Mexico Highlands University is proud to be the higher education institution partner for the Regional Partnership School," said Sam Minner, president of New Mexico Highlands University. "The opportunity to work with the Pojoaque Valley School District and Los Alamos National Laboratory to enhance the education of pre-service and in-service teachers in a school setting will ensure that our teachers are prepared to go into classrooms ready to meet the needs of students."

About Los Alamos National Laboratory (www.lanl.gov)

Los Alamos National Laboratory, a multidisciplinary research institution engaged in strategic science on behalf of national security, is operated by Los Alamos National Security, LLC, a team composed of Bechtel National, the University of California, BWXT Government Group, and URS, an AECOM company, for the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration.

Los Alamos enhances national security by ensuring the safety and reliability of the U.S. nuclear stockpile, developing technologies to reduce threats from weapons of mass destruction, and solving problems related to energy, environment, infrastructure, health, and global security concerns.

About Pojoaque Valley School District

Pojoaque Valley Public Schools is situated in a valley just north of Santa Fe between the backdrops of the Jemez Mountains (to the west) and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains (to the east). Pojoaque Valley Schools serves the Pojoaque Valley and the communities of Nambé, Jaconita, Tesuque, El Rancho, Arroyo Seco, and San Ildefonso. The district has one high school, one middle school, one intermediate school, one sixth grade academy and one elementary. Pojoaque Valley Schools is a collection of communities near the Pojoaque Pueblo with people from various ethnic backgrounds. The Pojoaque Valley School District (PVSD) serves approximately 2,000 students including students from the Pueblos of Nambe, Pojoaque, Ohkay Owingeh, San Ildefonso, Santa Clara, and Tesuque.

About New Mexico Highlands University

For 125 years, New Mexico Highlands University has provided opportunities, advancement, and fulfilled dreams for generations of students from across New Mexico and the globe through programs in the arts, sciences, business, education and social work at its locations in Las Vegas, Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Santa Fe and Farmington.