**I am New Mexico Public Schools!**

**Campaign Tip Sheet**

A simple four-step formula to successful school public relations is:

1. Do a good job!

2. Do a good job!

3. Do a good job!

4. Tell everyone about it.

Public schools across New Mexico and the nation are doing great things each and every day. It is more important than ever that we tell our story.

The New Mexico School Boards Association is providing its members resources to encourage them to share their success where ever and when ever they can.

This tip sheet offers ideas to use when sharing your message with parents, civic groups, community leaders and our own staff.

**I am New Mexico Public Schools Campaign Video**

Each school district superintendent received a copy of the seven-and one half-minute video. It is posted on the NMSBA website at http://nmsba.org where it can be viewed and downloaded.

• The video can be posted on your district Web sites, or simply linked to NMSBA’s page.

• Show the video when ever and where ever you can. For example, chamber of commerce meetings, rotary meetings, before the board meeting, before district professional development sessions, before sporting or academic events or awards ceremonies, and on the local public access TV station are just a few potential opportunities to showcase public schools.

• Schools can customize the video’s script and produce their own version to be shown in the community, in schools or posted on district Web sites.

• Create 30- to 60-second spots with students, teachers and other staff using the theme of the NMSBA video and display them in schools or post on the Internet.

• Other suggested uses include: broadcasting on public access cable channels; play before board meetings, training sessions and staff meetings; send a link to students and parents.

**Welcome centers**

Create a welcome center in each school building to showcase the accomplishments of students and staff.

• Play the NMSBA video or a district-produced version.

• Create a display to brag about students and staff.

• Showcase student art.

• Feature prominent school alumni.

**Send home good news**

To reinforce a positive message, send parents a monthly newsletter touting all the achievements of students and staff. Focus on the positive, catch students being good and tell your school community.

**Proud Products of New Mexico Public Schools**

As part of the campaign we encourage districts to highlight successful public school graduates on your district website. Nominate an accomplished graduate for state recognition, then begin publicizing you own proud products of your schools. If you don’t have an alumni hall of fame, start one. Bring those grads back to schools to speak to students and invite the local media to cover the events. Have students write letters to the prominent alumni.

**Speakers’ bureau**

Train staff, parents and students to be spokespersons for the district. Use the sample speech from NMSBA to train people to be your district’s ambassadors. Contact area civic groups and offer to provide a speaker for a 15-minute program. Use the NMSBA or a district-produced video as the first half of the program and sample speech as the rest of the program. You have NMSBA’s permission to duplicate the DVD.

**Repetition is the key**

They say it takes hearing a message seven times in seven different ways to sink in. Just think of some of the great commercial advertising campaigns over the years. You remember the simple messages you heard over and over and over.

If you use the same tag line to start every message, the image will become ingrained in your community. For example, “I am New Mexico (or your) Public schools,” then introduce yourself and say something great about your school. Each accomplishment you mention is tied together with the opening tag line.