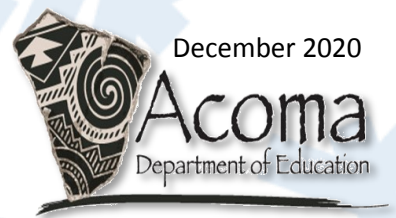


December Newsletter

December 2020



Gu'waa'dzi Hau'ba!

If any community member would like to receive the Acoma Department of Education newsletter, and be a part of our mailing list, or would like to nominate a student for our student spotlight section please contact the ADoE office at (505) 552-6077.

Greetings Everyone,

It's that time of the year again. Thanksgiving and Christmas time are when we can usually be with family and friends, but we are having to experience the season a lot differently this year due to COVID-19. I completely understand anyone who feels isolated and frustrated with not being able to see or hug a loved one but remember that it is each of our duty to keep ourselves and others safe. Please remember to wear your mask, avoid large gatherings with others not living with you, stay home, and wash your hands frequently. COVID-19 is taking over, but we can beat it by following executive orders and all of the recommended health guidelines.

Now, for some good news. We were able to fund several families through our Connectivity Relief Program. It was a difficult start to a new school year. Trying to get students and staff connected to the internet for virtual learning and instruction was a huge challenge, but it's getting a little smoother. Please call Leslie Vallo or Joanie Sanchez at 552-6077 for more information on jet packs or virtual learning needs.

The Haak'u Learning Center and Haak'u Community Academy currently have closed campuses. This means that only essential employees are onsite to make sure the buildings are secure, receiving shipments, and working on other important tasks. Teachers, administrative staff, and support staff are to be teaching remotely. We understand it may be difficult to not receive educational packets and meals but we are committed to doing our part in slowing the spread of COVID-19.

We recently completed the fourth Parent Community Forum. These are streaming live on Facebook and you can register to join us via Zoom. The Forums are intended for you, the community to ask questions, state concerns, and gather more information from our tribal schools and Grants Cibola County Schools. The more information you have, the better off you are in advocating for your child's education. Please join us for the next forum scheduled for December 17th. You can get more information by giving us a call. We are happy to help.

I want to encourage everyone to please consider joining us for the Acoma Board of Education (ABOE) Board Meetings and the Haak'u Community Academy (HCA) School Board Meetings that take place once a month. The ABOE meetings are the first Monday of the month, and the HCA School Board meetings are the third Monday of the month. Let us know if you plan to attend and we can send you a zoom link. We do not openly announce the zoom links for meetings due to the potential for hackers to gain access and infect our account.

We are moving into the end of the school semester and it is important to make sure your students have completed their work and are on time with submitting their homework. Daily attendance in your virtual classroom is a MUST. Parents, please make sure you have your child online for class and are making sure their work is being done. I understand that it is hard to keep on top of things when you have a lot of other responsibilities, but your child's education is important. Special education students also have needs that we cannot ignore, and parents/guardians are asked to please participate in IEP meetings and call your school principal and teachers if you have questions. I have spoke to some parents and they are frustrated and feel like giving up on this new way of learning, but we can't have anyone give up on our students. Their education is our responsibility, but it is also up to you to help us and your child by approaching this as a team effort.

Remember that college semesters are near the end. Whether you are first year students, in the middle, or near the end of your college experience – we need you to keep focused. Attend your classes, talk to your instructors, and be timely with your work. Don't be afraid to ask questions and visit your online resources such as libraries. Many times, college students are overwhelmed when final exams and papers are due. The simplest of things to do is plan your work from now until the end of the semester. Write down your tasks, due dates, and set aside time to complete them. Cramming work in at the last minute does not help your learning and increases anxiety. Some students say that they can work best under pressure but the point of learning is to 'learn', retain and apply what you learned. All classes are relevant. Social media and visiting with friends and family must wait. I wish all our students well this semester. You can do it!

Happy Holidays to everyone. Be safe and don't worry about tomorrow and those things outside of our control. Just be happy.

Until Next Time,

Melissa E. Riley, Ph.D.

Executive Director

News from Haak'u Community Academy



Guu waa dzii & Season Greetings,

In years past during this time of the school year, the Haak'u Community Academy staff were busy planning festive holiday activities for our parents and families. However, this year we plan to spread holiday cheer virtually. Stay tuned and check your child's Google Classroom for more information about days and times for class programming, which might include a short play or Christmas singing.



During Native American Heritage month the students wore their traditional clothing, shared their family clans, and wore their moccasins. It warmed our hearts to see the students take pride and have great appreciation for their culture. In addition to this month the students honored Veterans, by having wonderful discussions and writing essays about the respect and pride they had for military personnel who have and continue to serve our country. Great job students!

The end of November marked the midterm of instruction and Quarter 2 progress reports were sent via email by November 20th. If you have not seen your child's report, please contact the teacher for more information. As mentioned before, we are so proud of how dedicated the students have been to their studies. Thank you parents for supporting your child by helping with keeping school materials organized and managing time. These are important student life skills.

If students are struggling with school work, teachers have offered extra small-group instruction outside of the scheduled core math and English language arts sessions. A little more than half of students join and take advantage of the extra help. Some of the groups are formed to meet the students at and above their grade level. Teachers have posted these schedules on their Google classrooms. In addition, Moby Max is the online program that provides lessons at the students' level in math, English, science and social studies.

Just a reminder, the state of New Mexico offered EBT food assistance cards to families to help with food lunches. Letters went out to HCA parents and if you want to decline the card, the opt-out form should be filled out and returned to the school. These cards should arrive in the month of December.

Continue to take care of yourself and each other. Thank you for the gift of partnership in your child's education. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mrs. Veronica Perez, Instructional Coach Mrs. Edwina Trujillo, Principal

Important Reminders:

December 4 – Abbreviated day, Early dismissal 1:00 P.M

December 7-11- Schoolwide Spelling Bee, TBA

December 18- End of 2nd Grade Quarter

December 19 – January 4: Holiday Break

January 5 – Classes resume online



If there are any problems with the student laptop computers, contact Marcus Leno at (505) 934-6243. Principal's cell, Mrs. Trujillo (505) 934-0888

News from Haak'u Learning Center

Greetings students and families!

I trust that all of you are well and that the holiday season has offered some comfort and cheer. The HLC staff and I continue to navigate adjustments that are encouraged by the pandemic and are still learning new ways to enhance our Learn-at-Home Model. The Learn-at-Home model continues to keep our staff and I'd like to thank all our HLC families for your continued support and understanding during this time. The HLC experienced a recent closure in the last couple of months but I am happy to say that the HLC staff continued to provide services that support our families and children. One of the major resources that our staff uses to deliver instruction is Class Dojo. All classrooms and teachers have access to Class Dojo and with their access can post each day. The HLC launched the use of Class Dojo in October and I am pleased to say that the HLC teachers are becoming experts. All the videos that are posted by teachers align with their weekly lesson plans and the Creative Curriculum.

During the month of December, the teachers, children, and families will begin The Bread Study. A lot of our favorite meals include bread or foods like bread (i.e. pizza, and pretzels). As the children study bread, they will learn concepts and skills related to physical development, literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology. They'll also develop thinking skills as they observe, investigate, ask questions, solve problems, make predictions and test their ideas. Some of the videos that families can see on Class Dojo are videos of teachers making tortillas and oven bread, and maybe even pizza. Through the videos, teachers will teach new and familiar vocabulary and will use short lectures to encourage the development of school readiness skills. Even I know that the remote teaching experience cannot compare to the teaching and learning experience in-person but, the HLC teachers are great at making the remote experience developmentally appropriate and fun.

During the month of November, all HLC teaching staff were issued an iPad Pro with added accessories. These technological devices support our staffs developing technology skills. Our teachers are becoming more creative with the video making process and are experimenting with different ways to edit their videos. The HLC is fortunate to have the funds to support the learning experiences of our staff. Even though I know life during a pandemic can feel impossible, I also know that the pandemic has encouraged creativity and the development of skills that we may have never taken the risk of experiencing. And for this reason and many more, I'd like to acknowledge the HLC for taking risks and trusting the process and direction that the HLC has taken since March 2020. If you have not thanked your child's teachers, please think about telling your child's teachers how much you value their work and efforts during the pandemic.

Please continue to stay staff and stay well.

KatieAnn Juanico, HLC Director



Family and Child Education (FACE) Program

Introducing "Healthy Habits for Healthy Smiles"



Tips for encouraging your child to drink water:



• **MAKE DRINKING WATER FUN!** USE BENDY, SILLY, OR COLORED STRAWS. OR LET YOUR CHILD USE THEIR FAVORITE CUPS OR WATER BOTTLES.

• **ADD LEMON, LIME, OR FRUIT TO THEIR WATER!**

• **PROVIDE WATER WITH ICE CUBES IN FUN SHAPES LIKE DINOSAURS, LETTERS OR ANIMALS!**

• **BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL FOR YOUR CHILD. DRINK WATER INSTEAD OF DRINKS THAT HAVE SUGAR, LIKE JUICE, FRUIT DRINKS, SODA, OR SPORTS DRINKS.**

• **SET UP A STATION WHERE YOUR CHILD CAN GET A DRINK OF WATER WHEN THEY ARE THIRSTY.**

A CHILD'S BODY NEEDS WATER TO BE HEALTHY AND ACTIVE!

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE
EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING
AND KNOWLEDGE CENTER



Family and Child Education (FACE) Program

HELLO EVERYONE!

This month the staff focused on helping FACE families develop healthy habits based around oral health and dental care for expecting mothers, parents of infants and toddler aged children. FACE encouraged each family to set a routine of brushing their child's teeth twice daily (after breakfast and before bed). Also, FACE's Homebased Parent Educator mailed materials and hosted her first virtual FACE "Family Circle," creating fun turkeys that labeled what families were thankful for and safety topics during the holiday season and around the COVID-19 Pandemic. Some of these topics included:

- Safety in the Kitchen
- Travel during the holiday season
- Importance of wearing face coverings during the COVID-19 Pandemic



The FACE staff want to wish everyone a safe and Happy Thanksgiving. Please remember to stay safe, wash your hands, and practice social distancing.

FACE is continuing to enroll families for our Home-based Program (Prenatal-3 years), Pre-school (3-4 years) and Adult Education courses. We are following the Pueblo of Acoma/CDC guidelines, and providing services via Zoom, as well as mailing fun/interactive activities for families straight to your home!

For more information please contact us at (505)-934-2144 or (505)-934-1714! Located at the Haak'u Community Academy.

Keres Language Dictionary Project

The recent virtual Acoma Language Institute held on October 20th & 21st, 2020 was a success. We had many positive comments some of which are below:

“So exciting to see everyone, I miss not being home. This was a great opportunity not only to see everyone, but a great learning opportunity.”

“Mr. Riley’s presentation brought tears to my eyes, I share some of those same issues. We are now a mixed tribe and we need to figure out how we can deal with it. I am Acoma, my heart is Acoma, I know some people have a problem with it.”

“Rebecca indicated that culturally sensitive words were not included in the Acoma dictionary, how then will it be learned when it needs to be learned? If it’s not documented, we may lose it totally because our elders who are most knowledgeable are leaving us.”

“Because the session was delayed technically or speakers had spotty internet connection, this gives Acoma all the more reason to work to increase the broadband (G5) on the reservation.”

“Not only the language, but the Acoma songs need to be interpreted. All songs have special meaning and knowing what is being sung is as important as speaking the language.”

“If family members, who are enrolled tribal members, want to learn the language but are living in other states or even out of the US, can they have access to the virtual learning?” (At the library/Learning Center)

“How do we address issues of “Halfbreeds” – My children have a Plains father and my son does not want to go to Acoma because people have told him he is not Acoma.”

“When can we have another seminar such as this?”

“I really enjoyed the seminar, it brought forth many things to think about.”

“I was a great session, I missed yesterday’s event but, got to watch it today. Thank you for doing this, I hope there are more in the future.”

“It was mentioned Acoma folks rely on the use of English language, few fluent speakers, that we have semi-fluid speakers, and the younger generation do not speak the language at all. Where does the responsibility fall so the language is not lost?”

“Historically, Acoma way of life has all been passed down by the oral Keres language, but has Acoma now come to the permissible stage where the language now has to be written as a way to preserve the language?”

“As Acoma continues its efforts on addressing the Keres language, could attendees of the Acoma Language Institute be asked to provide suggestions, ideas, strategies on what could be possible as the next steps? “

Keres Language Dictionary Project (Cont.)

- Ideas for Acoma Language retention/restoration/preservation/sustainability:
 - Acoma declared the Keres language in crisis, per Governor Vallo.
 - What does this mean to everyone?
 - Are the current Tribal resolutions addressing the Keres language strong enough? Or do we need more traction to impact the language so there's evidence that it is retained, restored, preserved, sustained or immortalized for future generations?
 - Will Acoma further declare a "state of emergency" due to the potential of losing the language?
 - Can Acoma be transparent with the public as a way to draw more attention on the status of the language? By drawing more attention to this, it could bring a wealth of suggestions and/or financial aid to help to preserve the language.
 - What would a state of emergency mean?
 - Are there outside resources who can offer to help Acoma address the urgent need?
 - Does Acoma have a Tribal strategic plan to address the status of the language?
 - Could Acoma come up with ideas, so it has a consistent plan on how to address the state of emergency or the declared crisis?
 - Does Acoma have a team to develop a contingency plan so the tribe ensures itself the Keres language will always be a high priority throughout the community livelihood?
 - Does Acoma have an accountability plan, so the Keres language is within every family household?
 - Is there a reasonable timeline so Acoma stays on track with keeping the language strong even though there may be limited tribal resources?
 - Will Acoma be willing to endorse a tribal commitment plan so every enrolled member of Acoma is committing themselves to honor, preserve, respect the language and that they will pledge themselves to be self-determined not to lose the Acoma language?

The Haakume Keres Dictionary group reviewed the comments and continued discussing the best method to begin teaching the language as part of preservation. Because of the COVID pandemic, we came to the conclusion to start some Keres teaching through the DOE newsletter. Either writing or speaking it, will be a strong start to learning the sounds of our Hakumme vowels. Here is a list of these vowels to start learning and how they are pronounced:

- a - (pronounced "ah") aanyum'e - (pretty - female) anee (pretty - male)
- e - (pronounced "eh") esgra - animal hide
- i - (pronounced "ee") intyu - Indian or imii - fear
- u - (pronounced "ooh") suwa - yesterday
- ə - (The "schwa" is the upside down "e" - pronounced "eeh") tyee'e - far away

As you can see Haakume vowels have different sounds from English vowels. The more you put English vowels aside when learning Keres, the easier it may be for you to learn. We will continue in the next edition with different sounds and examples.

If you have any other comments or suggestions, please feel free to address them.

Rebecca Martin

Language Project Coordinator

Acoma Department of Education

505-552-6077 - keres@poamail.org



PUEBLO OF ACOMA STUDENT EDUCATION-COVID-19 CONNECTIVITY RELIEF PROGRAM

The Pueblo of Acoma Education COVID-19 Connectivity Relief Program is for the purpose of providing a onetime \$300 financial assistance for the educational expenses for Pueblo of Acoma Tribal Members who have children in grades PreK-12 and College.

Parent/Guardian or Child

Name: _____

Ma

Add

Phone

Student

Name: _____

Last

Middle Initial

First Name

School Attending: _____ Grade: _____

Name: _____

Last Name

Middle Initial

First Name

School Attending: _____ Grade: _____

Name: _____

*******CLOSED*****
APPLICATIONS ARE NO
LONGER BEING
ACCEPTED**

REMINDER

For those families that currently have jetpacks from Acoma Department of Education **PLEASE** remember that the jetpacks are **ONLY** to be used for Educational/School purposes.

Yes, the jetpacks have unlimited data usage, however, once you reach a certain amount of gigabytes the jetpack speed slows down tremendously.

If you need any further assistance with the jetpack please call (505) 552-6077.



7 Ways to Celebrate Christmas That Have Nothing to Do With Zoom

Prioritize the traditions that matter most to you

“Think about what is the essence of the holiday for you, so you can try to preserve it,” says happiness expert Gretchen Rubin, author of *Happier at Home*. “Even if you’re not doing everything you used to, you can set up the holiday decorations, if that’s really important, or make the special foods you love.”

Do your gift shopping and shipping early

Since more people will be shopping online to avoid the stores, shipping companies will be inundated—so you’ll want to shop and send gifts early to make sure they arrive right on time. (Check the USPS holiday shipping deadlines to make sure you’re on track.)

Trim a tree outdoors

Since you might be entertaining outdoors more than you usually do this time of year, this is the year to go overboard with decking out your deck or patio—and adorning an outdoor-friendly tree (or even a live Christmas tree in a planter) with LED lights and shatterproof ornaments is the way to go. (Tip: Use twist ties or florist’s wire to secure the ornaments to the tree, so they’ll stay put even in a stiff wind.)

Maybe Santa could even leave some of the best outdoorsy Christmas gifts of the year, such as snowshoes, skis, or sleds, at the outdoor tree, too.

Make special memories

Yeah, you and your household members may be a little tired of each other right now, but think of fun ways to help set the holiday season apart. Create a little advent calendar with festive activities for each day, rather than a treat. Your Christmas activities don’t have to be elaborate—it could just be drinking hot cocoa together wearing Santa hats or watching one of the best Christmas movies on Netflix—but it’ll help make the season brighter.

Find ways to make the most of your time with loved ones

To keep everyone as safe as possible, your best bet is following CDC recommendations and avoiding indoor get-togethers. (An outbreak of COVID is the Christmas gift that no one wished for.) And that means if you live in the northern part of the country, your time together will probably need to be briefer (and chillier) than you’d probably like. Zoom fatigue is real, though: If you can, make events in-person and outdoors, even if it means a quick chat while everyone’s bundled up.

When gathering in person outdoors, consider keeping celebrations to the daytime hours, when it might be a little bit warmer and more comfortable to spend time outside. Look for outdoor activities that can be socially distanced and keep you active, like sledding or snow-fort making. And don’t forget to serve hot foods and drinks to help keep everyone toasty. Do your Secret Santa or white elephant gift exchange around an outdoor picnic table or fire pit; for ugly sweater competitions, strategize layering options so you can show off your light-up sweater and stay warm at the same time.

Spread some joy

If 2020 has taught us anything, it’s how much the people in our lives mean to us, so go ahead and spread some happiness where you can. Write down how much the people you love mean to you and send it out to them. Make Christmas cookies and leave some with your friends and neighbors—or drop off pizza or other treats at a local nursing home, hospital, or fire department to brighten the lives of the people there.

Remember that what’s different may make this holiday more special

You may not remember exactly what happened at the holidays from year to year, but when something this different happens, it’ll stick out. “Things that go wrong often make the best memories,” Rubin says. “This exceptional holiday season will probably be more memorable because it’s so different. We just have to find a way to make the most of it.”