

Comments on the Northern NM Math and Science Academy (MSA)

Remarks by former DOE Secretary Samuel Bodman to LANL Director Mike Anastasio

I was pleased to hear from Senator Domenici about the continuing success of the Northern New Mexico Math and Science Academy (MSA) program and would like to extend my sincere best wishes to the first thirty MSA teachers who are completing the program ... 11/27/07

I am pleased to inform you that your organization has been selected to receive a 2007 Secretary of Energy EEO & Best Practices Award for your Northern New Mexico Math and Science Academy (MSA) program...to recognize new and innovative initiatives which support Secretary Samuel W. Bodman's commitment to EEO and diversity at DOE. Your unique program is clearly deserving of this recognition ... 6/20/08

Remarks by former DOE Secretary Spencer Abraham

And then there is the remarkable story of the Northern New Mexico Math and Science Academy. This is an ambitious, collaborative effort involving the Los Alamos lab that has energized students, teachers, parents, and school board members by substantially improving student test scores in math and science.

Statement by former LANL Director Pete Nanos ... 7/8/04

The tremendous results from the laboratory's Math and Science Academy were highlighted earlier today...That program's goal, to increase student achievement by improving teacher practice, is being realized not only in math and science classrooms, but also in students' overall achievement.

Remarks from NM Senator Jeff Bingaman

Modeled after the great work of MSA, the America COMPETES Act ...4/11/07

MSA serves as a model in New Mexico and throughout the country...11/16/07

The MSA Masters Program is a great example of what's needed throughout the country.

I am delighted to see the lasting positive impact that the MSA program is having on the enhancement of our Northern NM K-12 math and science learning environment and the related academic achievement levels of the over 3500 New Mexico students who have been taught by MSA-trained teachers, as evidenced by the 2005-2008 statistics supplied by LANL, showing increasing proficiency each year in math ... 11/7/08

Remarks from NM Senator Pete Domenici

At his 1/16/7 MSA/NMSU Masters degree graduation address and again on 8/15/08 at the LANL Foundation banquet held in his honor, Senator Domenici specifically called out and praised MSA for its very positive impact on northern NM math and science education.

Remarks from NM Lt. Governor Diane Denish

Greetings to all of you, and special congratulations to the 28 teachers who've completed their master of arts in teaching math and science. It took a lot of dedication and sacrifice to earn these degrees. Not only do you deserve applause but so do the families who supported you over the last few years ... 11/15/07

Comments from Teachers and Principals (From National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing [CRESST] reports, <http://www.lanl.gov/education/teachers/mathsci.shtml>):

***Teacher 1:** This is one of the most positive professional development experiences I've ever had. I'm a veteran teacher, and I've participated in many, many, many staff development projects. But none*

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of them have done for me what MSA has accomplished: rejuvenated my sense of wonder in teaching and learning. I'm trying new ideas, I'm thinking about things in dramatically different ways. There are so many reasons why this project works . . .

Teacher 2: *One of the primary reasons is that we're treated like professionals, people who are doing important work. Another reason I think MSA is what it is rests on the fact that we've really developed as colleagues. I think of my MSA colleagues as family: sometimes they make me mad, sometimes I feel irritated, but I treasure and value all the knowledge, ideas, and people in MSA.*

Teacher 3: *One of the biggest changes in my instruction has come by focusing on student learning and adjusting my teaching to students needs. I've re-visited my cooperative learning strategies and refined them in use. I'm more aware of the standards and benchmarks and the role of teaching about the context.*

Teacher 4: *As a result of working with MSA, I now analyze each and every move I make in the classroom, always thinking about the students and what they need. I almost debrief with myself on a class by class basis to determine if the success that I want was present or if we need to elaborate on a concept even more. The initial planning of lessons is the biggest change in my teaching philosophies. I am actually planning with assessment in mind first. I have never done that before.*

Teacher 5: *The coaching experience helped me to really focus on my processes of teaching. Isolating specifics about lesson goals, reteaching, etc. made me analyze, adjust and better my skills – and I didn't feel threatened by my coaches like I initially thought I would. When my coach and I did our pre and post conferences, I surprised myself that I knew my goals, etc. – my responses were right on. How validating as a teacher to have a real discussion about my teaching!*

Principal 1: *I've seen a lot of different projects in my time as an administrator, but this one (MSA) seems to be different somehow. Teachers are working more together as teams. In fact, their excitement about MSA is influencing other non-MSA teachers. Everyone wants to be part of the project and teach more effectively.*

Comments from CRESST Year Six Report:

Over the past seven years, MSA has grown from a middle-school project in 3 schools with 12 teachers and 200 students to a K – 9th grade project that includes 22 schools, 80 teachers and 3600 students. The project has grown in other ways as well: the vision for what quality teaching and learning look like in an MSA classroom is clearer, as are the tools and strategies teachers need to provide quality instruction for students. Teachers have become more sophisticated and perceptive participants in MSA, and most readily avail themselves of the tools and opportunities for professional growth and collaboration. As project recognition has increased, more teachers have made the commitment to the intensive and demanding program. Different from many professional development programs, where participants attend a training session, and then are expected to implement the ideas independently, MSA provides consistent follow-up and follow-through for teachers. The cognitive coaching process, with classroom observations and conferences with MSA mentor and veteran teachers, celebrations of learning, and biannual [MSA Days?] provides support for MSA teachers and the implementation of project goals.