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DATE: June 15, 2018

TO: NMSU Faculty and Staff

FROM: Chancellor Dan E. Arvizu

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Dan E. Arvizu'.

SUBJECT: Some early reflections

As I finish my second full week on the job, I wanted to share some thoughts on the meetings I have had, the people I have met and some of the positive conversations we've had.

I spent much of the last week traveling, meeting first with members of the Western Athletic Conference in Denver. Later, I traveled to Washington, D.C., to meet with both of our U.S. Senators and attend the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) event. At that meeting, I had a chance to talk with other chancellors and presidents on the issues facing higher education. I also had the opportunity to meet and speak with a few of our outstanding NMSU alumni and Foundation Board members. As I make these rounds and establish these important connections, I can't help but notice the immense pride everyone feels in this institution and the optimism they have for what New Mexico State University can be.

During the APLU meeting, I was struck by how the issues we are facing at NMSU are the very same issues faced by universities across the country. These issues include budgets, politics, alumni relations, adaptive and online instruction, relationships with our community colleges, accreditation, security on campus and freedom of speech. And on the latter topic, I want to reinforce how much I support freedom of speech on our campus. Please see the related link to the APLU declaration on this topic: <http://www.aplu.org/about-us/commitment-to-free-speech/index.html>. I wholeheartedly endorse this declaration and creative expression. I want NMSU to be a campus where we have open and honest dialogue and do so in a respectful and constructive way, without the toxic atmosphere we have gotten used to at the national level.

One of the most memorable comments from the APLU event came from one of my fellow chancellors. As we discussed faculty relationships, he said, "It's easier to change the course of history than it is to change a history course!" As I reflect on that statement, I am persuaded that I can actually work within that context because we're about changing the course of history.

Have a great weekend!