

University Business

5 New Mexico colleges launch groundbreaking partnership

'We will create efficiencies that will allow us to focus our precious resources on direct student support'

By: [Matt Zalaznick](#) | January 7, 2021



A wide-ranging partnership between five New Mexico colleges will allow students, for instance, such as this one at a Santa Fe Community College chemistry lab, to take a course offered at another college if it is not offered on their own campus.



Richard Bailey, president of Northern New Mexico College

Five public colleges in New Mexico have banded together in a potentially groundbreaking project to unify student services, business operations, various aspects of instruction and other campus functions.

Clovis Community College, Central New Mexico Community College, Northern New Mexico College, San Juan College and Santa Fe Community College are striving for new levels of efficiency with this week's launch of the development of the Shared Services Enterprise Resource Planning system.

"By partnering with our sister institutions, we will create efficiencies that will allow us to focus our precious resources on direct student support," says [Richard Bailey](#), president of Northern New Mexico College, a rural four-year institution.

"What makes our project unique is that this partnership still respects and celebrates the independent cultures, the specialties, and the personalities of the different institutions," Bailey says.

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Under the collaboration—which is three years in the making—the college will share a student information system. And, a student, for instance, will be able to take a course offered at another college if it is not offered on their own campus.

Administrators and faculty will also be able to more easily share expertise that any of the institutions might lack, says [Tracy Hartzler](#), president of Central New Mexico Community College.



Tracy Hartzler, president of Central New Mexico Community College. Participating colleges will also share decision-making, data and other processes. The goal is to save costs for both students and the institutions, leaders of the institutions say.

Once fully implemented, the Shared Services ERP will also:

- Eliminate multiple applications for admission or employment.

- Reduce duplication of student and employee records.
- Streamline student transfer.
- Provide academic programming and staff reinforcements when needed.
- Increase interaction with prospective and current students, community members, business partners, public officials; and more.

“We want students to suspend time learning, we don’t want them spending time going through five different web forms for applications or financial aid,” Hartzler says. “Our students’ and communities’ expectations for ease have increased.”

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Becky Rowley, president of Santa Fe Community College.

The colleges are in the process of forming a nonprofit to oversee the project, which more institutions are expected to join.

The collaborative also is soliciting proposals vendors to provide a comprehensive, state-of-the-art ERP solution.

Ultimately, the collaborative will strengthen all of its members as leaders grapple with COVID and enrollment challenges that had surfaced before the pandemic, says [Becky Rowley](#), president of Santa Fe Community College. “This will put all of our colleges in a much more sophisticated position,” Rowley says. “We will have options to do things that we’re not even contemplating right now because we’re trying to keep things running as well as we can on a day-to-day basis.”

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