

NMSD students take action on Capitol Hill

Written by By Hollie Fleming
Friday, 26 May 2017 03:03



New Mexico School for the Deaf High School students, Vergena Chee, Lindsay Hand, and Jacob Stevens, accompanied by NMSD Student Outcomes Specialist Gary Hand, recently attended the second Annual Capitol Hill Advocacy Day in Washington, DC.

Along with the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf, NMSD's students met with New Mexico's U.S. congressmen and women to raise awareness about the Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act of 2013 (H.R. Bill 1120) which advocates for Deaf and Deaf/Blind education and evaluation.

NMSD Superintendent Dr. Rosemary Gallegos determined that this was a powerful opportunity for students to utilize their self-advocacy skills and to better understand the inner workings of congress. Students had the opportunity to meet Representative Matt Cartwright, U.S. Congressman of the 17th District in PA who sponsored the bill.

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They also met New Mexico's Representative Steven Pearce, U.S. Congressman of District 2; Graham Mason, assistant to Ben Ray Lujan, District 3 Representative; Elya Taichman, assistant to Representative Michelle Lujan Grisham; and U.S. Senators Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall's assistants.

Upon returning from their trip, students learned that Representatives Michelle Lujan Grisham and Ben Ray Lujan agreed to co-sponsor the bill. NMSD is proud of the students who were able to convince two-thirds of our state's representatives to support this critical bill.

Vergena, Jacob and Lindsay's initiative, self-advocacy skills, and efforts on Capitol Hill was a successful endeavor. A big thank you to Representatives Matt Cartwright, Steven Pearce, Michelle Lujan Grisham and Ben Ray Lujan and Senators Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall, for supporting students' efforts and The Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act.

By Hollie Fleming