



# ACROSS NEW MEXICO



NEA NM will partner with the NM State Library on this project, which is coming up in March 2026. The State Library will create the poster design to include a QR code that can be scanned for further information on New Mexico's diverse authors as well as the diverse collection of books available about New Mexico.

## The book titles and authors for the posters will include:

Title	Author	Brief Summary
<b>Book Fiesta</b>	Pat Mora	A bright, bilingual picture book celebrating children, books, reading and culture. The text invites kids to "take a ride in a long submarine or fly away in a hot-air balloon" with their favorite book. It is tied to the celebration of El Día de los Niños/El Día de los Libros (Children's Day/Book Day).
<b>Tumble</b>	Celia C. Perez	As luchadores, the Bravos's legacy is strong. But being part of a family is so much harder—it's about showing up, taking off your mask, and working through challenges together. This story takes place in New Mexico.
<b>Tortilla Sun</b>	J.C. Cervantes	Infused with the flavor of the southwest and sprinkled with just a pinch of magic, readers are sure to find this heartfelt story as rich and satisfying as Nana's homemade enchiladas. The author resides in New Mexico.
<b>Where Butterflies Fill the Sky</b>	Zahra Marwan	An evocative picture book that tells the true story of the author's immigration from Kuwait to the United States. The author resides in Albuquerque, NM.
<b>Finding My Dance</b>	Ria Thundercloud	In her debut picture book, professional Indigenous dancer Ria Thundercloud tells the true story of her path to dance and how it helped her take pride in her Native American heritage. The author is an enrolled member of Sandia Pueblo in New Mexico
<b>Herizon</b>	Daniel W. Vandever	This is a wordless graphic/illustrated book that follows a modern-day Diné (Navajo) girl who, with her grandmother, must retrieve a flock of sheep across land and water aided by a magical scarf.
<b>My Pet Rattlesnake</b>	Joe Hayes	A tall tale based in the desert southwest by New Mexico author and previous chairperson of NM Read Across America and 2010 NM Library Association Centennial Storyteller.
<b>I Dreamed I was a Dog</b>	Joel Nakamura	This picture book begins with a young boy falling asleep and dreaming he's a dog with red fur and purple spots. From there he transforms through animals (a dinosaur etc.), and the narrative shows connections between all creatures and the vastness of the universe. The author lives in New Mexico.
<b>Bad News for Outlaws</b>	Vaunda Michaeux Nelson	The author resides in New Mexico and received the Coretta Scott King Author Award. This book is about the fascinating life of Bass Reeves, who escaped slavery to become the first African American Deputy US Marshal west of the Mississippi.



## **Read Across New Mexico: A How to Guide for Creating a Local Event**

- Invite local dignitaries to read in an elementary classroom. Guests could include mayor, fire chief, police chief, local legislators, local school board members, superintendent, NEA Retired members, local aspiring teachers, etc.
- Challenge intermediate elementary classrooms to read all nine of the books listed on the poster and award the winning classrooms with a prize, such as a pizza party
- Invite local news organizations to cover the event
- Encourage students to create their own story about New Mexico and award a prize for the winning entries
- Develop a lesson for one of the books featured on the poster and share the lesson with other teachers
- Invite an author or illustrator to visit the school library and read to the students
- Coordinate a community event with local public library to promote Read Across New Mexico
- Host a Book Parade and encourage students to dress as their favorite character from a book
- Invite students to create bookmarks or posters for each book
- Partner with a local business to print bookmarks and posters for each book
- Partner with a local bookstore to give away books to children
- Sponsor a contest with prizes for students who create their own illustrations for one of the nine books
- Ask students to write reviews of the books
- Host a buddy reading day at a local school for intermediate elementary students to read to primary students

## **Read Across New Mexico Ideas for Book Extensions**

1. “Book Fiesta” Invite hot air balloonists, lowriders, hot rods, drones and/or other transport systems displayed and explained to students at a school.
2. “Tumble” Invite local HS wrestlers to do actual, non-fake wrestling demonstrations. Ask students to create Luchador masks
3. “Tortilla Sun” Have a Cooking/tasting fair within a grade level, wing or entire school where each class creates their specialty.
4. “Where Butterflies Fill the Sky” Follow author’s journey on a large wall map and add students’ journeys from their own or their ancestor’s birthplaces.
5. “Finding My Dance” Invite local native dancers to perform /explain their dances and costumes.
6. “Herizon” Have demonstrations by NM Ag Dept, 4-H, FFA on sheep raising and wool processing from shearing to finished product. Ask individual students or the class as a whole to write text for the book.
7. “Bad News for Outlaws” Invite US Marshall or town Marshall to explain differences among them and Sheriff, Deputy, and city police. Ask staff at NM Ft. Stanton Monument to assist in researching the history of Buffalo Soldiers in NM. Visit the Ft. Stanton or Ft. Garland websites for more information on Buffalo Soldiers.
8. “I Dreamed I Was A Dog” Art Festival where everyone draws, paints, etc “My Life as a \_\_\_\_” Enter your preferred animal-real or imagined.
9. “My Pet Rattlesnake” Exhibit a collection of Joe Hayes books for students to read and then discuss similarities/differences, and any basis of the story coming from folktales such as La Llorona or Chupacabra, etc. Read other Tall Tales and compare to “My Pet Rattlesnake.”