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K-12 Math and Science Education: A Physicist Meets Reality

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Can professional engineers, mathematicians, and scientists have a positive impact on K-12 math and science education? The experience of the Santa Fe Alliance for Science, and several other like-minded organizations, indicates that they can indeed. But success is by no means assured. Good scientists are not automatically good educators, but they can learn enough about pedagogy, classroom, and community to do well. For example, their experiences working on research topics of great societal interest (e.g. the energy supply or global warming) can be a great attraction to young people. This discussion will be oriented around three major points: lessons learned, prospects for the future, and how our effort fits into state-wide plans for re-inventing K-12 math and science education in New Mexico.

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