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SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

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GOVERNOR

March 3, 2016

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Superintendents and Charter School Administrators

**FROM:** Hanna Skandera, Secretary of Education 

**RE:** **2016 NEW MEXICO CELEBRATES LITERACY**

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The Public Education Department (PED), in partnership with the New Mexico State Library System, is planning a statewide focus on literacy called *New Mexico Celebrates Literacy*. Events are scheduled for the week of April 30–May 7, 2016. Mark your calendars now for this important time of celebration!

The goal of *New Mexico Celebrates Literacy* is to promote the enjoyment of reading throughout the state for children of all ages. Love of literacy is encouraged especially during this time by raising awareness of the joys of reading through numerous language-rich events. These will be sponsored by school districts, community organizations, and by the state.

To kick off the week, we are supporting El día de los niños/ El día de los libros [Children's Day/Book Day, (Día)]. Sponsored by the New Mexico State Library, the 2016 event is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Día; it encourages a special emphasis on reading to someone special in your life: child, parent, loved one, even a beloved pet! Additional information is available on the New Mexico State Library web page at <http://nmstatelibrary.org>.

Additionally, in partnership with the New Mexico State Library, the PED is encouraging schools to participate in the Land of Enchantment Book Award. The award is designed to encourage the youth of New Mexico to read outstanding books of literary quality. We support this work and encourage districts and charter schools to review book lists with your school librarians. Additional information is available at: <http://www.loebookaward.com>.

As part of *New Mexico Celebrates Literacy*, the PED will be providing resources for districts and charter schools to support this effort promoting literacy in your local schools as listed in the following chart:



April 30–May 7, 2016

DATES	EVENTS
April 1–30, 2016	The Land of Enchantment Book Award voting occurs. Contact your school librarians or <a href="http://www.loebookaward.com">http://www.loebookaward.com</a> for more information.
April 30, 2016	<p>The New Mexico State Library announces the public library summer reading program, “<i>On Your Mark, Get Set... Read!</i>”</p> <p>Libraries across the state are preparing to deliver exciting programs that inspire readers of all ages to think about health, wellness, sports, and games. Whether it’s running around outside, playing baseball, beating an opponent at chess, eating your fruits and veggies, or creating new worlds in video games, your local public library is the place to be this summer. Your local library will be bursting with activities, reading incentives, performers, and lots of fun! Local author Pat Mora will be the featured author this year.</p> <p>Information will be available at <a href="http://www.nmstatelibrary.org">www.nmstatelibrary.org</a>. For additional information, contact Deanne Dekle at the State Library <a href="mailto:Deanne.Deckle@state.nm.us">Deanne.Deckle@state.nm.us</a>.</p>
May 2, 2016	The PED’s summer 2016 recommended reading list for grades K–12 is released. The list will be posted at <a href="http://literacynewmexico.org">http://literacynewmexico.org</a> .
May 2, 2016	The Land of Enchantment Book Awards are announced.
May 1–July 31, 2016	During the month of May—and in collaboration with the PED and the New Mexico State Library—Governor Martinez’s <i>2016 New Mexico True Summer Reading Challenge</i> is launched.

Ideas for how your district or charter school might support *New Mexico Celebrates Literacy* include sponsoring the following literacy activities:

- **Host a Local Sports Team.** Arrange to have your local college or high school sports teams come to school and read with your students. Have them engage with students about the importance of literacy. Invite parents, community members, and legislators to come and join them in the conversation.
- **Feature Staff Reader Leaders.** On signs outside their doors or on posters in a public space, have staff share the books they are reading.

- **Sponsor Family Reading Nights.** Choose a night on which families bring a book to school from the local or school library. In cozy nooks and crannies of the school, families read to each other. The school might provide activities for readers to engage in that extend their reading and provide structure for book discussions. Literacy stations might be set up to support family reading. These kiosks might provide reading strategies, titles and examples of recent Caldecott and Newberry Medal winners and Children Choice Book Award winners, book summaries that entice potential readers—perhaps created earlier in the week by students, snazzy book marks, and phone numbers and website and street addresses of the local library.
- **Introduce Principal Readings.** The principal reads a book—either in an assembly or over the intercom—and teachers project the text so students can follow along.
- **Stage a Read-a-Thon.** Develop literary categories in which readers can compete and coordinate with local businesses for small prizes for the winners.
- **Donate Class Books.** Have each class raise money to buy one book for the school library. The book can be embossed with their class name plate inside, and the librarian might read those donated books to their school mates during library read times.
- **Enlist your PE Teacher.** Ask your PE teacher to collaborate on ideas for integrating literacy and physical activity.
- **Promote Literacy through Contests.** Hold contests promoting literacy in our homes and schools. Challenging students to create posters, book marks, and podcasts are some of the great ideas we've seen successfully developed.

For more information, please visit the *New Mexico Celebrates Literacy* link at <http://literacynewmexico.org> or contact Julie Bryant at [julie.bryant@state.nm.us](mailto:julie.bryant@state.nm.us) or 505-827-6516.

We look forward to your participation in this literacy event and thank you for your commitment to making literacy the highest priority every day in your district and schools! Let's celebrate literacy together!

HS/LL/jb