

**State of New Mexico**  
*Office of the Governor*

**Susana Martinez**  
*Governor*

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**GOVERNOR SUSANA MARTINEZ URGES PASSAGE OF “REAL ACCOUNTABILITY, REAL RESULTS” SCHOOL GRADING PLAN Initiative Will Grade New Mexico Schools on an A- F Scale, Rewarding Progress and Intervening to Help Struggling Schools**

**SANTA FE** – Governor Susana Martinez held a news conference today at the Roundhouse to urge support for her “Real Accountability, Real Results” plan (Senate Bill 427/House Bill 355) to grade schools, bringing greater transparency and accountability to the quality of education we are offering our children. The Governor was joined by Public Education Secretary-designate Hanna Skandera, Senate Education Committee Chair Cynthia Nava (D-Las Cruces), Senate Education Committee Ranking Member Vernon Asbill (R-Carlsbad), and numerous other Republican and Democratic lawmakers.

“If we are to dramatically improve the quality of education in New Mexico, our system must be built on a strong foundation of accountability and transparency,” said Governor Martinez. “Implementing a new school grading system will allow everyone – from parents to teachers to community members – to understand how our schools are performing and whether progress is being made. Giving our schools the same grades we give our students will create a culture of higher expectations, greater achievement, and ultimately, greater progress.”

To increase accountability and transparency in New Mexico schools, the “Real Accountability, Real Results” initiative proposed by Governor Martinez adopts an easy to understand, easy to implement system of grading schools, using the traditional school grading format. Based on student achievement and progress, with a particular focus on the lowest performing 25 percent of students, schools will be assigned letter grades of A,B,C,D or F and these grades will be posted on an easily accessible website.

Schools earning an “A,” or improving a letter grade based on baseline data, in 2011 will be eligible for incentives rewarding improvement in student learning while students in

failing schools will receive extra assistance. Though under federal law, meaningful intervention in failing schools can sometimes be a five-year process, the Governor's plan calls for immediate intervention after two years for schools that have earned an "F" by targeting resources to improve these schools, helping struggling students and giving parents more options.

Governor Martinez continued, "I am encouraged by the bipartisan support for this important legislation, and urge members of the Legislature to quickly pass this critical initiative. The clock is ticking and we cannot waste anymore time when it comes to reforming our state's education system. There is simply too much at stake."

Governor Martinez has made improving education in New Mexico a top priority and is committed to ensuring every student has access to quality schools and teachers. Her "Kids First, New Mexico Wins" plan is comprised of four key initiatives to increase accountability and transparency, set students up for success by ending social promotion, target resources where they are needed the most and identify and reward our most effective educators and leaders.

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