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## **Governor Susana Martinez Highlights Education Reform Agenda in First State of the State Address**

*Reforms return fiscal discipline, increase accountability, aid struggling schools and students and reward effective educators*

**Santa Fe, NM** – Governor Susana Martinez today delivered her first State of the State address, taking the opportunity to outline her bold education reform agenda for New Mexico. Delivering on her promise to improve the quality of education for New Mexico’s students, Governor Martinez is proposing a comprehensive reform package that will transform our schools.

The “Kids First, New Mexico Wins” Plan is comprised of four key initiatives that will increase accountability, aid struggling schools and students, prioritize funding for students, eliminate wasteful spending and reward our state’s effective educators and leaders.

“For years, New Mexico schools have ranked among the worst in the nation, failing our students. Now it’s time to take bold efforts to ensure our children receive a quality education that will prepare them to succeed in college and the workforce,” said New Mexico Education Secretary Hanna Skandera. “Today, Governor Martinez announced a series of proven, innovative initiatives that will usher in a new era of progress and achievement in New Mexico’s school system. The Public Education Department looks forward to partnering with the Legislature, educators, parents and community leaders to implement these reforms.”

### **“Kids First, New Mexico Wins” Plan:**

- **A Smarter Return on New Mexico’s Investment:** An initiative to prioritize classroom spending over bureaucracy and return fiscal discipline to our Department and to local school districts. The needs of students must drive education policy and spending.
- **Real Accountability. Real Results.:** To provide maximum transparency when it comes to the quality of our schools, this initiative creates an easy to understand A, B, C, D, F school grading system. Real accountability in our schools will recognize and reward progress, reverse failure and help struggling schools and students.
- **New Mexico’s “Ready for Success” Initiative:** To prepare students to succeed throughout their academic careers, this initiative ends social promotion – the practice of passing children from one grade to the next before they have mastered the basics – in the gateway years of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. A command-focus on reading and literacy initiatives will ensure all students have the foundation for success in school and life.

- **Rewarding Effective Educators and Leaders:** To ensure all students have access to great teachers, this initiative will create a blueprint for evaluating, rewarding and incentivizing effective teaching and leadership in our schools and districts.

Governor Martinez has made improving education in New Mexico a chief priority and is committed to ensuring every student has access to quality schools and teachers.

To learn more about Governor Martinez's State of the State address, visit the Office of the Governor's website at <http://www.governor.state.nm.us>. For more information on the New Mexico Public Education Department, please visit <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/>.

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