



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

**Susana Martinez**  
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**Governor Martinez Announces New Early Dropout Warning System to Identify and Assist At-Risk Students**

**RIO RANCHO** - Governor Susana Martinez announced today that her administration will implement a new Early Dropout Warning System to identify and assist students who are at the highest risk for dropping out of school. Under the new system, the Public Education Department will combine critical student achievement data and deliver it to educators in time to intervene for middle and high school students in danger of dropping out of school. Factors such as 3rd grade reading, truancy and academic performance will be combined into a single report to allow educators to focus on struggling students. This new report will be the first of its kind in the state utilizing information already compiled by NMPED, but never before combined to form a comprehensive picture of students in need of intervention.

“Our goal for every New Mexico student is a high school diploma that prepares them for the next step in their life,” said Governor Susana Martinez. “We shouldn’t wait until high school to have the discussion with our students about graduation. We need to start early to make sure our students know of the opportunities ahead of them, and we absolutely must engage parents and teachers to help get students back on track when they are at risk of dropping out of school.”

New Mexico’s Early Dropout Warning System, funded by a \$500,000 allocation in the most recent budget, would begin as early as 3rd grade to identify key factors which impact a student’s ability to graduate. Elements in the Early Dropout Warning System would include:

- 3rd grade reading proficiency rates;
- Middle school truancy rates;
- Middle school course failures;
- 9th grade truancy rates;
- 9th grade GPA below 1.5; and
- Failure of any core courses during the 9th grade year.

These factors will be combined into a single report for every student and made available to school guidance counselors, who will engage students and parents for early intervention if needed. This report will also be the foundation for the 'Next Step' plan, which every student will complete by the end of 8th grade. Under the Next Step plan, a tool currently implemented in New Mexico schools which serves as a road map to graduation, students and parents will join with educators to develop year-by-year class requirements based on a student's post-secondary plans.

"When we combine the early dropout warning system with the Next Step plan, we bring students and parents together with educators to determine the best course to reach the ultimate goal of graduation," said NMPED Secretary Hanna Skandera. "We know factors such as reading proficiency, truancy and failure in core courses are all warning signs a student may drop out. It's time we use this information to get more of our students to graduate."

New Mexico's four-year graduation rate is 70%, meaning 3 out of 10 students do not graduate on time. Information utilized in the Early Dropout Warning System is already collected by schools and will not require additional reporting. Parents, students and educators will have information from the Early Dropout Warning System available starting in the 2013-2014 school year, which begins in August.

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