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September 7, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, Directors of State Education Institutions, and District Test Coordinators

FROM: Cathie Carothers, Deputy Secretary of Policy and Indian Education

RE: **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS CLARIFIED**

The PED is receiving questions about Senate Bill 360 and its application to graduation assessment requirements in school year 2011-2012. Please find an explanation of requirements below.

No SBA/HSGA Pass Requirement for Class of 2012

Senate Bill 360 temporarily suspends requirements to pass the Standards Based Assessment/High School Graduation Assessment (SBA/HSGA) and the Alternate Demonstration of Competency (ADC) for students graduating in 2011-2012. The bill specifies, "*The provisions of Section 22-13-1.1 NMSA 1978 notwithstanding, a student who has completed the course requirements for high school graduation in the 2011-2012 school year may graduate without demonstrating competence in required subject areas on the standards-based assessment or assessments or a portfolio of standards-based indicators established by the public education department by rule.*"

Most students who are relieved of the test requirement took the SBA/HSGA in 2010-2011 when they were juniors, and they will complete course requirements in 2011-2012. Their scores counted for AYP, and they do not have to pass the SBA/HSGA to graduate with the class of 2012.

The bill also applies to students who will complete course requirements in 2011-2012 and were accelerated from sophomore to senior status. As long as they complete course requirements in

fall 2011 or spring and summer of 2012, they do not have to pass the SBA/HSGA to receive a diploma. It is a federal requirement that students take the state accountability test in high school. So if they have not yet tested for AYP, they must do so before exiting. Watchful planning is necessary to ensure that students take the AYP test, even in 10th grade, if they will exit before their senior year.

SBA/HSGA Pass Requirement for Class of 2013

Senate Bill 360 only suspends requirements to pass the SBA/HSGA or ADC for students graduating in 2011-2012. Juniors in 2011-2012 will need to pass the test or complete an ADC to graduate in 2013. Retests will be given in fall and winter of 2012-2013.

Pass Requirements for NMHSCE Not Suspended

The New Mexico High School Competency Examination (NMHSCE) is only a retest for students who were 10th graders in 2009 or earlier (Section 22-13-1.1, K, NMSA 1978). The law requires schools to offer NMHSCE retests for five years after a student exits the school system. If a student passes the test in that time, they may receive a high school diploma.

A few students are still enrolled who took the NMHSCE in 2009 or earlier. NMHSCE pass requirements still apply to those students. A simple rule of thumb applies-if they started with the NMHSCE, they should finish with the NMHSCE.

NMHSCE test materials can be ordered for fall, and the retest window is open from September 26 through October 14.

The Assessment and Accountability Bureau is ready to answer your questions about these requirements. Please contact:

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Robert Romero, Assessment Coordinator (505.827.6524 or robert.romero1@state.nm.us),
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CC/TD

Cc: Executive Team
Leadership Team
District Test Coordinators