

Secretary of Education Dr. Veronica García's Remarks
2007 AYP Announcement
August 3, 2007
Painted Sky Elementary School Cafeteria
3:00 pm

- Thank you Principal Woodard and CONGRATULATIONS to Painted Sky Elementary for your tremendous achievement.
- I would, again, like to recognize your incredible staff, the parents, and students. In addition to Painted Sky Elementary, Alamosa and MaryAnn Binford Elementaries also came off of designation making three for the West Mesa Cluster!
- **New Mexico had a total of 14 schools that came off of designation by making AYP two years in a row. Please help me in congratulating the following schools:**
 - **Painted Sky Elementary**
 - **Alamosa Elementary**
 - **MaryAnn Binford Elementary**
 - **Freedom High School**
 - **B.T. Washington Elementary, Hobbs**
 - **La Promesa Elementary, Belen**
 - **Tularosa Elementary, Tularosa**
 - **Apache Elementary, Farmington**
 - **Alcalde Elementary, Espanola**
 - **Desert View Elementary, Gadsden**
 - **Arrey Elementary, T or C**
 - **A:Shiwi Elementary, Zuni**
 - **Newcomb Elementary, Central Consolidated**
 - **Sunset Elementary, Roswell**
- I also want to congratulate every student, teacher, parent, principal, superintendent, and Board of Education member of schools that made AYP in 2007.
- Schools achieving AYP met requirements in up to 37 areas including higher student proficiency.
- As you know, proficiency requirements increase each year as we move toward 100% student proficiency in 2014.
- New Mexico's education reform efforts support student achievement. In 2007, the Fordham Foundation ranked New Mexico 2nd in the nation for education reform.
- We now have 94% of all core courses taught by Highly Qualified Teachers.
- We will continue efforts to improve teacher support. This year we received over \$6 million from the 2007 legislature for teacher support and professional development programs.
- New Mexico has also been nationally recognized for our high academic standards by the Fordham Foundation, the American Federation of Teachers, Education Week, and Newsweek.
- Most recently, the U.S. Department of Education conducted a comparative study of the National Assessment for Educational Progress and state assessments. New Mexico standards and cut scores ranked in the top ten overall.
- Unlike some states, New Mexico did not play the game of setting low proficiency levels in order to increase numbers of schools making AYP.

- When New Mexico students achieve proficiency in Math, Reading, and now Science on our Standards Based Assessment, they are nationally competitive and can succeed not only in New Mexico but nationwide.
- **In 2007, approximately 42% of our schools made AYP.** We commend these schools and communities and will be looking to them to identify successful strategies.
- It is also important to note that **84 schools missed meeting AYP by only one of up to 37 indicators.** That means that these 84 schools could have missed just the participation requirements in only one subgroup.
- It is important to hold schools accountable but I do not believe that AYP measures are the best way to do it.
- The Spirit of No Child Left Behind is admirable.
- Unfortunately, its implementation lacks fairness.
- Some schools missed AYP due to student proficiency numbers. Others may have had just one student that did not complete the test causing the school to miss participation requirements.
- A school with low enrollment may have met proficiency but did not make AYP because one senior graduated over the summer.
- **For example, the following 13 schools met or exceeded proficiency targets for all students and still did not make AYP including :**
 - **Montessori of the Rio Grande, Albuquerque**
 - **Twenty-First Century, Albuquerque**
 - **Animas High School, Animas**
 - **Vista Nueva High School, Aztec**
 - **Dixon Elementary, Espanola**
 - **Walatowa Charter High School, Jemez Valley**
 - **Lake Arthur High School, Lake Arthur**
 - **Mosquero High School, Mosquero**
 - **Mountainair High School, Mountainair**
 - **Quemado High School, Quemado**
 - **Taos Cyber Magnet, Taos**
 - **Tatum High School, Tatum**
 - **Wagon Mound High School, Wagon Mound**
- It is critical for schools, parents, students, and communities to understand that AYP status does not give a complete picture of school success or improvement.
- Community members, I ask that you focus on student proficiency rates at your schools. Parents, I ask that you focus on your individual children rather than the potentially misleading AYP designation.
- No Child Left Behind falls short.
- A Pass/Fail AYP designation does not adequately describe a school's success especially when a school is making forward progress with student proficiency.
- No Child Left Behind measures schools on a single assessment that only targets math and reading. New Mexico has added a science assessment. But this still risks narrowing curriculum.
- No Child Left Behind does not recognize growth. For example, we compare one third grade class to the third grade class the following year. Comparing classes of different students does not allow us to track individual student or cohort progress from one year to the next.
- Finally, No Child Left Behind does not appropriately recognize factors impacting English Language Learners, Special Education students, or our bilingual students.

- For example, New Mexico's English Language Learners must take the math test their first year. New Mexico's high math standards require the reading of word problems, analysis, and proof of work.
- We can also not deny the incredible impact of poverty on student learning and the severe lack of funding for the implementation of No Child Left Behind.
- The Governor, I, and New Mexico's education leaders are hopeful that the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind will address these issues.
- Again, student proficiency in math, reading, and science are the most important part of the AYP announcement. Please be in contact with your schools on the progress each school is making in student proficiency.
- Parents and community members, your involvement is key to improving student achievement in New Mexico. I encourage you to discuss your school's AYP status with your teachers and principals.
- Focus on student proficiency and work closely with teachers, principals, and school boards toward educational excellence in your communities.
- Regardless of the issues with No Child Left Behind, New Mexico will continue to hold schools accountable, to set the bar high for our students, to work toward an aligned system, and to ultimately ensure that all New Mexico students are prepared for success in college or career when they graduate from a public school.
- I want to assure you that despite the technical difficulties we experienced with the report formats and data displays; neither the data quality nor the student work was compromised.
- I want to thank the districts, schools, communities and the media of New Mexico for their patience.
- Thank you for your support.