

## Public Hearings Scheduled for Changes in the Rule on Compulsory School Attendance and a New Rule on English Language Arts

**Santa Fe** – The Public Education Department will conduct public hearings on rule changes for Compulsory school attendance and a new rule on English language arts in the State Capital Building, Room 317; 490 Old Santa Trail, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501, on Friday, July 31, 2009.

Public input on Rule Number 6.10.8 Compulsory School Attendance will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (noon). The amendments to the Compulsory School Attendance Rule aligns the Rule with changes that occurred to the Compulsory School Attendance Law during the 2009 Legislative Session. The amendments

- clarify the definition of unexcused absences,
- define what must be included in a charter school or school district's written attendance policy as well as requires these policies to be approved by the Public Education Department
- require schools to document unexcused absences including all attempts to notify parents and the strategies utilized for intervention.

"Neither the law nor the rule provides a "free pass" on unexcused absences for students," said Education Secretary Veronica C. García. "Nor does it change any of the punitive actions in the Compulsory School Attendance Law directed at truant students or parents of truants. Rather the amendments strengthen the requirement for schools to identify students with unexcused absences from school and requires schools to provide intervention strategies with both the students and the parents to help ensure the student is back in school."

School districts and charter schools will be required to review, update, or revise their attendance policies. These policies must be approved by the Public Education Department (PED). A copy of the rule may be accessed at: <http://ped.state.nm.us/press/2009/20090629-NMAC6.10.8proposed.pdf>

From 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on July 31, public input will be held for new Rule Number 6.29.4 English Language Arts <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/press/2009/20090629-nmac6.29.4.pdf>

The 9-12 Language Arts content standards were revised in a two-year process that involved stakeholders from public schools, higher education, and the PED, including teachers, administrators and university professors. This new version has 47 total content standards in the areas of Reading, Language, Communication, Writing, Research, Logic, Informational Text, Media and Literature. This is a reduction from the previous 59 content standards. The content standards have been reviewed by the American Diploma Project Benchmarks for College and Workplace Readiness to ensure that the standards prepare high school students for success in quality, high-growth jobs and college coursework. These new English Language Arts standards were found to be in alignment with the America Diploma Project.

"Rigor, coherence, focus, specificity, clarity and measurability are the criteria used by the American Diploma Project to judge our new standards," said Secretary García. "I am confident that these standards will provide the guidance to our educators that will result in increased student achievement."

The purpose of these public hearings will be to obtain input on the rules.

Interested individuals may testify either at the public hearing or submit written comments regarding the proposed rulemaking to Kristine M. Meurer, Ph.D., Bureau Chief, School and Family Support Bureau, Public Education Department, 5600 Eagle Rock Ave, NE Room 201; Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113 ([Kristine.Meurer@state.nm.us](mailto:Kristine.Meurer@state.nm.us)), fax (505) 222-4759. Written comments must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on July 31, 2009.

Copies of the proposed rules may be accessed on the Department's website (<http://ped.state.nm.us>) or obtained from Kristine M. Meurer, Ph.D. Bureau Chief, School and Family Support Bureau, Public

Education Department, 5600 Eagle Rock Ave, NE Room 201; Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113  
([Kristine.Meurer@state.nm.us](mailto:Kristine.Meurer@state.nm.us)), phone (505) 222-4748 or fax (505) 222-4759. The proposed rules will be made available at least thirty days prior to the hearings.

Individuals with disabilities who require this information in an alternative format or need any form of auxiliary aid to attend or participate in this meeting are asked to contact Kristine M. Meurer, Ph.D., as soon as possible. The Department requests at least ten (10) days advance notice to provide requested special accommodations.

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