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NEWS RELEASE

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Public Education Department Provides College Board Exams Free of Charge for Public School Tenth Graders

Santa Fe – The New Mexico Public Education Department will provide the College Board PSAT/NMSQT® free of charge to all 10th grade students in public schools during the 2009-2010 school year. Reading, math, and writing skills are evaluated through this national exam.

In October, 2008, over 41 percent of tenth grade students took the PSAT/NMSQT® exam in New Mexico. This school year 2009-2010, all districts, on a voluntary basis, will have the opportunity to have tenth graders participate free of charge. This offer will save the districts approximately \$13 per participating tenth grade student.

“The New Mexico Public Education Department is pleased to offer this service to all our 10th grade students,” said Education Secretary Veronica C. García. “Results will demonstrate, to many students and their parents, what they need to work on in order to be ready for college or careers. We hope every 10th grade student will take advantage of this great opportunity.”

Exam participation is provided through the Public Education Department through funding provided by the state legislature for College Board, Advanced Placement (AP). In addition, Advanced Placement funds support professional development for teachers participating in week-long summer training sessions (Institutes), and provide district AP professional development through Regional Educational Cooperatives. Funds also support on-line AP courses through IDEAL New Mexico.

The PSAT/NMSQT ® exams can be taken on Wednesday, Oct. 14 or Saturday, Oct. 17, 2009. All students wishing to register to take the PSAT must contact their high school counselor. The exams will provide information to strengthen academic areas, with support from classroom teachers and counselors. Academic areas tested include critical reading, mathematics problem-solving and writing skills.

For more information on this program, contact Carolann Gutierrez, Program Manager for the PED Humanities Bureau at 505-827-6596.

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