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NEWS RELEASE

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Secretary García Certifies 2009 AYP and 2008 Cohort Graduation Rate

SANTA FE –Secretary of Education Veronica C. García today certified 2009 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results and 2008 cohort graduation rates for New Mexico schools. Preliminary numbers were announced August 3, 2009 to meet federal and state mandated requirements.

The certified 2008 cohort graduation rate for New Mexico is 60%. There were a total of 15,834 changes to districts' reports after the reporting deadline, resulting in the 6 percent increase in the cohort graduation rate. For the certified cohort graduation rate, 73 percent of school districts statewide changed between 0-5 percent on self-reported corrections. Thirty-three districts reported no change in their rates.

A persistent achievement gap is also evident in these graduation rates. Caucasian students had a graduation rate of 71.3 percent; Asian students – 80.1 percent, which both exceed the national average of 69.2 percent. Hispanic students have a graduation rate of 56.2 percent; African American students – 60.9 percent; American Indian students – 49.8 percent; and English Language Learner posted a 61.1 percent.

“While the overall statewide 2008 graduation rate is up from preliminary numbers, 60 percent is no cause for celebration. It would be unconscionable to lose our sense of urgency to address our serious drop out problem. Each student is much more than just a statistic. National studies report that not having a high school diploma impacts a student’s quality of life, overall health, and economic security. We must unite and do all we can to focus our efforts on Governor Richardson’s **Graduate New Mexico** initiative. It is still a relevant endeavor,” said Secretary Garcia.

This is the first year the state has calculated a cohort graduation rate. PED has adopted a continuous improvement process, and we are committed to working with the districts to make sure that they understand the importance of meeting required reporting deadlines with the most accurate information to cut down on the number of revisions.

All 820 schools, including charter schools, are annually given an opportunity to appeal their AYP ratings. Sixty schools appealed resulting in 9 additional schools making AYP. They are: Berrendo Elementary and Roswell High School in Roswell; Grace B. Wilson Elementary in Central Consolidated Schools; Animas High School in Animas; Moreno Valley High School in Cimarron; and 21st Century Public Academy, Atrisco Heritage, Media Arts Collaborative, and Dennis Chavez Elementary in Albuquerque.

Specific AYP and cohort graduation rate information for all New Mexico schools and school districts can be found on the PED website www.ped.state.nm.us.

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