



Dr. Veronica C. García  
Secretary of Education

New Mexico  
Public Education Department  
300 Don Gaspar  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501-2786  
[www.ped.state.nm.us](http://www.ped.state.nm.us)

Beverly Friedman and Danielle Montoya  
Public Information Officers  
505-827-6661 505-476-0393

[Bev.Friedman@state.nm.us](mailto:Bev.Friedman@state.nm.us) [Danielle.Montoya@state.nm.us](mailto:Danielle.Montoya@state.nm.us)

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **New Mexico Receives \$28 Million in School Improvement Grants to Turn Around Lowest Achieving Schools**

*PED will send funding to winning school districts in early May for implementation of programs for 2010-2011 school year*

SANTA FE – New Mexico will receive more than \$28 million in School Improvement Grants (SIG) to turn around persistently lowest achieving schools, announced U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan today. The funds are part of the \$3.5 billion that will be made available to states this spring from money set aside in the 2009 budget and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

“I want to commend Dr. Sheila Hyde and the Priority Schools Bureau for the exemplary work on this grant,” said New Mexico Education Secretary Veronica C. García. “With this funding we want to see dramatic improvements for our lowest performing schools. Local decisions about school leadership, instructional delivery, and focused professional development must be focused on improving student achievement.”

Following strict definitions from the U. S. Department of Education (USDOE), PED identified three tiers of schools that are the lowest achieving. Of the 418 schools in New Mexico that are Title I schools and have not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the last five years, PED used the definition of persistently lowest achieving schools as defined by USDOE to designate the 20 Tier 1 schools as the first schools eligible to apply for the funds.

While PED waited for final approval of its SIG application, school districts, with a designated Tier 1 school, completed preliminary applications for between \$50,000 and \$2 million dollars a year that would be used over a 3 year period to improve education delivery at these schools. PED also provided technical assistance to each of these districts via a series of 11 webinars.

In the last two weeks, the designated school districts made formal presentations of their applications to a PED review panel. This week feedback was returned to the districts, and final applications are due on Wednesday, April 14, 2010. PED will review the district’s final applications and make a recommendation to Education Secretary Veronica C. García who will announce winners in early May.

“School districts need to know the amount of their SIG program funding soon so that they can have programs in place when students return in the fall,” said Secretary García.

Once announcements of New Mexico SIG funding have been made, all applications and reviewer comments will be posted on the PED website [www.ped.state.nm.us](http://www.ped.state.nm.us)

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The \$28,534,742 in SIG funding over a three year period can be used for school expenditures that will help students be successful, including: extending learning time for students, lengthening of the school day or year; incentive pay to teachers for the longer day or year; purchase of curriculum that will provide differentiated instruction, teaching to the specific deficiencies of students; professional development; hiring counselors or social workers to address problems in the home that affect student learning; transportation; hiring instructional coaches, purchasing lap-tops and software for students, and selection and training for a new principal in the school.

The state's SIG application is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/summary/index.html>

The 20 schools that have been identified to apply for the SIG funding are:

<b>School District</b>	<b>School</b>
Jemez Mountain	Lybrook Elementary
Gallup-McKinley	Church Rock Elementary
Albuquerque	El Camino Real Charter School
Gallup-McKinley	Navajo Elementary
Dulce	Dulce Elementary
Gallup-McKinley	Tohatchi Middle School
Cuba	Cuba High School
Santa Fe	Ramirez Thomas Elementary
Central Consolidated	Naschitti Elementary
Gallup-McKinley	Crownpoint High School
Pecos	Pecos Middle School
Central Consolidated	Newcomb High School
Deming	Bell Elementary
Gallup-McKinley	Navajo Pine High School
Grants Cibola	Laguna-Acoma High School
Albuquerque	Ernie Pyle Middle School
Gallup-McKinley	Crownpoint Elementary
West Las Vegas	Valley Middle School
Gallup-McKinley	Stagecoach Elementary
Socorro	R. Sarracino Middle School

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