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August 24, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Education Study Committee

FR: Craig J. Johnson

**RE: WRITTEN REPORT: 11TH GRADE STANDARDS-BASED ASSESSMENT:
SPRING 2011 RESULTS**

INTRODUCTION

During the 2010 interim, the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) heard a report on the use of the 11th grade standards-based assessment as the new high school exit exam, replacing the New Mexico High School Competency Exam (NMHSCE). As that report explained, in 2007 LESCE-endorsed legislation was enacted to require that, beginning in school year 2010-2011, to graduate, a student must demonstrate competency in required subject areas on a standards-based assessment or assessments or on a portfolio of standards-based indicators established by the Public Education Department (PED).

- Among its provisions, the law allowed PED to establish one exam, a series of exams (such as end-of-course assessments in the required subjects), or a standards-based portfolio.
- The law was later amended to provide that PED may designate the standards-based assessment required in the *Assessment and Accountability Act* for measuring adequate yearly progress (AYP) of districts and schools to serve also as the high school exit exam.
- By using the New Mexico Standards-based Assessment for two purposes, the state addressed both the issue posed by the former exam, the NMHSCE, of assessing students

on a test not tied to the standards that they were taught, and the issue of duplication of cost and student time in the state's assessment system.

Since the 2010 interim, a number of developments have changed the implementation schedule and certain aspects of the state's student assessment system. This staff report will cover:

- recent developments, in terms both of legislation and the administration of the assessment system;
- results from school year 2010-2011; and
- the potential impact of the assessment system on graduation rates.

The report concludes with a brief background about the NMHSCE.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Legislation

During the 2011 legislative session, LESC-endorsed legislation was enacted to suspend, for FY 12, almost all student assessments currently required in state law but not required in federal law. More specifically, primarily as a cost-saving measure, this legislation suspends the following state assessments for school year 2011-2012:

- Passing the Standards-based Assessment/High School Graduation Assessment (HSGA) and Alternate Demonstration of Competency (ADC);
- standards-based assessment in writing in grades 4,6,7, and 11;
- standards-based assessment in social studies in grade 11;
- college placement test in grade 11;
- work force readiness assessment in grade 11; and
- short-cycle assessments in grades 9 and 10.

A memo released by PED on June 7, 2011 (Attachment 2), lists not only these assessments but also the assessments that are still required. This memo also explains that school year 2011-2012 will be a pilot year for the Standards-based Assessment/HSGA and the ADC. This year will allow policymakers and districts to examine standards-based assessment scores to estimate their impact on graduation rates and requirements for retesting.

- Scores from the spring 2011 test will also be reported to schools for planning ADCs, though the class of 2012 will not be required to pass the Standards-based Assessment/HSGA or the ADC.
- In addition, no Standards-based Assessment/HSGA retests will be available in school year 2011-2012. The Standards-based Assessment/HSGA will be administered to the class of 2013 in the spring of 2012; and the class of 2013 will be the first that must pass the Standards-based Assessment/HSGA or complete an ADC.

One issue that the 2011 legislation creates is a discrepancy between the assessments that districts may suspend and assessments that students must take. Although the language of the new law

excuses students scheduled to graduate in spring 2012 from the high school graduation test requirement, it does not do so for the class of 2013. That cohort is still legally required to pass the test, although the law now excuses schools from administering the social studies and writing portions of the test, passage of which is required for graduation.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Assessment Content and Scoring Changes

The New Mexico 11th grade standards-based assessment administered in spring 2011 was developed by a new contractor, Measured Progress, the successful bidder on requests for proposals issued by PED in 2009. PED issued three memorandums to clarify issues regarding assessment changes:

- An April 18 memo (Attachment 1) summarized changes in the assessment window;
- A June 7 memo (Attachment 2) outlined which assessments will be required and which assessments are suspended. This memo also discussed impacts on the HSGA; and
- A July 22 memo (Attachment 3) explained changes to content standards, performance standards, scale scores, and test security.

Information contained in the memos is summarized below.

Revised 11th Grade Content Standards

In 2009, PED made major changes to the 11th grade content standards in English language arts (ELA) to parallel the American Diploma Project's college and career readiness standards.

- these standards outline what students need to learn to succeed in college and in their careers;
- the standards-based assessment was redesigned and field tested in 2010 to measure grade 11 ELA college and career readiness standards; and
- students were tested on those skills for the first time on the 2011 standards-based assessment.

At the May 2011 LESC meeting, the Secretary-designate of Public Education announced that PED had been awarded a grant of \$350,000 from the Kellogg Foundation to implement Common Core State Standards (CCSS). According to PED, the purposes of the grant are to:

- develop a written plan to implement the CCSS;
- develop a communication plan for the standards;
- identify and establish a planning committee;
- analyze requirements for alignment with the standards of:
 - curriculum development;
 - teacher preparation and professional development; and
 - assessments; and
- map the assets that could be leveraged to implement the standards.

Recalibrated Performance Standards

The new assessment differs from the old standards-based assessment as it has a ratio of 80 percent multiple choice items to 20 percent constructed-response items (rather than 75 percent multiple choice to 25 percent constructed-response, as in previous years). This change was made to reduce the cost and time required for scoring the exam. The standards-based assessment still contains short-answer and essay items to measure advanced problem solving skills.

According to Attachment 2:

- performance standards for the standards-based assessment in all tested grades and content areas are being reviewed and adjusted in the spring and summer of 2011 to ensure that they accurately measure student proficiency;
- PED determined that, given the extent of assessment changes, new performance standards, or cut scores, needed to be set;
- in recalibrating the performance standards, PED also revamped cut scores that showed sixth graders underperforming their classmates in adjacent grades, a problem that has troubled policymakers and educators for many years;
- performance standards in reading and science were raised to match national standards that give students the best chances for success in college and careers. This decision was supported by a recent study that found that 33 percent of New Mexico students scoring Proficient or above on the grade 11 standards-based assessment are required to take remedial English courses in college; and
- the new performance standards will help New Mexico switch to assessments that are based on CCSS.

According to PED, the new scale allows better comparisons of student progress and it is better suited for advanced growth models such as those used for measuring educator effectiveness. Scores on the vertically moderated scale range from 0 to 80, and a score of 40 represents proficient performance. The first digit of a scale score identifies the grade level. For example, scale scores for grade 3 range from 300 to 380.

The appendix contains several data tables including Tables 1 and 2 which show the previous and current cut scores.

While the new cut scores provide some advantages, they also make comparisons to prior years more complicated. Therefore, PED produced a crosswalk to facilitate these analyses. The crosswalk can be used to convert a scale score from the previous standards-based assessment to a scale score for the new standards-based assessment which approximates a similar performance level. However, there can be instances where a scale score conversion would result in a different performance level. For example, an 11th grader earning a scale score of 596 in school year 2009-2010 in math would be considered proficient. However, the crosswalk indicates that score would be equated to a scale score of 1137 in school year 2011-2012 or a nearing proficient level. Similarly, a scale score of 625 in reading would have been proficient using the old performance standards and cut scores whereas converting this score using the crosswalk would result in a nearing proficient performance level.

Testing Window

Currently, New Mexico allows for a five week assessment window for grades 3-8 and 11 Standards Based Assessments. Over the next two academic years (2011-2012 and 2012-2013), New Mexico will transition to a shorter assessment window. The goal is to provide data to districts and schools in time to make instructional decisions and to plan for the upcoming academic year based on student achievement data. As such, for school year 2011-2012, districts can anticipate receiving final standards-based assessment data back by the first week of June, with AYP and school grades finalized and released by the end of June.

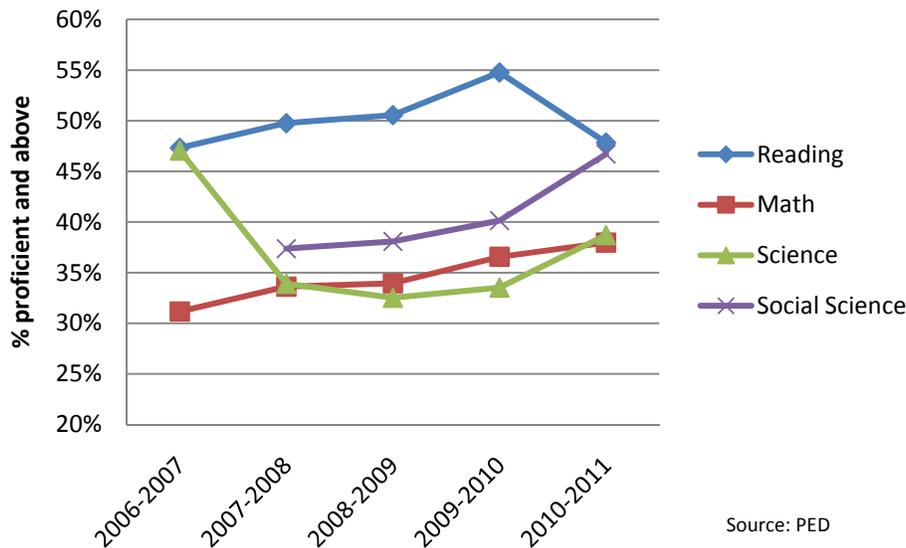
- During school year 2011-2012, the assessment window for the New Mexico Standards-based Assessment will be from March 19, 2012-April 13, 2012 (four weeks). Test results will be delivered by May 30, 2012. AYP and school grades will be published by the end of June 2012.
- During school year 2012-2013, the assessment window for the New Mexico Standards-based Assessment will be from March 18, 2013 through April 5, 2013 (three weeks). Test results will be delivered by May 22, a full month earlier than in 2011.

RESULTS FROM SCHOOL YEAR 2010-2011

Comparing standards-based assessment results from 2011 to earlier years is problematic due to changes in content standards, changes in the assessment, and changes in the cut scores. The precise impact of these changes on the resulting performance levels is unknown. As the graph below illustrates, relative to last year, the percent of students reaching proficiency or above increased in three of the four tested content areas, math, science, and social studies, but it fell in reading.

In the Appendix, Tables 3 through 10 show subgroup performance in reading, math, science, and social studies for school years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. In the Appendix, Tables 11, 12, and 13 show the 11th grade standards-based assessment results by district, high school, and charter school and compare the percent proficient and above to the most recent graduation rates.

11th grade NMSBA results



POTENTIAL IMPACT ON GRADUATION RATES

As the standards-based assessment will serve as the assessment required for high school graduation, PED will need to determine what level of performance on the standards-based assessment constitutes a demonstration of competency. Attachment 2 explains that:

- state law specifies that a student shall not receive a New Mexico diploma of excellence without demonstrating competence in math, reading and language arts, writing, social studies, and science based on a standards-based assessment or a portfolio of standards-based indicators;
- if a student exits high school at the end of grade 12 without satisfying those requirements, the student shall receive a certificate of completion indicating earned coursework credits;
- the same standards-based assessment performance levels are used for the HSGA and AYP;
- students achieving at least Proficient performance on the Standards-based Assessment/HSGA will pass the test for high school exit; and
- passing scores for the Standards-based Assessment/HSGA will be set by mid June 2011 and student test scores will be posted online for districts by July 15, 2011.

Depending on where PED sets the cut scores for the graduation requirement, passing the HSGA could have a significant impact on New Mexico's high school graduation rate.

Table A below shows the four-year cohort graduation rate for the class of 2010, along with the percent of 11th graders achieving proficiency or greater in math and the percent of 11th graders achieving nearing proficiency or greater in math.

Table A: Student Category	4 year Cohort Graduation Rates: Class of 2010	Proficient or Above 11 th grade math	Nearing Proficiency or above 11 th grade math
All Students	67.3%	38.0%	87.2%
Caucasian	75.6%	56.7%	93.3%
African-American	62.1%	27.2%	82.2%
Hispanic	64.1%	30.4%	82.8%
Asian	83.9%	68.8%	88.7%
American Indian	60.5%	25.4%	81.2%
Economically Disadvantaged	61.3%	27.1%	80.5%
Students w Disabilities	66.0%	12.1%	56.0%
English Language Learners	60.8%	12.5%	64.4%

BACKGROUND

Since 1986, to graduate from high school in New Mexico, students had been required by statute to pass the NMHSCE in certain required subjects. In testimony during the 2006 interim about the college and career readiness of New Mexico high school graduates, the LESC heard from representatives of PED and other sources that the NMHSCE:

- tested skills only at approximately the eighth grade level; and
- was not aligned with state high school standards.

Until spring 2009:

- high school students took the old NMHSCE in their sophomore year, had five additional opportunities to retake the exam and pass it before they were scheduled to graduate; and
- had five years after they completed the course requirements for graduation to successfully complete all six portions of the exam to earn a diploma.

Because statute still requires that students be given five years after they exit high school to pass the test, versions of the NMHSCE may still be required to be administered by some school districts until as late as school year 2015-2016 for some students.

APPENDIX: 11th Grade Performance
 Tables 1 – 13
 Source: PED

Table 1: Previous 11th Grade NMSBA Performance Level Cut Scores				
	Beginning Step	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
Math	560 or below	561-593	594-634	635 or above
Reading	577 or below	578-621	622-671	672 or above
Science	545 or below	546/597	598-653	654 or above
Social Studies	567 or below	568-606	607-648	649 or above
Writing		601 or below	602 or above	

Table 2: Current 11th Grade NMSBA Performance Level Cut Scores				
	Beginning Step	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
Math	1126 or below	1127-1139	1140-1150	1150 or above
Reading	1128 or below	1129-1139	1140-1150	1150 or above
Science	1129 or below	1130-1139	1140-1151	1152 or above
Social Studies	1129 or below	1130-1139	1140-1151	1152 or above
Writing		1139 or below	1140 or above	

TABLE 3: NM 11th Grade SBA: Subgroup Performance 2010-2011				
READING	Beginning Step	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
Caucasian	7.0%	26.9%	48.2%	17.1%
African-American	18.0%	39.5%	34.2%	7.5%
Hispanic	16.2%	41.6%	33.9%	7.3%
Asian	8.0%	30.9%	38.3%	22.2%
American Indian	18.6%	45.5%	29.9%	5.3%
Economically Disadvantaged	18.5%	43.3%	30.7%	6.4%
Students w Disabilities	51.4%	32.6%	8.2%	6.1%
English Language Learners	35.7%	48.4%	12.6%	1.9%

TABLE 4: NM 11th Grade SBA: Subgroup Performance 2009-2010				
READING	Beginning Step	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
Caucasian	5.6%	24.5%	54.9%	14.2%
African-American	17.0%	34.6%	40.6%	6.2%
Hispanic	12.3%	38.4%	42.4%	6.0%
Asian	8.8%	25.0%	47.0%	18.6%
American Indian	10.3%	41.4%	42.8%	4.2%
Economically Disadvantaged	13.2%	40.2%	40.0%	5.3%
Students w Disabilities	41.8%	40.4%	10.4%	4.9%
English Language Learners	22.6%	51.3%	22.4%	2.2%

TABLE 5: NM 11th Grade SBA: Subgroup Performance 2010-2011				
MATH	Beginning Step	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
Caucasian	6.0%	36.6%	44.3%	12.4%
African-American	17.5%	54.6%	24.8%	2.4%
Hispanic	14.0%	54.5%	27.3%	3.1%
Asian	5.1%	25.7%	41.5%	27.3%
American Indian	15.7%	58.1%	23.2%	2.2%
Economically Disadvantaged	16.2%	55.5%	24.4%	2.7%
Students w Disabilities	42.5%	43.1%	8.3%	3.7%
English Language Learners	28.6%	57.6%	10.7%	1.8%

TABLE 6: NM 11th Grade SBA: Subgroup Performance 2009-2010				
MATH	Beginning Step	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
Caucasian	12.4%	31.7%	34.8%	20.2%
African-American	32.0%	36.3%	24.9%	4.1%
Hispanic	30.4%	39.8%	22.9%	5.7%
Asian	9.8%	27.7%	31.1%	30.7%
American Indian	34.5%	41.3%	19.6%	3.4%
Economically Disadvantaged	33.5%	39.8%	20.4%	4.8%
Students w Disabilities	61.7%	26.6%	5.2%	3.6%
English Language Learners	52.2%	34.5%	10.1%	1.7%

TABLE 7: NM 11th Grade SBA: Subgroup Performance 2010-2011				
SCIENCE	Beginning Step	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
Caucasian	7.2%	30.7%	52.6%	8.3%
African-American	23.8%	45.1%	27.6%	2.0%
Hispanic	21.2%	46.8%	28.6%	1.5%
Asian	7.7%	32.2%	46.6%	12.5%
American Indian	25.4%	50.4%	22.0%	1.1%
Economically Disadvantaged	24.3%	47.3%	25.3%	1.2%
Students w Disabilities	49.5%	33.1%	11.7%	2.5%
English Language Learners	46.0%	43.1%	8.3%	0.8%

SCIENCE	Beginning Step	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
Caucasian	3.9%	40.4%	51.3%	2.8%
African-American	14.4%	57.5%	24.2%	0.6%
Hispanic	10.7%	62.3%	24.5%	0.6%
Asian	4.4%	43.9%	43.9%	6.4%
American Indian	10.4%	69.9%	18.2%	0.2%
Economically Disadvantaged	11.6%	64.3%	21.3%	0.6%
Students w Disabilities	32.2%	54.2%	7.8%	1.9%
English Language Learners	20.0%	69.9%	7.5%	0.3%

SOCIAL SCIENCE	Beginning Step	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
Caucasian	5.5%	26.8%	53.6%	12.8%
African-American	16.2%	41.2%	37.9%	3.1%
Hispanic	15.2%	43.8%	35.7%	3.4%
Asian	10.0%	24.8%	43.7%	20.3%
American Indian	17.4%	49.0%	30.1%	2.1%
Economically Disadvantaged	17.4%	46.0%	31.7%	2.8%
Students w Disabilities	40.5%	35.7%	14.4%	5.9%
English Language Learners	33.4%	49.7%	13.0%	1.7%

SOCIAL SCIENCE	Beginning Step	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
Caucasian	7.7%	30.5%	45.5%	14.6%
African-American	26.2%	36.3%	30.9%	3.2%
Hispanic	20.4%	45.8%	27.3%	4.1%
Asian	11.5%	29.7%	39.2%	18.2%
American Indian	18.2%	53.5%	25.1%	1.7%
Economically Disadvantaged	22.1%	47.6%	24.5%	3.2%
Students w Disabilities	45.6%	36.3%	8.9%	4.9%
English Language Learners	37.0%	48.7%	10.3%	1.4%

Table 11: District Performance					
The Top Five Districts in 11th Grade reading			The Bottom Five Districts in 11th Grade reading		
District	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	District	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
Los Alamos	79.0%	87.5%	Jal	4.3%	81.5%
Mountainair	68.4%	81.7%	Peñasco	15.0%	83.6%
Texico	67.5%	98.0%	Cuba	17.3%	71.2%
Mora	65.8%	81.7%	Jemez Valley	19.4%	91.0%
Ft. Sumner	65.4%	88.9%	Hondo	23.1%	86.4%
The Top Five Districts in 11th Grade math			The Bottom Five Districts in 11th Grade math		
District	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	District	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
Los Alamos	73.9%	87.5%	Jal	0.0%	81.5%
Logan	61.5%	94.5%	Cuba	9.3%	71.2%
Ft. Sumner	61.5%	88.9%	Española	10.3%	54.4%
Mora	60.5%	81.7%	Jemez Mountain	11.1%	80.9%
Texico	60.0%	98.0%	Jemez Valley	13.9%	91.0%
The Top Five Districts in 11th Grade science			The Bottom Five Districts in 11th Grade science		
District	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	District	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
Los Alamos	80.3%	87.5%	Jal	0.0%	81.5%
Cloudcroft	66.7%	88.7%	Española	12.0%	54.4%
Capitan	61.3%	76.9%	Cuba	14.7%	71.2%
Rio Rancho	58.0%	74.6%	Lake Arthur	18.2%	71.0%
Ft. Sumner	57.7%	88.9%	West Las Vegas	19.3%	75.7%
The Top Five Districts in 11th Grade social studies			The Bottom Five Districts in 11th Grade social studies		
District	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	District	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
Los Alamos	82.2%	87.5%	Jal	13.0%	81.5%
Capitan	74.2%	76.9%	Cuba	14.7%	71.2%
Cloudcroft	69.2%	88.7%	Zuni	19.5%	82.8%
Melrose	68.4%	97.2%	West Las Vegas	22.2%	75.7%
Springer	63.2%	98.0%	Jemez Valley	22.2%	91.0%

Table 12: High School Performance

The Top Five High Schools in 11th Grade reading			The Bottom Five High Schools in 11th Grade reading		
School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
La Cueva High	79.6%	84.9%	Jal High	4.3%	81.5%
Los Alamos High	79.0%	87.5%	Peñasco High	15.0%	83.6%
Cliff High	77.8%	79.1%	Silver City Opportunity School	15.0%	76.3%
Rio Rancho Cyber Academy	76.0%	60.5%	Gallup Central Alternative	15.2%	17.9%
Eldorado High	70.7%	79.8%	Independence High School	15.9%	49.6%
The Top Five High Schools in 11th Grade math			The Bottom Five High Schools in 11th Grade math		
School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
La Cueva High	74.6%	84.9%	Jal High	0.0%	81.5%
Los Alamos High	73.9%	87.5%	University High	2.9%	49.9%
Cliff High	72.2%	79.1%	Silver City Opportunity School	5.0%	76.3%
Rio Rancho Cyber Academy	64.0%	60.5%	New Hope Alternative High	5.6%	63.2%
Eldorado High	62.7%	79.8%	Gallup Central Alternative	6.1%	17.9%
The Top Five High Schools in 11th Grade science			The Bottom Five High Schools in 11th Grade science		
School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
Rio Rancho Cyber Academy	84.0%	60.5%	Jal High	0.0%	81.5%
Cliff High	83.3%	79.1%	Tse Yi Gai High	5.3%	59.3%
Los Alamos High	80.3%	87.5%	University High	5.7%	49.9%
La Cueva High	74.8%	84.9%	Gallup Central Alternative	6.1%	17.9%
Cloudcroft High	66.7%	88.7%	Century Alternative High	6.7%	34.5%
The Top Five High Schools in 11th Grade social studies			The Bottom Five High Schools in 11th Grade social studies		
School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
Rio Rancho Cyber Academy	84.0%	60.5%	University High	2.9%	49.9%
La Cueva High	83.4%	84.9%	Independence High School	6.8%	49.6%
Cliff High	83.3%	79.1%	Gallup Central Alternative	9.1%	17.9%
Los Alamos High	82.2%	87.5%	Jal High	13.0%	81.5%
Capitan High	74.2%	76.9%	Cuba High	14.7%	71.2%

Table 13: Charter School Performance

The Top Five Charter Schools in 11th Grade reading			The Bottom Five Charter Schools in 11th Grade reading		
School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
New Mexico School for the Arts	87.9%	NA	School for Integrated Academic	0.0%	22.5%
Albuquerque Institute of Math	87.5%	75.4%	Tierra Encantada Charter	0.0%	51.0%
Taos Academy Charter	81.3%	NA	Robert F. Kennedy Charter	3.8%	22.4%
Cottonwood Classical Prep	78.9%	NA	Deming Cesar Chavez Charter	6.3%	24.3%
Public Academy For Performing	77.8%	88.3%	Academy of Trades and Tech	9.5%	11.2%
The Top Five Charter Schools in 11th Grade math			The Bottom Five Charter Schools in 11th Grade math		
School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
Albuquerque Institute of Math	95.8%	75.4%	School for Integrated Academic	0.0%	22.5%
Cottonwood Classical Prep	78.9%	NA	Tierra Encantada Charter	0.0%	51.0%
Southwest Secondary Learning	68.1%	61.0%	Robert F. Kennedy Charter	0.0%	22.4%
East Mountain High Charter	64.2%	87.6%	Deming Cesar Chavez Charter	0.0%	24.3%
Moreno Valley High Charter	60.0%	60.7%	New America School Charter	4.5%	NA
The Top Five Charter Schools in 11th Grade science			The Bottom Five Charter Schools in 11th Grade science		
School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
Albuquerque Institute of Math	83.3%	75.4%	School for Integrated Academic	0.0%	22.5%
Southwest Secondary Learning	76.6%	61.0%	Tierra Encantada Charter	0.0%	51.0%
New Mexico School For The Arts	75.8%	NA	Robert F. Kennedy Charter	0.0%	22.4%
Taos Academy Charter	75.0%	NA	Deming Cesar Chavez Charter	0.0%	24.3%
Academy For Technology	72.1%	79.7%	Walatowa Charter High Charter	0.0%	90.5%
The Top Five Charter Schools in 11th Grade social studies			The Bottom Five Charter Schools in 11th Grade social studies		
School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate	School	% Proficient and Above	2010 4y grad rate
Albuquerque Institute of Math	100.0%	75.4%	School for Integrated Academic	0.0%	22.5%
Southwest Secondary Learning	85.1%	61.0%	Robert F. Kennedy Charter	0.0%	22.4%
New Mexico School For The Arts	84.8%	NA	Deming Cesar Chavez Charter	0.0%	24.3%
Academy For Technology	83.7%	79.7%	Century Alternative High	6.7%	34.5%
Cottonwood Classical Prep	78.9%	NA	Los Puentes Charter	7.1%	23.8%



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HANNA SKANDERA
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

April 18, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents of Public Schools, Directors of State Charter Schools, State Education Institutions, and BIE Schools, and District Test Coordinators

FROM: Hanna Skandera (signature on file)
Secretary-designate, Public Education Department

RE: **SBA Assessment Window**

Background and Assessment Window Changes

As we discussed at the Spring Budget Workshop, the Public Education Department is working to provide final data for AYP determinations and school grades (beginning in the 2011-2012 school year) to districts and schools in a timely manner. As a result, over the next two academic years (2011-2012 and 2012-2013), New Mexico will transition to a shorter assessment window.

Our goal is to provide data back to districts and schools in a time frame that allows for instructional decisions and planning for the upcoming academic year to be based on student achievement data. As such, for the 2011-2012 school year, districts can anticipate final SBA data back by the first week of June, with AYP and school grades finalized and released by the end of June.

Currently, New Mexico allows for a 5 week assessment window for the 3-8 and grade 11 Standards Based Assessments (SBA).

During the 2011-2012 school year, the assessment window for the NM SBA will be from March 19, 2012-April 13, 2012 (4 weeks).

During the 2012-2013 school year, the assessment window for the NM SBA will be from March 18, 2013-April 5, 2013 (3 weeks).

Basketball Tournament and Spring Break

Several districts expressed concern that a shorter SBA window will interfere with the state basketball tournament and spring break calendars for universities and students enrolled in dual credit courses. Because the window will not open until the third week of March and the basketball tournament is generally the first week of March, the Public Education Department does not anticipate any interference.

After meeting with the New Mexico Higher Education Department, the Public Education Department has determined that while there may be disruption for some students in terms of the dual credit courses, we are committed to moving forward with a 4 week window in the 2011-2012 academic year. Please see Attachment A for details on the spring breaks for several New Mexico colleges and universities.

Best Practices

As you prepare for a shorter assessment window, please make every effort to complete and return the SBA's within the first 3 weeks of the assessment window next year so that we can make a coordinated effort to have our completed materials shipped and delivered to our testing contractor Measured Progress by April 13. Of course, districts will still have the flexibility to use the 4th week of the window as a make-up week, but the sooner we can get materials to Measured Progress, the sooner we will receive actionable data.

Additionally, we want to encourage districts to consider other ways to expedite the completion of the SBA's. For example, districts could reduce the overall number of days it takes to complete all of the assessments by transitioning to fewer days overall while extending the time used for assessing on each individual day.

This has been an effective model in other states such as Kentucky where all 3-8 and high school students are assessed state-wide within 5 days. Louisiana is able to assess all students across their state within 7 days. Part of the strategy in these states, and many others, has been to extend the number of hours per day that students are being assessed.

The Public Education Department is also discussing options to expedite the return of NMAPA data and will follow-up with districts accordingly.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Tom Dauphinee at either (505) 827-6528 or tom.dauphinee@state.nm.us or Leighann Lenti at either (505) 412-2285 or Leighann.lenti@state.nm.us.

cc: Senator Cynthia Nava, Chair, Senate Education Committee
Representative Rick Miera, Chair, House Education Committee
David Abbey, Director, Legislative Finance Committee
Frances Ramirez-Maestas, Director, Legislative Education Study Committee

Subject: SBA Assessment Window
Date: April 18, 2012

ATTACHMENT A

2012 Spring Break Schedules for New Mexico Universities, Colleges, and Community Colleges

University of New Mexico: March 12-16, 2012

Highlands University: March 12-16, 2012

New Mexico Tech: March 12-16, 2012

Northern New Mexico Community College: March 12-16, 2012

Central New Mexico Community College: March 12-16, 2012

New Mexico State University: March 19-23, 2012



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HANNA SKANDERA
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

June 7, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Charter School Administrators and Directors of State Educational Institutions

FROM: Hanna Skandera *HS*
Secretary-designate, Public Education Department

RE: **ASSESSMENT CHANGES**

Senate Bill 360, signed by Governor Martinez on April 8, 2011, temporarily suspends certain state assessments in the 2011-2012 school year.

We recognize the significant impact that these changes will have on students and school districts. For that reason, we are providing the attached FAQ document to explain those requirements. We will provide additional information on each of these topics in the coming weeks and months.

Please contact a PED Assessment and Evaluation staff member if you need additional assistance with these requirements: Robert Romero, robert.romero1@state.nm.us, (505) 827-6524; Diana Jaramillo, diana.jaramillo@state.nm.us, (505) 827-6570; Charles Trujillo, Charles.Trujillo@state.nm.us, (505) 827-6536.

Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to the following questions are provided to explain changes in state requirements for New Mexico's student assessments.

ASSESSMENTS

Suspend Certain State Assessments in 2011-2012 School Year

QUESTION: What state tests will not be required in 2011-2012?

ANSWER: SB 360 temporarily suspends certain state assessments in 2011-2012 to balance the state budget and reduce general appropriations for state government and public schools.

The following assessments are suspended in the 2011-2012 school year:

- SBA in writing in grades 4, 6, 7, and 11.
- SBA in social studies in grade 11
- College placement test in grade 11
- Workforce readiness assessment in grade 11
- Short-Cycle assessments in grades 9 and 10
- Passing the SBA/High School Graduation Assessment and Alternate Demonstration of Competency

Temporarily suspend requirements to pass SBA/HSGA and the Alternate Demonstration of Competency:

2011-2012 will be a pilot year for the SBA/High School Graduation Assessment (SBA/HSGA) and the Alternate Demonstration of Competency (ADC). Scores from the spring 2011 test will be reported to schools for planning ADCs, though the class of 2012 will not be required to pass the test or the ADC. No SBA/HSGA retests will be available in 2011-2012. The SBA/HSGA will be administered to the class of 2013 in the spring of 2012. The class of 2013 will be the first that must pass the SBA or complete an ADC.

The following assessments are required in the 2011-2012 school year:

- SBA in reading in grades 3 through 8 and 11.
- SBA in writing in grades 3, 5, and 8.
- SBA in mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and 11.
- SBA in science in grades 4, 7, and 11.
- NMAPA in reading/language arts in grades 3 through 8 and 11.
- NMAPA in mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and 11.
- NMAPA in science in grades 4, 7, and 11.
- NMHSCE retesting for students exited from high school
- ACCESS for ELLs assessment for English Language Learners
- NMAPA alternate to NMHSCE retesting for students exited from high school

Standards Based Assessment/High School Graduation Assessment

QUESTION: How will Senate Bill 360 affect the SBA/High School Graduation Assessment?

ANSWER: SB 360 continues SBA/HSGA testing in school year 2011-2012. Statutory requirements for passing the test for high school graduation are suspended for 2011-2012. The PED intends the 2011-2012 year to serve as a statewide pilot so policymakers and school districts can examine SBA/HSGA pass rates and determine their impact on requirements for retesting and preparing Alternate Demonstrations of Competency (ADCs). Students who do not pass the SBA/HSGA in spring 2011 will not be required to retake it in 2011-2012 to get a high school diploma. This will also remove the cost of retesting from school districts in 2011-2012. The class of 2013 (cohort of 10th grade students in 2010-2011) will be the first cohort required to pass the test or complete an acceptable ADC

QUESTION: When is a student required to take the SBA or the NMHSCE?

ANSWER: From 2011-12 on, the NMHSCE will only be a retest for students exited from high school in 2010-2011 and earlier. These students can retake the NMHSCE for five years after exiting high school (winter 2016). Starting in 2010-2011, students must pass the SBA/HSGA for a high school diploma. Elsewhere in this FAQ document, the impact of Senate Bill 360 on SBA/HSGA testing is explained.

QUESTION: What are passing scores on the SBA/HSGA?

ANSWER: Performance standards for the SBA in all tested grades and content areas are being reviewed and adjusted in spring and summer 2011 to ensure that they make accurate measurements of student proficiency for the new test design with 80% multiple choice items and alignment with certain updated assessment frameworks. The same SBA performance levels are used for the High School Graduation Assessment and adequate yearly progress (AYP). Students achieving at least Proficient performance on the SBA/HSGA will pass the test for high school exit. Passing scores for the SBA/HSGA will be set by mid June 2011 and student test scores will be posted online for districts by July 15, 2011. Hardcopy reports will be delivered by August 1, 2011.

QUESTION: How should SBA/HSGA scores be used to identify a student's needs?

ANSWER: The SBA Student Report for Parents provides several types of data on a student's performance. Student achievement is classified in four performance levels based on a scale score. Scale scores pinpoint a student's overall performance in each content area. Scale scores are also used to monitor a student's year-to-year growth. Raw scores for reporting categories (e.g. Algebra and Geometry in math) within a content area are also reported. There are a small number of items and raw score points for reporting categories, so it is not possible to compute a scale score. However, the test vendor will provide a lookup table that will report proficiency levels achieved by a typical student with a certain reporting category raw score. The table will classify raw scores into categories to assist teachers in identifying needs.

QUESTION: When should early graduates take the SBA/HSGA? Should they take it when they are sophomores since their junior year will be their last?

ANSWER: Statute 22-2C-4, NMSA 1978, established New Mexico's norm for administering

academic assessments for adequate yearly progress (AYP). The statute states that the SBA will be given in grade eleven in mathematics, reading and language arts, social studies, writing, and in one high school grade in science. Grade 11 was selected for the science assessment in high school.

New Mexico's high school graduation assessment requirement has broader application to all high school grade levels. Statute 22-13-1.1, (M), NMSA 1978, specifies that a student shall not receive a New Mexico diploma of excellence without demonstrating competence in math, reading and language arts, writing, social studies and science based on a standards-based assessment or a portfolio of standards-based indicators. If a student exits school at the end of grade twelve without satisfying those requirements, the student shall receive a certificate of completion indicating earned coursework credits. The statute applies to a variety of circumstances in which a student might not be in grade 11 and must pass the test for a diploma. Local districts should identify students such as these as early as possible so they may have opportunities to retest prior to high school exit.

QUESTION: Will scores for early graduates be counted for AYP?

ANSWER: U.S. Department of Education guidance specifies that students take a state accountability assessment during high school. Many different timelines for completing high school graduation requirements, including taking the SBA/HSGA, are possible. In order to satisfy federal requirements, a student's scores on the SBA/HSGA will be counted for AYP participation, and if they are FAY students, also for proficiency, when their graduation cohort's grade 11 results are used for AYP. Student test scores will be stored in a database until they are applied to AYP.

QUESTION: Will returning dropout students be required to take the SBA/HSGA, and will their scores be included in AYP?

ANSWER: An increased number of dropout students are returning to high school in New Mexico. In some cases, students left school many years ago. These students must meet graduation requirements of the year in which they would have graduated. Students required to take the SBA/HSGA when they return to school will not be counted for AYP, according to U.S. Department of Education guidance. That is, these students will not be counted for AYP if their cohort has already graduated from high school.



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HANNA SKANDERA
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

MEMORANDUM

July 22, 2011

TO: Public School Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, Directors of State Educational Institutions, and BIE School Administrators

FROM: Hanna Skandera
Secretary of Education, designate 

RE: **Advances in New Mexico's Assessment and Accountability System**

We are receiving a number of questions about recent changes in content standards and assessments and how they impact student achievement and AYP results. I appreciate your inquiries. Please find an information sheet attached that explains the following improvements:

- Grade 11 Content Standards Raised to Ready Students for College and Careers
- Assessments Streamlined to Deliver Results Earlier, Reduce Costs and Testing Time
- SBA Performance Standards Raised to Meet National Standards and Remedy Sixth Grade Dip
- Improved SBA Scale to Measure Student Growth
- Stronger Test Security for High Stakes Uses
- More Information on Adequate Yearly Progress

The Assessment and Accountability Division is ready to answer your questions about any of these changes. Please contact Robert Romero, Assessment Coordinator, (robert.romero1@state.nm.us or 505.827.6524), or Dr. Tom Dauphinee, Deputy Director of Assessment and Accountability (tom.dauphinee@state.nm.us or 505.827.6528) with questions about content standards, performance standards, and assessments; and Dr. Cindy Gregory (cindy.gregory@state.nm.us) will answer questions about AYP.

Thank you for supporting our assessment and accountability system to improve student outcomes.

Attachment (1)

HS/TD

cc: PED Executive Team
PED Leadership Team
District Test Coordinators



New Mexico Public Education Department

Advances in New Mexico's Assessment & Accountability System

New Mexico's Assessment and Accountability System is made up of four key parts designed to raise student achievement. They include the New Mexico Academic Content Standards, student assessments, performance standards, and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Last year, we made important improvements in these areas to promote student success, and more improvements are coming in 2011-2012.

Grade 11 Content Standards Raised to Ready Students for College and Careers

In 2009, New Mexico made major changes in Grade 11 content standards in English Language Arts (ELA) to parallel the American Diploma Project's college and career readiness standards. These standards mark a path for students to learn what they need to succeed in college and jobs with long term potential.

New Mexico's Grade 11 content standards are on the PED website at:
<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/standards/>

You can learn more about American Diploma Project standards at:
<http://www.achieve.org/standards-0>

The Standards Based Assessment (SBA) was redesigned and field tested in 2010 to measure Grade 11 ELA college and career readiness standards. Students were tested on those skills for the first time on the 2011 SBA.

Assessments Streamlined to Deliver Results Earlier, Reduce Costs and Testing Time

In spring 2012, the SBA will be given in four weeks instead of five to deliver test results to districts by May 31. The test window will run from March 19, 2012-April 13, 2012. The 2013 test window will run for three weeks from March 18, 2013-April 5, 2013, and data will be delivered by May 22, a full month earlier than in 2011. Even more, AYP and school grades will be published by the end of June 2012.

The SBA will be streamlined in 2012 by suspending the Writing test in grades 4, 6, 7, and 11 and Social Studies in grade 11. Students in grades 3, 5, and 8 can still take the Writing test without using special state funding to design the tests, yet another cost savings. The Alternate Performance Assessment (NMAPA) in Social Studies is also suspended in 2011-2012.

We will draw test items from the SBA's bank rather than writing new items. This will bring costs to districts and the PED down, and it will take from 30% to 50% less time to give the SBA. For example, the time needed to give the grade 11 SBA will fall from 23 hours in 2011 to 11 hours in 2012.

The share of multiple choice items used in the SBA is increased from 70% to 80% of the test to reduce costs to districts. The SBA still contains short answer and essay items to measure advanced problem solving skills.

These changes will also lower costs of the SBA and NMAPA for districts and the PED. In 2012, the SBA in grades 3 through 8 will cost \$32.12 per booklet and the grade 11 SBA will cost \$73.13 per booklet. That means the cost of the SBA in grades 3 through 8 will fall by \$11.91 per booklet, and the cost of the grade 11 SBA will go down by \$5.35 per booklet. Also, NMAPA costs will drop to \$50.00 from \$75.00 per student.

Even though no new SBA items will be written and no more items will be released, items and practice tests from prior releases will still be available online at:

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/AssessmentAccountability/AssessmentEvaluation/SBA/index.html>

SBA Performance Standards Raised to Meet National Standards and Remedy Sixth Grade Dip

Whenever a test design is changed in the ways outlined above, new performance standards, or cut scores, must be set. These changes also gave us a chance to repair performance standards that falsely made sixth graders underperform their classmates in adjacent grades, a problem that troubled New Mexico educators for many years. Performance standards in Reading and Science were raised to match national standards that give students the best chances for success in college and careers. This decision was supported by a recent study that found that 33% of New Mexico students scoring Proficient or above on the grade 11 SBA are required to take remedial English courses in college. The new performance standards will help New Mexico make a successful switch to next generation assessments that are based on challenging Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

New Mexico's CCSS in English/Language Arts and Math can be found on the NMPED website at the following links:

<http://www.nmcpr.state.nm.us/NMAC/parts/title06/06.029.0013.htm>

<http://www.nmcpr.state.nm.us/NMAC/parts/title06/06.029.0014.htm>

More information about the 2011 SBA performance standards can be found at:

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/AssessmentAccountability/AssessmentEvaluation/sba/dl11/New%20SBA%20Cut%20Score%20Memo.20110701.pdf>

Improved SBA Scale to Measure Student Growth

2011 SBA scores are reported on a new vertically moderated scale. The new scale allows better comparisons of student progress and it is better suited for advanced growth models such as those used for measuring educator effectiveness. Scores on the vertically moderated scale range from 0 to 80, and a score of 40 represents Proficient performance. The first digit of a scale score identifies the grade level. For example, scale scores for grade 3 range from 300 to 380. More details on the vertically moderated scale can be found at:

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/AssessmentAccountability/AssessmentEvaluation/sba/dl11/New%20SBA%20Cut%20Score%20Memo.20110701.pdf>

Stronger Test Security for High Stakes Uses

New procedures will be put in place to prevent breaches of test security from high stakes uses of SBA scores such as qualifying students to graduate from high school and measuring the effectiveness of teachers and principals. These changes are particularly important when no new items will be written for the SBA. Effective instruction for our students depends on accurate test results for pointing out strengths and needs. And, the PED has spent more than \$4 million annually to develop state assessments. The following improvements will be set in place to protect our investment in students:

- SBA sessions must be given in a certain order and schedule yet to be set.
- Student test data files will contain student scores by subject and subarea performance and they will not contain student answers to test items.
- The SBA student answer documents will be analyzed for unusual response patterns. The PED will investigate instances where it appears that answers might have been changed to artificially raise test scores.

More Information on Adequate Yearly Progress

There are additions to the 2011 AYP FAQ to better explain Safe Harbor and how to read a report. Details on these additions can be found at:

<http://ped.state.nm.us/ayp2011/>

The PED Can Answer Your Questions

The Assessment and Accountability Division is ready to answer your questions about changes in the SBA and NMAPA. Please contact Robert Romero, Assessment Coordinator, (robert.romero1@state.nm.us or 505.827.6524), or Dr. Tom Dauphinee, Deputy Director of Assessment and Accountability (tom.dauphinee@state.nm.us or 505.827.6528) with questions about content

standards, performance standards, and assessments; and Dr. Cindy Gregory (cindy.gregory@state.nm.us) will answer questions about AYP.