Stand4KidsNM daily email fodder:

**Jan. 20:**

Honorable lawmakers:

Stand4KidsNM welcomes you back to work. We are eager to see what actions you take to alleviate the stresses, burdens and heartaches being endured by teachers, parents and students in our state -- all of which are perpetuated by Hanna Skandera and her Public Education Department.

We are Stand4KidsNM and we are a grass-roots movement founded by five mothers (one current teacher, two former teachers, one former EA and one current school board member among us). Our advocacy began at an October 2013 town hall meeting at our Albuquerque Northwest high school, where we learned the ugly details about testing and new ridiculous graduation requirements imposed on our students by Ms. Skandera.

We are angry enough that our movement has grown quickly and spread statewide, helped considerably by social media and an early attempt by Skandera, Gov. Susana Martinez and Journal Editor Kent Walz to smear our board member, Kathy Korte. Ms. Skandera ordered that an email be sent to every teacher and administrator in public and charter schools statewide in October. In her email, she attempted to portray Ms. Korte as misinformed based on a letter Ms. Korte wrote to her ABQ lawmakers.

Ms. Skandera’s email was the spark that fueled the simmering fire being felt among parents and teachers across the state in regards to her unreasonable and costly education initiatives.

So throughout this legislative session, you will get daily emails from Stand4KidsNM and other people who have joined our fight to be heard. In our letters, we’ll offer you the viewpoints of parents, teachers and students as shared with us via emails and our very active Facebook page.

Our Facebook page alone, on any given week, gets 25,000 to 38,000 views. Our petition will be presented to lawmakers during this session as well.

Our message to you: We, as the parents and teachers of our students, know what these PED reforms really mean in the trenches where we live, work and play. And they don’t mean what the PED is telling you -- not by a long shot.

We will be watching each of you to see what actions you take to help us. We are not liars. Our teachers are not lazy workers who don’t like to be evaluated. Our parents are not complaining for the fun of it. We are telling you what our experiences are and we want you to consider what it means when the Public Education Department has:

* Proposed to take $99 million of the new $140 million in education money below the line instead of above the line. This tactic means UNEQUAL distribution among the state’s 89 districts;
* Unfettered access to these taxpayer dollars to be used for pet pilot projects like merit pay, unfounded and untested teacher and principal evaluation plans and a NM Reads to Lead program that gave ZERO dollars to the largest district in the state last year without proof and justification that these programs even work;
* Stripped local boards of education of their ability to make local decisions that best fit the needs of their local communities of learners;
* Instituted rules and regulations without any checks and balances by our ELECTED local officials -- YOU.
* SKEWED the statute that requires students to show competency in “end of course” exams. Did you as lawmakers really mean for the PED to come up with untested, unvetted and unreliable one-size-fits-all End of Course exams for every student in the state? Or was your intent to have teachers gives final exams that they wrote?? If the latter, then Skandera has warped the intent of your law.

Finally, we know that you are serving your communities because you choose to help your communities. As elected officials, we recognize that your job isn’t easy. However, we also want to emphasize to you that we will be watching each of you and will be distributing your record on education issues for this 2014 session. It’s an election year for representatives.

We wish you the best of luck. Our Stand4KidsNM supporters will be at the Roundhouse periodically throughout the session. Being that we are teachers and employed, it is hard for us to be in Santa Fe daily. But we’ll be wearing red when we are.

We’ll ask to meet with you and we’ll support you in your efforts to undo the damage inflicted by Ms. Skandera on our teachers and students. In the meantime, you can find us at:

[www.stand4kidsnm.org](http://www.stand4kidsnm.org)

[www.facebook.com/stand4kidsnm](http://www.facebook.com/stand4kidsnm)

Twitter: @stand4kidsnm

Stand4kidsnm@outlook.com

Good luck, ladies and gentlemen. It should be an interesting session.

Our deepest regards,

Stand4KidsNM

**Jan. 21:**

*If you ask high school students about these new End of Course exams, they will tell you they are ridiculous. Many of our students are taking honors, AP, dual credit and IB classes. Despite their high achievements in these classes, they are forced to take an End of Course exam to “prove competency.”*

*Attached is a petition signed by Albuquerque High School students who object to the testing requirements and graduation hurdles they must jump through to achieve a diploma.*

*\And the following is a comment posted to the ABQ Journal web site and our Facebook page by Emma Lathrop, a Los Alamos High School student. Her response below was directed at Hanna Skandera's Albuquerque Journal commentary, titled “****Reform is Worth Discomfort.”*** *Miss Lathrop has also created a Facebook page, New Mexico Students "D"mand Better.*
Emma Lathrop · Los Alamos High School
Yes, Ms. Skandera, I am already learning from your “reformed” educational system. As a student here in New Mexico, and one of those who your plans are supposed to benefit, here is what your policies have taught me:
•I learned that I mean nothing more to my state than a test score, and how well I perform on one of these tests will soon dictate how much my teachers get paid.
•I learned that I should try and get the best teachers I can while I can. Good teachers are quitting because they are worn out and tired of being forced to comply with a direction in education that compromises their professional and educational beliefs.
•I learned that this “reform” is not geared towards helping students, but rather the pockets of corporate testing companies.
•I learned that I should not become a teacher because it would mean entering a career where I would not be treated as a professional, I would have to teach to a test, I would be overworked, and I would be underpaid.
•I learned that I am lucky to be graduating this year because it means that I will be narrowly escaping a new education system that sucks the joy out of learning and focuses on redundant and repetitive testing that unnecessarily stresses students and teachers.
But most importantly, I learned to stand up for what I believe in and to take action against the injustices and wrong-doings that your PED has created.
So, I thank you, designee Skandera, for all that you have taught me.

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**Jan. 22:**

I would also like to give you my perspective. I have been in education since 1998 when I started as an EA. I have been a teacher for students with autism, emotional/ behavioral issues, learning disabilities and currently general education in both elementary and high school. I love teaching and it is a huge part of my identity. My husband is also a teacher so really, education is the identity of our household. But here is the thing, I don't know if I can do it anymore. I am tired of having to put my own money into my classroom because the materials I have do not align with what I have to teach. I am tired of living paycheck to paycheck because our pay has not even kept up with the cost of living, let alone with increases to health care and retirement. I am tired of not knowing what will come down from PED next. Really I am tired of not being able to teach as effectively or emotionally as I want.

But more than being tired, I am scared. I have two sons who attend school where I teach. I am scared that the quality, experienced teachers like they have now won't be there in a couple of years because it has just gotten to be too much. I am scared that if I opt my son out of testing next year that I will have professional repercussions. I am scared that what I chose to do 16 years ago isn't what I will retire from. Mostly, I am scared that if I leave teaching I will lose my identity and that of my family.

Please don't give up the fight. So many people in APS and across the State are counting on you.

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**Jan. 23:**

A superintendent wrote this opinion column:

I recently returned to District–level public school administration after a 10 year absence, though I had

remained peripherally engaged on a state-wide basis working closely for, or with, various educational

organizations and agencies. I was pleased, but not surprised, to find the same level of tireless,

dedicated, (com)passionate professionals working with our students and families as I had remembered.

In fact, they seemed even better trained, extremely cohesive and more focused on improved student

achievement than ever before, due to the local implementation of powerful collaborative models like

Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s) and data driven Continuous Improvement initiatives.

 I didn’t find teachers waiting to be anointed as “rock stars”, or any withholding their best instruction

until rewarded with additional merit pay. Nor did I find even a hint of dissatisfaction about our local

schools among our parents and community members, which is consistent with the results of the highly

reputable annual Gallup poll on this topic, yet terribly inconsistent with the steady drumbeat of many

media critics.

What I did find, to my dismay, was a clearly demoralized, frustrated staff dealing with multiple,

questionable “reform” initiatives- new national standards, excessive testing, hastily designed evaluative

procedures- and a funding level still well below that of 2008 when a legislatively funded external

study had actually determined N.M. was, even then, underfunding its public schools by at least 15%; a

significant factor in the District’s plight of frozen salaries and reduced support services to students and

families for fully six years.

 Please consider that fact within the context of the esteemed, and oft cited, Annie Casey Foundation’s

“Kids Count” and Chance for Success reports which, unfortunately, but consistently list N.M. at the

bottom of many rankings in which we can take no pride- including factors like overall poverty;

teen parenting rates; family educational attainment level etc.- for which teachers can’t control yet

must address. The Casey Foundation has wisely stated that “ We should expect schools to increase

achievement for all students regardless of race, income, class, and prior achievement …. but it is

unreasonable to expect schools to completely eliminate any large pre-existing inequalities, especially if

the schools themselves are underfunded and overchallenged.” Does that sound like anyplace you/we

know?

Your reaction to that question suggests an even more troubling question: Why has our current

state-level educational leadership chosen to demonize our teachers and consistently use a statistic

about their evaluations as mythical as the “alligators in the storm drains” story to do so? The

Albuquerque Journal recently wrote that N.M. Education Secretary-designee Skandera-for the

umpteenth time- said that “the old system gave 99 percent of teachers the highest rating, while N.M.

hovers near the very bottom of teacher effectiveness nationwide.” Please read that last, inflammatory

and judgmental statement about our teachers most carefully, as it is no longer simply criticizing the

evaluative model, but now attacking the individual educators.

First of all, there is no Public Education Department data base that currently tracks local districts’ files on

teachers in this way- unless they are referring to those who must demonstrate, and submit, evidence of

3 satisfactory evaluations to even retain their initial licenses; in which case 1% may have inadvertently

slipped by , apparently to someone’s shame. But more troubling on this point is the omission of statistics

about novice teachers who often leave the profession within their first 3-5 years at rates

reported nationally between 25-40%. Are we to believe that our N.M. supervisors are routinely driving

away high performing individuals to then rate the survivors as satisfactory? Highly illogical.

This may not be the proper venue to debate the relative merits of a different teacher evaluation

system, but it is the appropriate forum to question why educators are being subjected to a leadership

style akin to a General who blames the infantry for its inability to accomplish the mission.

I will gladly exhort, and assist the “troops” to continue to improve teaching and learning, but I will never

denigrate their incredible efforts or commitment to our youth.

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**Jan. 24:**

A teacher wrote to us via email:

So, today we found out that the principals were told that we would all receive our evaluations BEFORE we leave for the summer.

How is that possible?

Because they will be using LAST YEAR's Junior data (not this year's Senior data- because there isn't any data for seniors) to compute the 50% of our evaluation for this year.

When I inquired as to the fact that I am a senior teacher, which student scores would be applied to me, I was informed that LAST YEAR's Junior SBA data would account for half of my evaluation for this year.

Guess what? I never taught those kids before this year, so how can their Junior SBA data account for HALF of my evaluation this year?

Apparently the principals were told this week that this year's collected data will be used next year, but not this year.

In addition, Hanna Skandera told the crowd at the Hispanic Cultural Center that we would only be judged on OUR students' data.

That must have been another LIE!

HOW IS SKANDERA GETTING AWAY WITH THIS?

How can you base someone's evaluation on the scores of students they did not teach from last year?

Also how can you base someone's current evaluation on data from a previous contract period?

HOW IS ANY OF THIS LEGAL?

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**Jan. 27**

*A teacher posted this to our FB page. More than 4,500 views and 40 comments:*

Oh my. PED just keeps stirring things up! NM Education Peeps: are you listening? Our individual teacher evaluation scores for this 2013-14 school year are being based on our evaluations and school scores and student SBA scores , etc. from the previous 3 years. NOT this years' work, observations, student scores, etc.

No real details or complete answers (duh! we are talking about NM PED here!) , but YEAH - kind of insane!!

AND, there's info of some kind of "exemption" available: an "exemption" from this year's third observation based on our 2013-14 score (this school year)which is, of course (duh) based on everything from the previous 3 years. Supposedly, if we scored "Effective" or "Highly Effective" we could be exempt from the final observation this year. But, there may also be a deadline to apply for said exemption, which may or may not have passed.
(Confused yet?)
And, supposedly, 5th grade teachers around the state have already been "scored". So, even though this school year is barely half over - teachers are receiving a grade for this year. But it's okay - because this year's grade isn't based on this year. That makes sense, doesn't it?????

So..... THIS year's evaluation score is being based on the (according to PED) poorly designed, badly implemented, below par, ineffective teacher evaluation system we've used the last several years - which PED has spent millions of dollars replacing - AND they want to use the results of that old system to exempt us from the evaluation system they
have created which they say is the REAL and authentic evaluation system which is going to "save education in NM".
What???????? Are you kidding me???????
No details. More questions than answers. Par for the course.

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**Jan. 28**

*Education standards destructive by Carol Singletary as printed in Clovis News-Journal January 10, 2014*

We met the other day in the kitchen of a retired teacher — far right, far left, working and retired teachers of all grades.

Despite our differences, we all came together for a single purpose: to fight what is happening to public education, particularly the new one-size-fits-all standards, the reliance on high-stakes standardized testing, and the new teacher evaluations.

The Common Core State Standards, were designed by non-educators and approved by most states before they were written.

Even if we set aside doubts about the desirability of a set of common standards for a nation as diverse as the U.S., we should be concerned about who designed these standards and their tests.

London-based Pearson, “the world’s leading education company,” designs many of the standardized tests used to test the effectiveness of the new standards. And it worked jointly with Bill Gates and others to fund development.

Thus, the company that was part of writing the standards is designing the tests to evaluate the standards, designing the curriculum the teachers use to teach the standards, and publishing the textbooks used in support of the standards.

Supporters of Common Core say they are not a curriculum, but will make instruction more efficient, like assembly lines improved efficiency in manufacturing.

But no one seems to be asking why that is a good thing. Are our children widgets now?

We remembered when most tests students took were designed by the teacher who had been teaching the material. We remembered using those tests to evaluate what our students knew, and how we could help them understand.

Now, more and more days are spent taking tests made by outside, for-profit groups that do not know the students or what the local community has decided is important.

And now if students do poorly on those tests, the teachers and schools are labeled as failing. The result, of course, is schools will tell their teachers to focus only on what will appear on the standardized test.

So do not tell us these standards are not dictating local curriculum.

Another issue of concern is the teacher evaluation system being implemented by Gov. Susana Martinez and Education Secretary-designate Hanna Skandera. They say this system is designed to recognize the good teachers and weed out the bad. The reality could not be further from the truth.

The current system bases 50 percent of a teacher’s evaluation on the scores from the Standards Based Assessment (SBA) to hold teachers “accountable.”

The SBA tests students in grades 3-8,10 and 11 over English and math. Thus, teachers’ evaluations will be based 50 percent on how well their students do on this test.

For those who believe in the validity of corporate-created standardized tests, that makes sense. But what about a kindergarten teacher? Or a junior high science teacher? Or a high school vocational teacher? Since they do not teach tested subjects, their evaluation will be based on the school’s overall test scores.

That means, no matter how hard the teachers work, their evaluations will be based on test scores out of their control or impact.

Tell me again how this is going to identify excellent teachers?

As we gear up for the legislative session, we need to push back against these destructive changes to education.

**Carol Singletary is a longtime public school teacher. Contact her at:** **csingletary@plateautel.net**

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**Jan. 29**

Today is Public Education Day. And attached are the 7,000-plus signatures on our petition that we began in October.

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**Jan. 30**

*The APS Board of Education received this email from a high school teacher in December, right before administration of December End of Course exams in classes that are ½ semester long, such as health, government, economics and NM history. This particular teacher is also a founder of CURE NM, a group of teachers who have done a lot of research on the origins of Skandera’s reforms and offer a viable evaluation tool that doesn’t cost millions to implement.*

*You can find the CURE at* [*https://www.facebook.com/CUREUSA*](https://www.facebook.com/CUREUSA)

Dear Members of the APS Board of Education,

The following two sentences were pulled from a PED memo (written by Dr. Goldschmidt) regarding EOC's sent to administrators yesterday.

**"Remember that the EoCs may not be distributed to Test Administrators until the day of the test.  Teachers may not access the EoC Tests or Scoring Keys before, during, or after administration."**

I am absolutely outraged by this!  How dare someone at the PED degrade my profession by making the point that teachers are not to be trusted under any circumstances with these EOC's.  Unreal!!  As a veteran teacher of 23 years, I am incredibly offended by these comments.  This is a clear statement that teachers are not trusted and that these EOC's are simply there to set teachers up for failure.  Distrusting me and my colleagues to have any contact with these EOC's at any point reduces my role in the classroom to nothing more than an underpaid baby-sitter.  Dr. Goldschmidt and the PED should be ashamed of sending this type of message out.  I am appalled by these statements which illustrate a total distrust for professional educators.  Going to the efforts of using bold print for these statements is even more offensive.  The PED should be supporting the teachers of New Mexico, not treating them like second class citizens.

Up until today, I thought that maybe the PED would eventually see that these new reforms are punitive based and a waste of taxpayer monies’.  Clearly, that is not the case and never will be with the current administration in Santa Fe.  As a classroom teacher who is seeing firsthand the effects of the PED mandates, I beg you as a board of education to step up and help us fight against the corporate takeover of public education.

Respectfully,

Quint Seckler
Eldorado HS

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**Jan. 31**

*Do you recall the Albuquerque Journal column by Hanna Skandera that was callously titled “Reform Is Worth Discomfort”? I guess Skandera can easily say such a thing. After all, Skandera is a NON TEACHER and a NON PARENT. What does she know of the difficulties of not only raising children but of teaching them in classrooms?*

*Here is a columnist who lashed out and adequately portrayed our beliefs. His name is Kris Nielsen and he has started a movement, NM Refuse the Tests, down in Las Cruces. Stand4KidsNM supports Kris and his efforts. You can find him here:*

**https://www.facebook.com/groups/635451629832910/**

# Hanna Skandera’s Reforms Cause More Than ‘Discomfort’

JANUARY 7, 2014 BY [KRIS NIELSEN](http://atthechalkface.com/author/klnielsen74/) [3 COMMENTS](http://atthechalkface.com/2014/01/07/hanna-skanderas-reforms-cause-more-than-discomfort/#comments)

Education Secretary-Designate Hanna Skandera [recently wrote an editorial](http://www.abqjournal.com/332070/news/reform-is-worth-discomfort.html)to the Albuquerque Journal stating more untruths, vague ideas, and plenty of blame against those who are questioning her initiatives.  She suggests that there will be some “discomfort” during her period of reforms.  I suggest that discomfort isn’t the problem; what we’re fighting against is the actual damage being done.

She does have the politician thing down pretty well.  She takes all the credit for gains in New Mexico (which were beginning to happen before she chose to grace us with her presence), she touts her ideas as the only things that can possibly work (although they are all based on shoddy research), and she calls parents and teachers “special interest” groups that care more about themselves than we do our own children.  This is nothing new; parents in New York State were recently insulted in much the same way.  Skandera just seems to be a little softer-spoken.

I won’t respond to the first half of Skandera’s editorial, since it mostly cherry-picks test data that she cites to point to her victory.  I will speak to the following statement she made toward the end of the data-worship:

“…as long as everyone can agree the primary goal is to improve student achievement, there is no reform that should be dismissed.”

First of all, we don’t all agree that “student achievement” should be the primary goal; we believe that student personal growth and student success are the primary goals of a public education, and not in terms of only test scores.  “Achievement” is a word that has changed meanings in order to make it sound as though more and more testing can actually make kids learn more.  It can’t.  It doesn’t.  Skandera uses student test scores for one purpose only: to make sure that teachers are teaching to her tests.

No, parents and teachers want our kids to be happy, thoughtful, collaborative, well-spoken, literate, deep-thinking, and problem-solving people who are ready to join the world and move things forward.  Skandera’s system seeks to make sure our kids are trained to fit into a world that has been preset for them, based on their “achievement” scores against narrow standards.

There is no true debate here, folks.  Parents, teachers, and students — the people who live public education and are increasingly feeling the lashes of Skandera’s initiatives every day — know that this isn’t working and is harming our kids’ future outlooks.  And then there’s Skandera, who refuses to talk to any of us directly, and instead uses public media to attempt to discredit us.  That’s not debate.  Seeing that her budget calls for increasing state control over education, rather than local district control, we can see that she doesn’t want to or need to listen or debate.  She’s just there to control.

It won’t work.  We are on the side of right because we are on the side of kids.  Despite all of her feel-good language and talking points, Skandera has no idea what good education or strong learning looks like.  She was trained and paid to do a job–rank our kids in preparation for a corporate workforce and slowly work to close our public schools and get rid of our public teachers.  And it is an important fact that she has never been a classroom teacher.

Skandera’s final point is that New Mexico should be worried since we are “at the bottom.”  There’s one major factor that she will never talk about, regardless of the research and data put in front of her: we are on the top of the kids-living-in-poverty scale.  [According to a recent report,](http://www.allgov.com/news/controversies/low-income-students-now-a-majority-in-public-schools-in-17-states-131022?news=851458) 68% of NM public school students are living in poverty.  For a state education chief to call that an excuse for not getting great test scores shows just how short-sighted, naive, and unqualified she really is.

During her photo-op visits to schools around the state, the heat is on teachers to look their best.  Unfortunately, Skandera has no idea what to look for in order to see real, effective teaching and real, authentic learning.  She doesn’t have that background.  I do.  When I speak to teachers and visit classrooms (they still let me in!), I see dysfunction and stress as teachers and kids try to maintain under a crushing system of standardized and one-size-fits-all “achievement.”

This has gone on long enough.  Much of the damage that has been done will already take time to repair.  Some damage may be irreparable for many kids.  We can’t afford to allow people who know nothing about education to continue harming our children and the future of our state.

Not only should we worry about our kids, but also the economic stability of our schools and state, as Skandera hemorrhages millions of dollars of state funds to outside vendors and corporations.  We don’t need that and we can’t afford it.  We have all the resources we need right here.  Let’s educate our kids using the plentiful expertise and power we have as New Mexicans.

Some may say that it hasn’t worked in the past and we need outside help.  I would argue that since 2002, all of the outside help to get all of our kids to “achieve” on standardized tests has done much more harm than good.  Teachers tried throughout this outside interference to stay on point, on task, and do what was best for kids.  [Now, teachers are being punished](http://atthechalkface.com/2013/12/12/teachers-fleeing-new-mexico-districts/) by Skandera’s beloved NMTEACH program for continuing to care about their students, rather than invalid test scores.

We’re done.  We are parents, we are teachers, and we are students, and we want it back.  It’s time to put the “public” back into public education and kick out the corporate henchman that has come here to sell us off.

Our kids, our culture, and our future depend on it.

Please be sure to [sign the petition here](http://www.change.org/petitions/sen-lee-cotter-sen-mary-papen-sen-john-smith-vote-against-the-confirmation-of-hanna-skandera-as-nm-secretary-of-education?fb_action_ids=1426295744272449&fb_action_types=change-org%3Arecruit&fb_ref=__TgKftxPfsT), asking state senators to vote against Skandera’s upcoming confirmation.

And [contact your senators](http://www.nmlegis.gov/lcs/legislator.aspx?T=S) to let them know that she needs to go.

And then, [refuse to let your kids take Skandera’s meaningless tests](http://nmrefuse.weebly.com/).

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**Feb. 3**

*We started our petition in October of 2013. Attached are the signatures and we would like you to consider that the signatures come from all over the state of New Mexico and from other states.*

*As of this morning,****7,138 citizens of New Mexico have signed the petition of NO CONFIDENCE in Hanna Skandera and the Public Education Department.***

*The text of the petition can be found here:*

<http://www.change.org/petitions/stop-the-corporate-education-reforms-in-new-mexico>

Petition to Governor Susana Martinez:

Unconfirmed Public Education Department Secretary-Designate Hanna Skandera has forced a corporate reform model of education on the children of New Mexico while intentionally bypassing the school districts, parents, elected school boards, superintendents, teachers, the State Legislature, and the People of the State of New Mexico. We demand that these rushed, partisan, non-scientific, non-research-based corporate 'reforms' be halted immediately and that our local and national education experts, education colleges, university professors, parents, community stake-holders, and elected legislators in the State of New Mexico collaborate together, at the same table, in order to carefully evaluate our needs and responsibly plan the future direction of the public educational system in New Mexico. Parents, teachers and citizens of New Mexico cherish our public schools, respect and revere our dedicated and caring teachers, and want what is best for our children and their learning communities. By signing this petition, we officially declare a vote of NO CONFIDENCE in Secretary-Designate Hanna Skandera (a politician with NO educational licenses, teaching experience, credentials or degrees)  and demand an immediate CEASE and DESIST from the Governor of New Mexico in pushing, promoting and promulgating the existing corporate educational reforms that have been implemented by intentionally circumventing and bypassing the democratic processes cherished and demanded by the citizens of the State of New Mexico.

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**Feb. 4**

*We got the Facebook message below from another teacher in Albuquerque, who is angry and frustrated. We do our best to encourage teachers to hang tough and help us fight these ill-conceived reforms that put the blame for students’ success squarely on the shoulders of a teacher. That’s a simplistic view of our public education system in New Mexico.*

*The truth is that our teachers are social workers, second parents, counselors and advocates of the kids they are trying to teach. In APS alone, 60% of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch. It doesn’t mean they can’t learn. It means they need more services and intensive remediation that tests won’t provide.*

*The social ills our state face are not insurmountable. But we can assure you more tests made by out-of-state companies are NOT the solution for our culturally rich and diverse state. Programs like extended hours, online course recovery, AVID, pre-kindergarten and community schools are helping close the achievement gap. It’s unfortunate we don’t have enough money to do this districtwide. The PED wants $99 million of that extra education funding this year. It won’t distribute that much-needed money equally.*

Our demographics have been changing for several years - seeing more and more families struggling and dealing with keeping things together. This year, I have 4 students who have 20+ days absent from school and 15+ tardies (EACH, on both). I know that teachers all over Albuquerque have been dealing with this for a lot longer than we have. Yet, my evaluation is based on the testing of these students and of course, my own attendance is considered, but not the increase in poverty which makes health care come second in many situations, for health care costs and childcare if a parent needs to miss work to stay home with a sick child. I know you know this, but there are so many variables that we have no control over. I knew what I signed up for when I made the choice to teach, and I've never wanted to do anything else - it has always been my passion. But over the years, I guess I've become frustrated with the lack of perspective. This year, I'm faced with feeling very angry about it all - something that in 19 years of teaching, I've never faced. Any words of wisdom on getting someone to actually hear this and have it have meaning?

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**Feb. 5**

*This is a letter sent to members of the House Education Committee members. The writer is a state government worker, and so the writer requests anonymity for fear of retaliation. It’s a shame. To speak out with conviction is deemed now to be rude and insulting to some folks in the GOP establishment who seek to squelch dissent instead of encourages collaboration. .*

Honorable Representatives and members of the House Education Committee:

Please see the attached document.  Do you have any way to assure your constituents and all residents of New Mexico that you are supporting education policies that are not being crafted by ALEC and its corporate affiliates?

As State Legislators who represent our community, my family wants you to know that we are standing firmly in support of our school district, our teachers, and our students and are in strong opposition to recently imposed student testing and teacher evaluation policies.  Not only are these policies and strategies soundly proven to be ineffective (and arguably destructive), they are being implemented by circumventing the democratic process.  You all well know this Cabinet Secretary designate has not been confirmed and these policies are being imposed by the Governor through executive order.

None of us would argue there is no room for improvement in our educational system.  This is true for every state in the nation.  However this administration's approach is completely wrong for a state like ours; very rural and economically challenged.  Many in academic research would say these strategies will not achieve the results we're being marketed in any state.

I would like to see our State "experiment" with improving public academic performance by actually investing in the State and its residents.  Please, improve our economy by investing in our State infrastructure, creating good jobs and increasing the tax base rather than through austerity and sending our State assets (tax dollars) to contractors who contribute little to our own economy.

Please, listen to our local schools and their staff, and our district decision makers.  They are right and they are our academic experts.  Please do what you can as our elected officials to force this administration to work collaboratively with our locally trusted and cherished educational institutions.

Thank you very much for your consideration and for your contributions to our communities and the State.

Sincerely,

A concerned Albuquerque resident and parent of a third grade student

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**Feb. 6**

*We are in Week 3 of the legislative session and we wonder whether you’ve heard from Public Education Department officials about how successful Tennessee is -- and the PED will tell you WE IN NEW MEXICO ARE DOING THE SAME THING! (Keep in mind the PED used to tout Florida, but Florida reforms were a mess and it pulled out of the PARCC.)*

*What the PED may say sounds great BUT like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, the wizard behind the curtain isn’t what you think it is.*

*It is a fact that Tennessee parents are fighting reforms and we parents in New Mexico are learning from them via email conversations and watching their Facebook and blog posts. They call themselves Momma Bears and they’ve given us New Mexico revolutionary cubs a few tips on how to battle Skandera and her ties to Jeb Bush and ALEC.*

*We’d like you to take a peek at what is going on in Tennessee. It isn’t what Skandera tells you.*

<https://www.facebook.com/RemoveKevinHuffman>

*Here is what parents say about Tennessee’s corporate reforms, which come from the same playbook as Skandera’s reforms:*

[**http://www.mommabears.org/blog.html**](http://www.mommabears.org/blog.html)

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**Feb. 7**

My name is Jeff Tuttle, I have been a teacher at Monte Vista Elementary for 22 years. Last year I was awarded a Golden Apple. I was raised in New Mexico, and went to school in the Albuquerque Public Schools.

If we keep the teacher evaluation system in tact, as faulty as it is, we could do it for free with Google Docs or email and templates. The teacher evaluation system, “Teachscape” uses a framework for teacher evaluations called the Danielson Rubric, which is freely available, and could be used without copyright violation.

The lessons and materials we are currently uploading to one of the largest textbook conglomerates in the world, (Pearson, which owns Teachscape) to prove our competence, could instead be gathered online as material for open source textbooks and used to develop expertise and professional investment.

This is a better dream than political rides on the backs of New Mexico school children. We could fund smaller classrooms and have more instructional time with the money we are pouring into this multi-billion dollar multi-national corporation.

Please do all that is in your power return public education to the public. If there is only altruistic intentions then lets move to the free existing infrastructure on the internet. If this is not altruistic, teacher evaluations will be followed by the package deal: Pearson’s standardized tests, (which New Mexico has already started), and Pearson textbooks. This is and will be at the cost of classroom spending on our children in New Mexico. We know where the Mantra “stop the status quo” goes, the Philadelphia governor used it to adopt Pearson in their schools, and has made education there worse. (NPR)

Thanks for your consideration in sparing our schools millions of dollars and years of more being played in politics for personal gain.

Sincerely,

Jeff Tuttle

Master Teacher

Monte Vista Elementary School

(505) 262-0236 (home)

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**Feb. 10**

Of 89 school districts in the state, 44 have passed resolutions urging the secretary-designate to slow down, to re-think some of these initiatives. ‘

This is the latest resolution passed by the Deming Public Schools Board of Education passed on Jan. 16, 2014.

It is worded beautifully and captures the essence of our opposition to the Public Education Department’s initiatives.

We posted this resolution to our FB page. It got 4,808 views, 69 “shares” and 130 Likes.

DEMING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Resolution

Whereas, the current teacher evaluation system is inordinately weighted towards Standards Based Assessment scores, outcomes from End of Course exams, and other testing measures, and
Whereas, End of Course exams administered in some subject areas in December 2013 included numerous questions with incorrect information and lacking valid answers, and

Whereas, normed end of course scores such as those currently in place are completely incongruent with any responsible standard for effective assessment of student learning, and

Whereas, the teacher evaluation system, end of course exam framework, and transition to Common Core standards has resulted in the allocation of millions of dollars in below the line
spending by the Public Education Department to out of state vendors who have frequently failed to deliver effective products and services, and

Whereas, below the line spending has led to the unequal and inefficient allocation of resources, including the distribution of much needed intervention services such as reading coaches only to
the most populous areas of the state at the expense of rural districts, and

Whereas, the proposed system for allocating raises disproportionately rewards only a handful of teachers while ignoring the contributions of the overwhelming majority of teachers who have dedicated their careers to the education of their students, and

Whereas, popular calls for the return to core subjects such as reading, writing, and arithmetic resonate strongly with the spirit of liberal arts instruction that formed the foundation for systems
of education across the breadth of western civilization for more than seven centuries, and

Whereas, curricula built on standardized testing fail to nurture the creativity, adaptability and intellectual flexibility that will enable New Mexico's youth to compete in a rapidly changing globalized economy, and

Whereas, university faculty within New Mexico and across the nation are beginning to report the damage that a decade of test-driven education has inflicted upon the entrance of a generation
of students that has known no alternative since the implementation of No Child Left Behind, and

Whereas, the shift away from these standards in education has been modeled on programs in Florida, Louisiana and other states that within a span of only a few years have come to regret their rapid adoption of untried and untested ideas

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Deming Public Schools Board of Education asks that the teacher evaluation system be restructured to ensure that testing measures count for no more than
25% of teacher evaluations.

Be it further resolved, that the End of Course exam system be reorganized to include a one year trial period during which effective benchmarks for student learning can be determined; that the
Public Education Department provide a full, detailed, and itemized public disclosure of payments to out-of-state vendors or be subjected to scrutiny by the Legislative Finance Committee; that the
Legislative Education Study Committee conduct an in-depth analysis of the actual time currently shifted away from instruction to the preparation for and conduct of all testing measures; that the
proposed system for raises be re-allocated to include equitable raises for all teachers who will receive contracts for the coming fiscal year; that a revitalized liberal arts curriculum centered on math, language arts, science, music and fine arts and the acquisition of foreign language fluency be implemented as the time-tested curriculum that will instill the values, skills, and innovation
that will enable them to prosper in the hyper-competitive environment of the twenty-first century; and that the Legislature of the State of New Mexico impose a mandatory two-year
period of observation on the program of any potential model state in order to effectively assess the success, challenges, and unintended consequences of any potential new reform model.

Adopted this 161 day of January, 2014.

W. Bayne Anderson, President
Dr. Andrew Hernandez, Vice-President
Ruben S. Torres, Secretary
Ronald Wolfe, Member
John Sweetser, Member

**Feb. 11**

*Stand4KidsNM is proud to have formed partnerships with many parents and teachers across the nation as we all share the same battle for our public schools. One particular team effort is forged with the Tennessee Momma Bears who have been fighting their Republican-led corporate reform movement longer than we have.*

*The Tennessee Momma Bears shared this letter with us. We think it’s as pertinent to New Mexico as it is to New York and Tennessee. After all, the corporate reforms Skandera are pushing are from a playbook that is endorsed by corporate education reformers nationwide. Same script. Same strategies. Same end goal: the demise of public schools.*

*Another similarity: business leaders tout Gov. Martinez’s reforms, including the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce. We have a problem with that. While we understand that economic prosperity is hinged to better educational outcomes, we also want the GOP to acknowledge that academic success is directly linked to POVERTY.*

*Districts know this. We have many initiatives focused on our high-income, low-achievement schools. No one asks us what we are doing!*

*Here’s that letter:*

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Today's business and education elite are passionate about the need to reform education. Business and even education leaders argue that a data driven management approach to oversee teacher performance should be used to reform the education system. This approach is both naive and problematic on many levels.

Students are not inanimate outputs like machines or software. Schools are not factories. Students are living and breathing individuals. Each student comes to the school with a unique personal history and personality which plays an integral role in his/her education process.

After a twenty year career in business, I decided to become a mathematics teacher. I returned to school to obtain another master’s degree in adolescent education. I was convinced that my management expertise would be readily transferable to teaching. I had managed an international staff, how hard would it be to manage a classroom of thirty or less students? Needless to say, I quickly learned that teaching students was far more complicated than managing adults. Why, you may ask? There are three simple reasons that I would like to share with the business intelligentsia:

1. Your employees are paid to listen to you, your students are not.

2. In business, employees are selected based upon a search and interview process. Teachers do not select their students.

3. In business, an insubordinate employee is fired. An insubordinate student is merely one more challenge for a classroom teacher.

To judge the effectiveness of teachers based upon an annual high stakes test would be comparable to judging the effectiveness of a business leader based upon one meeting or one memo. A business leader may have an ineffective meeting because of a variety of reasons. Similarly, students' test scores on a particulate day are influenced by a host factors including their home life and social interactions.

Today's education policy appears to missing the mark. Vilifying all teachers will not rectify the problems which plague a subset of this country's education system. The current ineffective policies have been developed by individuals who lack experience teaching and are removed from students.

Nonetheless I do recognize that there are certainly lessons from business which are applicable to education. Here are a few for the NYS Education Commissioner and his colleagues to consider:

1. Those who are closest to the customer should provide the necessary feedback and market information so that sound strategies can be formed. Using business terminology, teachers with years of experience working with students are your best source of market intelligence.

2. Any large scale implementation requires a detailed project plan. It must be effectively managed as demonstrated by adhering to published deadlines and commitments.

3. Communicate clearly and effectively to all your customers, colleagues, and staff. Listen to their concerns.

When I left the business arena to become a teacher, I naively had no idea of the complexities and challenges faced by teachers each day. Teaching is one of the most rewarding and challenging endeavors I have undertaken. Even though the career is much more demanding and complicated than I anticipated, the satisfaction I receive from a job well done more than compensates me for the effort I invest in teaching
my students. I hope that the numerous problems accompanying the education reforms now underway in New York and across the country will be acknowledged and appropriately addressed before the
education system is bankrupt.

 ***Beth Goldberg is a Middle School Mathematics Teacher at Linden Avenue Middle School in Red Hook, NY in the Mid-Hudson Valley. Beth has been teaching for eight years since obtaining her Masters of Arts in Teaching at Bard College. Prior to earning her MAT, Beth was a senior executive at JP Morgan Chase where she had global responsibility for a suite a payment services products. Beth holds an MS in business from the MIT Sloan School of Management and a BA in Mathematics from Wellesley College. Beth has seen how mathematics skills can create transformative opportunity and she is dedicated to providing her students the solid mathematics foundation they will need to succeed in life.***

**Feb. 12**

Honorable lawmakers,

We want to clear up some misinformation that is perpetuated by the secretary-designate.

Hanna Skandera claims our kids only spend 2% of a total 1,080 hours in the classroom doing tests.

That is patently false.

We attach the calendar of tests several teachers at three APS elementary schools put together. If you do the math, you will see that it is NOT 2% of class time devoted to testing, as Skandera claims.

In fact, **40%** of our kids’ class time is spent testing. And this calendar doesn’t include the new End of Course exams or Make-Up test days.

To spend this much time in testing is ridiculous.

And if you doubt the teachers, then we highly encourage you to go into classrooms and spend some time in them.

**Feb. 13**

*Honorable lawmakers,*

*A teacher gave us permission to share this with you. We took out identifying names to protect the teacher. This teacher’s despair is being felt across the state. Please don’t ignore this.*

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We had a staff meeting this afternoon where we learned about our last observation of the year. It will be unannounced and Principal will be in our rooms 45 to 60 minutes with his laptop tapping away scoring us. He did say he went through calibration training. Here's what I know about that:

* He attended one session with 35 other principals.
* They observed classrooms although I don't know where they were.
* He confirmed his scores were in line with his peers. Now, here's what that means . . . According to the PED, scores are "in line" as long as they're within one point of each other. Remember, we only receive a 1, 2, 3, 4, or perhaps a 5. So, a 2 for a 3 or a 3 for a 4 is acceptable as far as "calibration". That is a HUGE margin of error! So, it is O.K. for a 2 (minimally effective) to be aligned with a 3 (effective).

This entire thing makes me SICK. Today was my day to feel beaten down. For the first time this year I had tears in my eyes. You know how easily I cry but today was the day I teared up for me. It was evident in our staff meeting that I am not happy with any of this. I spoke out a bit but decided to hush down. This system is so wrong. So many teachers just go with the philosophy of "it is what it is". Blech!

As you know, our principal is extremely black and white. I truly believe he gets a thrill out of following the "rules" to a T.

For my first observation he wasn't able to change a 2 to a 3 due to a technology glitch. He wrote a letter explaining the situation and he knew I was going to upload the letter as evidence. He then submitted the document before I uploaded it, meaning once again I couldn't edit anything. I did get that letter to upload under Observation 3 documentation but what difference does it make anyway? Apparently, according to PED calibration, minimally effective is as good as effective. Again SICK.

During my second observation this is what he told me on one point, "I know you're flexible, but I can't give you a 4 because I didn't see it when I was in your classroom." So . . . Here we go again loading more crap into Teachscape for lesson plans, up to 10 artifacts per domain, updating Domain 4, etc., etc., etc. I can't get off this wheel soon enough.

On top of that, District Official visited our (full inclusion) class last week. I'm not sure what the purpose of her visit was. I understood it to be to see the inclusion models we're using. She sat down to talk to my co-teacher and myself. She talked about how much more training general ed teachers need to work with special ed. She talked about the technology initiative she's working on. Then, it quickly turned into a "prove yourself" talk. Not even a discussion. She was asking us to do Survey Monkeys with our parents. Do Survey Monkeys with our students. Gather data, data, data. Supposedly we need all of this to prove full inclusion isn't just a good thing for teachers. Goodness knows test scores won't show progress. Then she started spewing more data about blah, blah, blah. I don't recall what it was. In retrospect, there is no need to gather any of this information for anyone. Nobody would look at it and the bottom line is . . . We'll get to do it again if the numbers are there. If the numbers aren't there, it won't work, because it all comes down to money.

Yes. Today was the day to question what I am doing with my life. I would have walked out if I didn't have nine more years to work.

Thank you for fighting for teachers and students. Thanks for giving me the courage to stand up too. I'm confident I'll get my energy back soon, thanks to you all. Just a downer of a day. So fortunate to be able to unload with you. :-)

Let's hope there's some good news from Santa Fe tomorrow. I'm at a loss there too. What other message can I send to help "educate" people who don't listen?

**Feb. 14**

Happy Valentine’s Day, honorable lawmakers!

As parents and teachers, we love this day. It is a fun day for our kids. They get to swap Valentines in class. They’ll get to eat snacks and maybe watch a fun video or movie. They get to be CHILDREN today.

For the older kids, they’ll buy roses for classmates that are passed out by student Senate leaders. They’ll pretend they don’t care, but they’ll hope they get a Valentine or some other show of affection from that cute kid in their 3rd period class!

They’ll get a little fun. And then in a few short weeks, fun goes out the window.

In a few short weeks, they’ll be forced to:

* Third in the Riverside Interim Assessment series
* Standards Based Assessment
* PARCC field tests
* Advanced Placement exams
* SAT exams
* ACT exams
* National Assessment of Education Progress exams
* Final Exams
* End of Course Exams

How ridiculous is this?! These are 3rd through 12th graders!

As for the PARCC: consider this, written by a teacher who has to do the PARCC at her school because her school is one of the test sites:

I just came from Pearson PARCC training for field testing. There were so many what ifs and if that happens then you do this that my head is spinning. The Pearson rep kept making an analogy between field tests and a "theatrical dress rehearsal". Our school will have 2 fourth grade classes and 2 fifth grade classes field testing ELA. The window is March 24th - April 11th. As soon as they finish the SBA, they test again. Then they get a week for spring break and come back to the spring testing window for Riverside Interim Assessment. They talked about accommodations for special education students. The computer jargon they use for accommodations could require new IEPs to make sure the new language is used. They also said something about how the technology needed for these accommodations is still developing.

We were notified that we had been selected for field testing on January 27th and had a week to arrange to attend the training. Now we have until Monday at noon to make a decision about which classes we have selected. Somehow I'm supposed to get teachers ready for SBA, organize and facilitate SBA administration, and now coordinate PARCC. At the same time I will be teaching first grade, administering the DRA and the PIA. I can tell you right now that I will not be the School Test Coordinator next year. $50 a month isn't worth it.

This test is going to cost way more than what they are saying. It is going to take a huge amount of manpower to manage the technology issues and it will waste kid's time when the inevitable tech failures occur. Oh yeah, I almost forgot. No one will ever get any data from the field tests. No one will ever know how they did. But we're doing a great thing because this helps them refine their tests and make sure they are okay. I'm disgusted. The students in this district don't deserve to be used in this way.

**Feb. 15:**

**Today is Public Education Day. Many educators and teachers and public school advocates will be rallying in Santa Fe.**

*Unfortunately, under Skandera’s reforms, public education is an endangered species. Why? Her reforms are causing us to lose our best and most experienced teachers, who are retiring or quitting out of frustration. In APS alone, we have a current 101 openings in APS alone ( 17 elementary teachers, 5 middle school, 6 high school and 73 special education teachers). As parents, we are very worried. We don’t want substitutes “teaching” our children. Morale is low. Workloads are horrendous. Pay is horrible. Why would we think that under Skandera’s reforms, we will IMPROVE education if our teachers aren’t staying? Why would we think anyone would want to take on this noble profession when Skandera says teachers are to blame for our educational woes? We want you to read this letter from a Manzano High School teacher who gave us permission to post it.*

*His letter got 5,600 views in a 24-hour period. And the responses it elicited were heartfelt and heartbreaking.*

*We thank you for your service this 2014 Legislature. Let’s see what you have done to help us, our children and our beloved teachers like Mr. Usmar.*

*(We XXX’d out the references to another teacher cited by Mr. Usmar)*

January 10, 2014

Beloved Students & Parents:

I have given everything I possess to the wonderful students of Manzano High School since 1977. Bert Jones, Director of Personnel in 1977, gave me the privilege of choosing which APS high school I would like to serve. Without any hesitation, I chose Manzano, which approximately had the same mixture of ethnic and racial groups as the state at large. Teaching at MHS has been the best decision of my life!

However, the Martinez administration has seen fit to micromanage every classroom, has created what I feel is make-work that few if any will ever see and is tremendously time consuming for the teacher. In addition, students are tested far too much. All of this leads to less available time in grading assignments, and less time on task for the students. From a teacher’s perspective, teachers statewide are being denigrated and disrespected by state and federal officials and no raises have been offered even equal to the inflation rate while more is taken from the paycheck for health insurance and other items.

Teachers do have home lives and families to support but are losing ground every year to shrinking paychecks in real terms. The teachers I know are struggling heroically to serve the students first while dealing at the same time with an enormity of bookwork imposed by the state and federal governments AND are trying to provide for their families with less and less in their pay. The world’s highest rated school system is in Finland. As one current Finnish teacher put it: "We pay teachers like doctors, students enjoy over an hour of recess, and there's no mandatory testing- the opposite of what they do in America."

I am certain you will agree that parents know far better what’s best for their children than do bureaucrats in Santa Fe and Washington, D.C. who believe that one size fits all for our state and country.

Sadly, all this has taken a severe toll on my health as I am an asthmatic and diabetic with both rapidly becoming problematic. In fact, my blood sugar has been fluctuating wildly. Both of these diseases require that I retire and concentrate on my health. It is with immense sadness and reluctance that I leave the profession I so dearly love and have devoted my life to with the greatest passion. As a result, I am retiring effective Friday, January 17th, after my duty day. Your students will be most fortunate to have XXXXX, with whom I share the room now, as their new teacher. XXXXX, as many of you know, is an experienced master teacher. They most certainly will be in the best possible hands! I had had the honor to have taught her son in Advanced Placement Literature, so XXXXX is quite familiar with what I do.

With a heavy heart,

Chuck Usmar

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**Feb. 17**

*We find it interesting. Of all the House lawmakers who voted against the state budget on the first round a few days ago, many appear on the list below.*

*You will never convince us parents and teachers that some of you who without question endorse the governor’s reforms do so for kids. It’s a political agenda. We are not fooled. And we are not as ignorant as you may have thought your constituents were.*

*At least we have done our homework. We know WHY the reforms cause such a partisan stir. What’s frustrating for us is that OUR KIDS are the collateral damage. And we just can’t tolerate that. We’ll remember your votes this year, House members.*

**http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New\_Mexico\_ALEC\_Politicians**

**New Mexico Legislators with ALEC Ties**

**House of Representatives**

* Rep. Thomas A. Anderson (R-29), ALEC [Communications and Technology Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Communications_and_Technology_Task_Force) Member[[1]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-0)
* Rep. Alonzo Baldonado (R-8), ALEC [Education Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Education_Task_Force) Member[[2]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-1)
* Rep. [Paul Bandy](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Paul_Bandy) (R-3), ALEC [State Chairman](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/ALEC_State_Chairmen)[[3]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-StateChairs-2), [Energy, Environment and Agriculture Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Energy%2C_Environment_and_Agriculture_Task_Force) Member[[4]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-3) and Guest at the December 2010 [International Relations Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/International_Relations_Task_Force) meeting[[5]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-IRMeetingAgenda-4)
* Rep. Lee Cotter (R-36) [[6]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-5)
* Rep. Anna M. Crook (R-64)[[7]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-HHS_Letter-6), ALEC [Tax and Fiscal Policy Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Tax_and_Fiscal_Policy_Task_Force) Member [[8]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-7)
* Rep. Nora Espinoza (R-59), ALEC [Health and Human Services Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Health_and_Human_Services_Task_Force) Member[[9]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-8)
* Rep. Nathaniel Quentin Gentry (R-30), ALEC [Tax and Fiscal Policy Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Tax_and_Fiscal_Policy_Task_Force) Alternate [[10]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-9)
* Rep. William Gray (R-54), ALEC [Energy, Environment and Agriculture Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Energy%2C_Environment_and_Agriculture_Task_Force) Alternate[[11]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-10) – Full Name and Address], Tax and Fiscal Policy Task Force Membership Directory, August 2011, obtained and released by Common Cause </ref>
* Rep. Jimmie Hall (R-28)[[12]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-EPA_Letter_for_Senate-11)[[13]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-12) and [Energy, Environment and Agriculture Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Energy%2C_Environment_and_Agriculture_Task_Force) Alternate[[14]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-13)
* Rep. Larry A. Larranaga (R-27), ALEC [International Relations Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/International_Relations_Task_Force) Member[[15]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-14)
* Rep. William R. Rehm (R-31), ALEC [Public Safety and Elections Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Public_Safety_and_Elections_Task_Force) Member [[16]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-PSENOLA-15)
* Rep. Dennis Roch (R-67), ALEC [Education Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Education_Task_Force) Member[[17]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-16)
* Rep. James R.J. Strickler (R-2), ALEC [Tax and Fiscal Policy Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Tax_and_Fiscal_Policy_Task_Force) Member [[18]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-17)

**Senate**

* Sen. Sue Beffort (R-19), ALEC [Health and Human Services Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Health_and_Human_Services_Task_Force) Member[[19]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-18)
* Sen. George K. Muñoz (D-4), ALEC [Commerce, Insurance and Economic Development Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Commerce%2C_Insurance_and_Economic_Development_Task_Force) Member[[20]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-19) - **Announced he was cutting ties to ALEC on April 20, 2012.**[[21]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-20) See [Legislators Who Have Cut Ties to ALEC](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Legislators_Who_Have_Cut_Ties_to_ALEC) for more.
* Sen. William H. Payne (R-20), ALEC [State Chairman](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/ALEC_State_Chairmen)[[3]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-StateChairs-2) and [International Relations Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/International_Relations_Task_Force)[[22]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-21) and [Energy, Environment and Agriculture Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Energy%2C_Environment_and_Agriculture_Task_Force) Member[[23]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-22)
* Sen. Sander Rue (R-23),[[24]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-23) [Tax and Fiscal Policy Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Tax_and_Fiscal_Policy_Task_Force) Member [[25]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-24)
* Sen. William E. Sharer (R-1)[[7]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-HHS_Letter-6), ALEC [Commerce, Insurance and Economic Development Task Force](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Commerce%2C_Insurance_and_Economic_Development_Task_Force) Member[[26]](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/New_Mexico_ALEC_Politicians#cite_note-25)

**Feb. 18**

*We parents have been watching you as our lawmakers. We will look to see how you voted on key education initiatives that we support. Did you vote for the constitutional amendment to take the power of education out of ONE individual’s hands? Did you give our taxpayer money to the PED below the line? If we could give you a bubble test, it would look like this:*

**Fill in the answer on our bubble test for you. We have been kind. The PED’s health End of Course exam had 60 questions. 20 of them actually had to do with the standards. 40 of them had nothing to do with the standards. Some were riddled with misspellings. One question asked, “how many legs does an octopus have?” A senior who testified on Feb. 1 said, “Octopuses don’t have legs.” At one high school, 40% of 9th graders flunked it, using the normal grading system our teachers use. But teachers don’t know why. Neither do students. How is that helping improve instruction?**

1. I voted YES to give extra education funding directly to districts above the line:

A. Yes

B. No

1. I voted yes to Sen. Keller’s bill that protects students from repercussions if they opt out of End of Course exams.
2. Yes
3. No
4. I voted YES to ensure more accountability from the Public Education Department by voting for the statutory line item targeted to reading interventions :

A Yes

B. No

1. I understand FULLY and COMPLETELY the teacher evaluation system and End of Course exams:
2. Yes
3. No
* Yes
* No
* Yes
* No
* Yes
* No
* Yes
* No
* Yes
* No
* Yes
* No

We’ll see you at the polls this year, honorable House members.

Thanks to all of you for your public service.

Stand4KidsNM