

PED Secretary Hanna Skandera to resign

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SANTA FE — Gov. Susana Martinez announced June 8 that New Mexico Public Education Secretary Hanna Skandera will step down effective June 20.

“New Mexico’s students and schools are better off today because of Secretary Skandera’s leadership and dedication,” Martinez stated in a press release. “Since day one of my administration, she’s been relentlessly committed to helping us fight the status quo – like teachers unions and other entrenched special interests – to reform education and give our students, teachers, parents and schools more of what they need to succeed. Now, more New Mexico students are graduating from high school than ever before, more are at grade level in reading and math, and more New Mexico kids are college ready. I’m so grateful for all Hanna has done for New Mexico’s kids, and I wish her all the best.”

It was rumored some months back that Skandera was considering a job with the Trump administration, but her plans were not announced as of press time.

Deputy Secretary Christopher Ruszkowski will serve as acting cabinet secretary. Prior to his service in New Mexico, Ruszkowski worked as a middle school social studies teacher and served for nearly six years at the Delaware Department of Education under former Democratic Governor Jack Markell.

Martinez claimed in the press release that under Skandera’s watch, since 2011, high school graduation rates in New Mexico have increased by 8 percentage points, to an all-time high of 71 percent. Last year, 14.4 percent more students are now at grade level in math, and nearly 5 percent more students are at grade level in reading. Since 2011, the number of A and B schools has increased by 25 percent. 30,000 more students are now attending A and B schools.

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“It has been such a privilege to be part of Governor Martinez’s team in the fight to lift up our students and schools,” Skandera stated, in the press release. “The results we’re seeing in New Mexico show what can happen when we choose to embrace reform and put kids first. New Mexico should be very proud of our teachers and kids for their continuing hard work and achievement.”

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