

Education Secretary Ruskowski Unveils First-Ever “Secretary’s School Honor Roll”

After visiting all 89 districts and hundreds of schools and classrooms, outgoing Secretary highlights “proof points” of what is possible for all of New Mexico’s students

Santa Fe, NM – This evening, the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) announced the unveiling of the first-ever “Secretary’s School Honor Roll”, highlighting “proof point” schools from across the state for everyone to celebrate, visit, and study further. After visiting all 89 school districts and hundreds of schools and classrooms across the state, the ten schools were selected based upon multiple years of school performance, the degree to which the school serves students from low-income communities, and the innovative and evidence-based practices gleaned during the Education Secretary’s visit (or multiple visits) to the school over the past eighteen months.

“I hope that my successor will invest the time and energy in visiting every school district, put themselves in our students’ shoes, and celebrate and champion our state’s best schools and classrooms through a combination of reviewing student achievement data and on-site observation. This list hopefully becomes the beginning of a tradition where ten schools are put on the “honor roll” each year and become open-door labs of learning and innovation—places that fundamentally change the collective consciousness around what is possible for all students, regardless of background”, said Education Secretary Christopher Ruskowski. “We should learn from the best and design for excellence. This collection of schools are often beating the odds, are the most innovative, and are proving that demographics do not define our students’ educational and life outcomes. Once you visit one, you will be forever transformed. And once you see students’ academic trajectories and lives being fundamentally changed in one school, you inevitably ask yourself the question: Why doesn’t every school do what these schools are doing?”

Here are the ten schools that are on the first-ever Secretary’s School Honor Roll, in no particular order:

- 1) San Lorenzo Elementary School—Cobre Consolidated School District
- 2) Gil Sanchez Elementary School—Belen Consolidated Schools
- 3) El Capitan Elementary School—Roswell Independent School District
- 4) Jose Barrios Elementary School—Silver Consolidated Schools
- 5) Anthony Elementary School—Gadsden Independent School District
- 6) Mesquite Elementary School—Gadsden Independent School District
- 7) Mission Achievement and Success—Albuquerque (State-Authorized Charter School)
- 8) Sidney Gutierrez Middle School—Roswell (District-Authorized Charter School)
- 9) Santa Teresa Middle School—Gadsden Independent School District
- 10) New Mexico School For The Arts—Santa Fe (State-Authorized Charter School)

Each of the selected schools earned an “A” in the most recent school year. San Lorenzo and Mission Achievement and Success have each earned four consecutive “A” ratings, and El Capitan has risen from D-to-C-to-B-to-A over the past five years. New Mexico School For The Arts and Sidney Gutierrez Middle School have each earned an “A” all seven years of School Grades. The vast majority of schools on the list serve communities that are over 80% low-income.