



State of New Mexico

Office of the Lieutenant Governor

Diane D. Denish
Lieutenant Governor

Dear School Administrator:

On January 6, 1912, New Mexico became the 47th state in the union. In April of 2008 Governor Bill Richardson signed an executive order creating the New Mexico Centennial of Statehood Task Force. Its purpose is to give New Mexico residents and visitors access to a deeper understanding of our state's rich and diverse history and culture.

My goal is to commemorate our state's 100th anniversary by engaging our 9th graders – the Class of 2012. This class will be called Centennial Graduates. I invite every 9th grade high school student to take part in this initiative. Over the next four years, our 2012 graduates will have the opportunity to take part in many statewide centennial projects as we prepare to commemorate our state's centennial anniversary. As part of the celebration, I will be leading initiatives that highlight the importance of educating our youth for success, deepening connections to culture and community, and understanding New Mexico's past, present, and future.

With your support, I also plan to initiate a scholarship program that connects academic achievement, community service, citizenship, and career pathways. It is important for you to know that the Centennial Graduates Initiative will not add additional work to our teachers and administrators. The intention is to create excitement about the high school experience and graduation, to increase engagement by bringing attention to existing programs and incentives. I would also like to encourage freshmen to participate in more rigorous programs of study that align to the High School Redesign requirements beginning next year.

Over the next few months I will be engaging partners from the Coalition of School Administrators, the New Mexico School Boards Association, and the Public Education Department and Higher Education Departments to ensure that we are aligning to existing initiatives and helping you promote all of the exciting opportunities available to your students.

I started promoting the unique class of 2012 and the Centennial Graduates Initiative in September with freshman classes statewide. We received positive reactions from students, parents, staff, and administration at the fourteen high schools we visited including schools in Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Deming, Lordsburg, Silver City, Taos, Raton, and T or C.

Please contact my Director of Special Projects, Carlos Acosta at (505) 476-2256, to arrange a visit to a high school in your district or for more information about the Centennial Graduates Initiative.

I look forward to working with you as we move forward on this journey. I also look forward to celebrating and commemorating the unique culture, history, and people that have made and will continue to make New Mexico the Land of Enchantment.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diane D. Denish".

Diane D. Denish
Lieutenant Governor