

TALKING POINTS ON EDUCATION GOVERNANCE

- WE NEED A COMMON SENSE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM THAT INCLUDES:
 - A SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
 - ALIGNMENT UP AND DOWN THE SYSTEM
 - SUPPORT FROM THE STATE TO THE DISTRICTS AND SUPPORT FROM THE DISTRICTS TO THEIR INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS
 - ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES CLOSER TO THE STUDENT ALONG WITH DECISIONS ABOUT HOW THOSE RESOURCES ARE UTILIZED

- SECRETARY OF EDUCATION:
 - OF THE TOP TEN STATES IN OVERALL EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT (ALEC RATINGS) THE GOVERNOR IS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN APPOINTMENT OF THE CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICER OR THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION IN SEVEN OF THOSE STATES INCLUDING THE TOP TWO RATED STATES
 - IN NEW MEXICO, THE STATE BOARD AND STATE SUPERINTENDENT ARE SUPPOSEDLY RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATION OUTCOMES, BUT WHEN THE TIME COMES, EVERYONE POINTS THE FINGER AT SOMEONE ELSE
 - WE NEED TO HAVE THE “BUCK” STOP WITH ONE INDIVIDUAL AND THAT SHOULD BE THE GOVERNOR WHOEVER THAT IS ---- RIGHT NOW THE GOVERNOR HAS NO AUTHORITY IN THE AREA OF EDUCATION WHICH IS ARGUABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT OBLIGATION OF STATE GOVERNMENT TO ITS CITIZENS
 - IN FACT, OVER HALF THE STATE’S BUDGET GOES TO EDUCATION YET NO ONE IS REALLY IN CHARGE
 - THE CHAMBER HAS MADE CREATION OF A SECRETARY OF EDUCATION A KEY COMPONENT OF ITS REFORM PACKAGE

- LAST YEAR WE TIED SUPPORT FOR PASSAGE OF EDUCATION REFORM LEGISLATION TO PASSAGE OF A JOINT RESOLUTION FOR A SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
 - LEGISLATIVE APPROACHES HAVE VARIED—SOME BILLS HAVE THE GOVERNOR APPOINTING A BOARD OF EDUCATION, OTHERS HAVE THE STATE BOARD ELECTED AND OTHERS DO NOT CREATE A STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
 - FOR TWO YEARS, THE SENATE WITH LEADERSHIP FROM SENATORS NAVA AND GORHAM HAS PASSED A JOINT RESOLUTION TO PUT A SECRETARY OF EDUCATION QUESTION ON THE BALLOT --- THIS YEAR THE SENATE BILL DID NOT INCLUDE A STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
 - THE HOUSE HAS FAILED TO EVEN GET SUCH A BILL TO THE FLOOR FOR A FULL VOTE
 - THIS IS A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT --- THE CITIZENS OF NEW MEXICO WOULD DECIDE THIS QUESTION, BUT THE HOUSE DEMOCRATS SIMPLY WILL NOT LET IT GO TO THE VOTERS WHICH IS VERY FRUSTRATING
 - THIS IS SOMETHING THAT I THINK WE ALL AGREE NEEDS TO BE DONE AND WE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO CONVINC
CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE TO MOVE THIS TO THE FLOOR IN A PROMPT FASHION AT THE NEXT SESSION
- ALIGNMENT UP AND DOWN THE SYSTEM:
- THERE MUST BE CLEAR LINES OF AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RESULTS OR FAILURES OF THE SYSTEM
 - HAVING THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT TO A POLITICALLY CHARGED BOARD REPRESENTING DIFFERING IDEAS AND WITHOUT CLEAR LINES OF AUTHORITY, MAKES ACCOUNTABILITY DIFFICULT
 - WE MUST TRANSFER THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR EDUCATING CHILDREN TO THE LOCAL LEVEL AND PROVIDE PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS AND PARENTS WITH THE TRAINING AND AUTHORITY TO MAKE GOOD DECISIONS FOR THEIR STUDENTS

- LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD SHOULD SET POLICY AND HIRE A SUPERINTENDENT WHO IS ALIGNED WITH THAT POLICY AND THEN THEY SHOULD LET THAT SUPERINTENDENT DO HIS OR HER JOB – MICRO-MANAGING IS NOT EFFECTIVE
- SUPPORT FROM THE STATE TO THE DISTRICTS AND SUPPORT FROM THE DISTRICTS TO THEIR INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS
 - WHEN TRAVELING THROUGHOUT THE STATE THIS PAST YEAR, SUPERINTENDENTS AND SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENTS TOLD US THEY FEEL THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IS GENERALLY NON-RESPONSIVE TO THEIR DISTRICTS
 - ADDITIONALLY, THEY STATED THAT THE DEPARTMENT IMPOSES A NUMBER OF RULES, REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS ON THE DISTRICTS THAT ARE BURDENSOME, COSTLY AND IMPEDE THEIR FOCUS ON EDUCATION
 - LEGISLATION INTRODUCED THIS SPRING TO STUDY THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CODE AS WELL AS STATE DEPARTMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS AND THEN REPEAL THE CODE AND REPLACE IT WITH THE STUDY GROUP'S RECOMMENDATIONS SHOULD BE PASSED DURING THE NEXT SESSION
 - THIS OVERSIZED CENTRAL BUREAUCRATIC APPROACH IS EXPENSIVE, INEFFICIENT AND FOCUSED ON REGULATING SCHOOLS RATHER THAN SUPPORTING THEM
 - WITHOUT STRONG LEADERSHIP AND AUTHORITY VESTED IN A SINGLE PERSON, I.E. A SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, THOSE FUNCTIONS APPROPRIATE TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT SUCH AS SERVICE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT OFTEN ARE NOT FULFILLED AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR APPROPRIATE SUPPORT TO DISTRICTS ARE NOT MET.
- ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES CLOSER TO THE STUDENT ALONG WITH DECISIONS ABOUT HOW THOSE RESOURCES ARE UTILIZED
 - WE NEED STRONG SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT WHERE SCHOOL LEADERS HAVE THE AUTHORITY AND AUTONOMY TO MAKE DECISIONS, SET PRIORITIES AND CONTROL RESOURCES BASED ON LOCAL NEEDS

- WE NEED TO DRIVE AT LEAST 92 CENTS ON THE DOLLAR TO THE SCHOOLS BY MINIMIZING ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS INCLUDING THOSE CREATED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT THROUGH UNNECESSARY REGULATIONS
- LEGISLATION PREVIOUSLY INTRODUCED TO IDENTIFY ACTUAL COSTS SHOULD BE PASSED AT THE NEXT SESSION AND PERFORMANCE BASED BUDGETING REQUIREMENTS SHOULD BE ACCELERATED
- WE CANNOT CONTINUE TO TAKE LIMITED RESOURCES OUT OF THE CLASSROOM WHERE THEY ARE MOST NEEDED
- AS BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS, WE NEED TO ADDRESS THE FLAWED GOVERNANCE SYSTEM INSTITUTED AT THE STATE LEVEL AND REMOVE THE OBSTACLES TO EDUCATION IN OUR STATE. UNTIL WE DO SO, REAL SYSTEMIC EDUCATION REFORM IS NOT POSSIBLE IN NEW MEXICO.

STATE ACADEMIC STANDINGS/THEIR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

1. Iowa --- SBE appointed by Governor/CSSO appointed by Governor
2. Minnesota --- no SBE/CSSO appointed by Governor
3. Wisconsin --- no SBE/CSSO non-partisan election
4. Massachusetts --- SBE appointed by Governor/CSSO appointed by SBE
5. Montana --- SBE appointed by Governor/CSSO non-partisan election
6. Nebraska --- SBE non-partisan election/CSSO appointed by SBE
7. New Hampshire --- SBE appointed by Governor/CSSO appointed by SBE
8. Oregon --- SBE appointed by Governor/CSSO non-partisan election
9. Washington --- SBE: 9 elected by local school board members and 1 by private school board members/CSSO non-partisan election
10. Alaska --- SBE appointed by Governor/CSSO appointed by SBE with approval of Governor

Of the top ten achieving states, the Governor directly appointed the CSSO or directly appointed the SBE who appointed the CSSO in five of those states including the top two rated states: Iowa (1), Minnesota (2), Massachusetts (4), New Hampshire (7) and Alaska (10). In the remaining five states, the Governor directly appointed the SBE in two of those states: Montana (5) and Oregon (8).

This demonstrates a correlation between direct involvement by the Governor in the governance structure and a state's academic achievement.

CSSO: Chief State School Officer
SBE: State Board of Education

SOME TALKING POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- When we fail to educate the poorest of our children or those from diverse backgrounds, we really fail all our children.
- There are those who have said that we should accept that 25 to 30% of our children cannot be education --- all of our children can and should be education. When the Chamber says all, we mean all!
- The dropout rate in New Mexico especially among Hispanic children is outrageously high – this must be addressed.
- We must also strive to ensure that those who graduate do so with a diploma that has value; that it represents a real education with which these children can enter the workplace or an institution of higher education and be fully prepared.
- Education reform must be about the children not the adults within the system.
- For reform to be meaningful, there must be accountability attached to all those within the education system: the teachers, administrators, parents and the students themselves.
- We must find a way to involve parents in the education of their children through involvement in their children's schools --- they must be made to feel welcome and be given the opportunity to make a difference.
- We must find an effective way to meet the social and physical needs of children in schools so that they are able to learn and teachers are freed to teach.
- Litigation was necessary in some states in order to change the system; as in Kentucky, and other states, we cannot continue to piece meal education reform nor can our children afford to wait any longer to receive the education they must have in order to succeed.
- All of us benefit when our children are well education; our economic development and our quality of life improve and future generations benefit.