



New Mexico Public Education Secretary MIA During Schools and Health Crisis: Managing Department From Philadelphia

Writing is on the chalkboard: Lujan Grisham Administration is detached from focusing on real needs of New Mexicans

Albuquerque, July 21--As parents and New Mexico public schools desperately scramble to figure out fall strategies and schedules--whether or not to hold in-person classes, remote classes or a hybrid model--a KOB-TV investigative report reveals the state's Public Education Secretary is managing his Department and the crisis from Philadelphia.

That's right. Ryan Stewart, the state's top educator, is running things from his home 2,000 miles from Santa Fe. His Cabinet office is empty.

New Mexico schools are frantically trying to address COVID-19 issues, the state's feeling serious fiscal pains and the Public Education Department's Deputy Secretary recently quit, but New Mexico's education leader is "in charge" along the Delaware River in Pennsylvania!

What's happening here?

The Lujan Grisham Administration is allowing Stewart to run public schools from the East Coast-- and he has been for months.

When asked by another media outlet about this remote-control management of New

Mexico's education system, a governor's spokesman is quoted as saying "Working out of state is not necessarily something we encourage."

So why is this happening? You can't properly manage a public schools system being absent. Stewart can't possibly be in tune with what's happening in the state.

With so many unanswered questions about the future of schools and student needs, this is a time for real leadership here in New Mexico. The governor should be accountable and make sure at least in-state attendance is a requirement for her Public Education Secretary.

"Allowing the Education Secretary to work from Philadelphia is a real problem and irresponsible," said Republican Party of New Mexico Chairman Steve Pearce. "All Cabinet members--and all New Mexico state employees for that matter--should live and work in New Mexico. This is an insult to our children and families who deserve better. What the Secretary is doing is disrespectful and inexcusable, especially in this time of crisis."

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