

Update 01-2016

The work of the 2016 legislature begins in earnest this week. The New Mexico Republican controlled house is wasting no time in [scheduling](#) some very bad public education proposed legislation. The idea behind [HB 67, SCHOOL GRADE PROMOTION & RETENTION](#), sponsored by [Representative Monica Youngblood](#), has been debated year after year in the legislature. It is one of Governor Martinez's main objectives for this legislative session once again. This measure would require that third grade public students who cannot pass a reading text be retained in the third grade, with no input from parents or education professionals. Research indicates that retention is not an appropriate educational strategy. This ill-conceived public policy will be heard in [the House Education Committee](#) tomorrow. There is little doubt that it will get out of committee on a party line vote and little doubt that the Republican controlled House will send it to the Senate, where we must work hard to kill it the [Senate Education Committee](#). On a bright note the ranking Republican member of the Senate Education Committee, [Senator Gay Kernan](#), has withdrawn her support for the bill and now believes that one test score should not determine whether or not a child is retained in third grade. Please let all legislators know that we oppose this bad legislation.

Another bad public policy will be on the [House Education Committee](#)'s agenda on Wednesday. [House Bill 145](#), introduced by [Representative Conrad James](#), provides that an unlicensed person who has earned at least a bachelor's degree; has a minimum of three years' experience in each area of subject-matter expertise in which the adjunct secondary instructor will teach; passes the New Mexico teacher assessments in each area of subject-matter expertise in which the adjunct secondary instructor will teach; and completes a department-approved pedagogy course can teach subject areas in grades seven through twelve. These individuals will not be allowed to receive any benefits other than "negotiated" compensation. Although presented as a way to prevent shortages, in reality this measure allows school districts to save money by hiring unqualified unlicensed "experts" to teach. Let all legislators know that you oppose this attack on the quality of the teaching profession.