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FROM THE NEWSROOM

JOURNAL POLL: New Mexicans are most worried about inflation and crime. **A1**

NEWLY APPOINTED Public Education Department Secretary Mariana Padilla vows to stay on job through end of governor's term. **A1**

A FORMER FOOD DELIVERY DRIVER was sentenced to five years in prison for fatally shooting a homeless man in the parking lot of a restaurant. **A3**

A BILL LARGELY AIMED at lowering the number of vacant buildings in Downtown will be on the agenda for the next City Council meeting. **A3**

THE CITY COUNCIL approves \$1 million in funding for film studio on the West Side. **A3**

A VOLCANO VISTA High School student is accused of bringing firearms onto campus Tuesday. **A4**

BUSINESS

INTEL: The Sandoval County Commission unanimously approved an ordinance to amend its lease with the tech company. **A7**

OPINION

CRT SHOULD BE eliminated from New Mexico's education system. **A9**

SPORTS

TABLE TOPS: No. 1 United prepares for second-place Sacramento Republic. **B1**

LOBO HOOPS lands versatile guard, first commitment of 2025 recruiting class. **B1**

NATION/WORLD

HUNDREDS OF HANDHELD PAGERS EXPLODED near simultaneously in parts of Lebanon and Syria, killing at least nine people. **A1**

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JOURNAL POLL

NEW MEXICANS' BIGGEST WORRIES:

Inflation, crime

Poll says those concerns transcend political ideologies



What is the biggest issue or concern facing New Mexico residents right now?

Inflation	18%
Crime	16%
Quality of K-12 education	9%
Weak economy/jobs/wages	8%
Illegal immigration/border security	8%
Homelessness	7%

Among other issues most cited were: Drugs, poverty, abortion, health care reform, gun control, local/state government ethics, mental/behavioral health, quality of higher education system, climate change

Source: Research & Polling Inc. JOURNAL

BY MEGAN GLEASON

JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

What's the biggest issue New Mexicans face in their daily lives?

Inflation. The cost of living, gas, housing — it's all just too expensive.

Not too far behind that, most New Mexico residents' top concern is crime.

These are responses from a new Journal poll of voters asking of them their biggest issue or concern.

No single issue took precedence by a landslide. A majority of voters mentioned one of six issues as their top concern: inflation, crime, (K-12) education, weak economy/jobs/wages, illegal immigration/border security and homelessness.

In the poll, 18% of voters said inflation is the biggest issue, 16% said it's crime, 9% said it's poor education, 8% said it's a weak economy, 8% said it's illegal immigration and border security, and 7% said it's homelessness.

Brian Sanderoff, president of Research & Polling Inc., which conducted the poll, said "this is just a way of getting a person's top of mind, gut feeling (of) what's the biggest thing. It doesn't mean those other things aren't of value."

He noted that of the top five issues, two are related to the economy and two are related to crime.

Sanderoff said while the 18% and 16% difference between inflation and the economy isn't that big, more voters are concerned about inflation because it impacts more people directly than

See POLL >> A5

New PED secretary vows to stay on job through end of gov's term

Padilla touts state's progress in first public remarks since appointment

BY DAN BOYD
JOURNAL CAPITOL BUREAU

SANTA FE — One week after being appointed to oversee New Mexico's public school system, Mariana Padilla pledged to stay on the job through the end of Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham's second term.

"Absolutely I will be



EDDIE MOORE/JOURNAL

New Public Education Secretary-designate Mariana Padilla, center, speaks during a Tuesday news conference, as Early Childhood Education and Care Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky, left, Lt. Gov. Howie Morales and Higher Education Secretary Stephanie Rodriguez look on.

See PED >> A6

Hezbollah hit by wave of exploding pagers

At least nine people killed as devices detonate in Lebanon and Syria

BY BASSEM MROUE, ABBY SEWELL AND KAREEM CHEHAYEB
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIRUT — Pagers used by hundreds of members of the militant group Hezbollah exploded near simultaneously in Lebanon and Syria on Tuesday, killing at least nine people — including an 8-year-old girl — and wounding several thousand, officials said. Hezbollah and the

Lebanese government blamed Israel for what appeared to be a sophisticated, remote attack.

Among those wounded was Iran's ambassador to Lebanon. The mysterious explosions came amid rising tensions between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah, which have exchanged fire across the Israel-Lebanon border since the Oct. 7 attack by Hamas that sparked the war in Gaza.

The pagers that blew up had apparently been acquired by Hezbollah after the group's leader

See PAGERS >> A5

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