Betty the PDAP dog and Myrilla Feaster at Jefferson Elementary in Hobbs during a recent presentation.

SANTA FE (AP) — The New Mexico Supreme Court on Tuesday waded into a political dispute over legislative redistricting that could influence elections for the coming decade and may help determine how New Mexico lawmakers can win a majority in the state House of Representatives for the first time in a half century.

After hearing arguments from lawyers for about two hours, the court took the case under consideration and said it will issue an order “expeditiously” if the court didn’t announce a deadline for its decision promptly.

House candidates typically give speeches at the redistricting appeal has had cautious over what schedule.

The Legislature and a group of Democrats and minority voices asked the court to set a deadline for Texas to draw new House districts that was ordered by a district judge last month, but a lawyer for the state gave Sen. Susana Martinez urged the justices to stick with the court-approving districts.

“Betty plays an important role in the trust issues Sata has to have with her clients,” May said, “Betty seems to know when someone is hurting and when someone is doing. She’s a source of comfort in a time when someone needs comfort.”

Sara Svoboda, who is Betty’s handler and a counselor at PDAP, said she believes the dog is a valuable tool in the fight against drug abuse.

“Betty provides comfort and companionship for clients who are recovering from drugs and alcohol along with their family members,” Svoboda said. “Betty helps people with their difficult emotions.”

Svoboda was nominated for the award last year by Barb May, who is the Total Health Planning Council.

According to a press release, Betty is a 2-year-old golden retriever is receiving the second annual John Henry Morehart Award from the New Mexico Behavioral Health Planning Council.

Betty is a one-of-a-kind golden retriever who has been helping SDAPS clients and their family members by giving them hope.

The dog has been described as a “wise, gentle, and loving companion” to clients.

Betty’s handler, Svoboda, said the dog has a unique ability to connect with people in a way that few other dogs can.

Svoboda said Betty’s presence can help clients feel more comfortable and less anxious.

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