



2021 Legislative Session Priorities



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PUBLIC EDUCATION OVERVIEW

The Public Education Department (NMPED) is committed to equity, excellence, and relevance. As we approach this year's legislative session, the NMPED is focused on ensuring New Mexico's students receive the funding and programs they need by building on recent investments in evidence-based practices and through a combination of innovative strategies, equitable use of available funds, and alignment across agency initiatives.



Strategic Alignment & Funding Requests

The NMPED has developed a strategic plan to address current inequities and promote student success. In addition to aligning to the findings of the Martinez/Yazzie consolidated lawsuit, the NMPED's four strategic pillars (e.g. supporting the whole child; closing the opportunity gap; promoting a vibrant educator ecosystem; and developing pathways and profiles of a New Mexico graduate) are reflected across the following legislative priorities:

» **Maintain current investments in public school funding.** Despite the economic challenges of the past year, the NMPED believes it is crucial to maintain funding for New Mexico's public schools. This means school districts and charter schools should not be negatively impacted by enrollment decreases due to the health pandemic.

The NMPED also will continue to advocate for funding that supports initiatives in indigenous, multilingual, and multicultural programs, the recruitment and retention of high quality educators, additional opportunities for students, and programs aimed at improving academic achievement and enrichment.

» **Martinez Yazzie remediation strategies (\$151 million).** The NMPED asks the Legislature to expand the use of funds currently earmarked for K-5 Plus and Extended Learning Time Programs to allow LEAs to supplement these extended learning opportunities with career technical education and community school initiatives. Stacking these programs on top of each other allows for a robust response to the Martinez/Yazzie lawsuit. *This proposal does not require new appropriations.*

» **Family Income Index (\$80 million).** The department recommends an appropriation from the Education Reform Fund for two years of funding targeted to schools serving students with the least amount of resources. While the current at-risk factor provides additional funding based on district-wide numbers of economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and mobile students, the Family Income Index would use individual student and family data to ensure money reaches students that need it most at the school level.

» **Eliminate the Impact Aid credit (\$35 million).** New Mexico has historically taken a credit for a portion of this funding. By ceasing to do so, federally impacted districts will keep the money intended to offset reduced property valuations, resulting in a significant impact for communities serving Native American students.





Accountability



Each of these proposals potentially mean school districts and charter schools would receive significant additional funds to support crucial programs. Equally important, though, is the need to ensure those funds are spent efficiently and effectively on evidence-based initiatives. Past legislation, namely Senate Bill 96 from the 2020 Regular Session and the Educational Plan provisions of Senate Bill 1 and House Bill 5 from the 2019 Regular Session, is important in providing the resources and guidance the department will use to track spending and programming.

Further, the department’s strategic plan will include concrete metrics by which to measure both departmental and local performance. By measuring academic progress and social emotional metrics, the department will demonstrate the need for additional resources and the efficacy of those investments.

Supporting Facts



The 2018 decision in the Martinez/Yazzie consolidated lawsuit sets both a legal and moral imperative for New Mexico to provide sufficient resources and programs to students who need it most. This obligation directs the state to remedy the existing inequities by innovative approaches to budgets and funding, re-imagining classrooms, engaging deeply with families and communities, and ensuring that local community needs drive all of our decisions and programs.

The economic disparity across our state disproportionately impacts Native American and Hispanic communities. According to 2018 data¹, 41% of Native American and 30% of Hispanic children were living in households experiencing poverty, compared to only 14% of their non-Hispanic white peers; numbers that have stayed relatively constant over the previous years. The proposed appropriation of funding per the family income index, coupled with the Impact Aid credit cancellation will help direct funding where it’s needed most and could be used to bolster community schools programming such as school-based health centers, meal distribution efforts, and more.

» Tribal Remedy Framework (\$30 million).

The NMPED proposes transferring \$30 million to the Indian Education Fund to support education efforts in New Mexico’s tribal communities. The appropriation would support implementation of the Tribal Remedy Framework, support tribal sovereignty, and provide resources for locally determined needs.

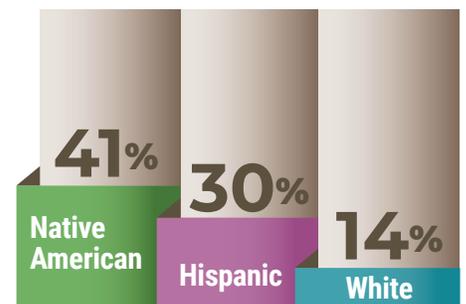
» Work-Based Learning (\$15 million).

The NMPED proposes funding to support salary matching for work-based learning and paid internships for high school juniors and seniors. This funding will be instrumental in three ways: supporting students with successful pathways out of high school, supporting statewide economic recovery, and supporting long-term shifts in high school redesign that will result from lessons learned through the pandemic.

» Closing the Digital Divide (\$10 million).

The NMPED acknowledges that despite huge financial and logistical efforts to ensure all New Mexico students have both the digital devices and the Internet connectivity they need to effectively access distance education, there is still much work to do. This proposal would continue efforts to ensure every student has a device and the connection needed to use it, so that they can access digital content and instruction, both during the health pandemic and in the future.

New Mexico Children Living in Poverty



¹ <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/>

Maintain Current Investments in Public Education

Key Points

Despite the economic challenges of the past year, the NMPED believes it is crucial to maintain funding for New Mexico's public schools and is requesting a four percent increase in public school funding. This means school districts and charter schools should not be negatively impacted by enrollment decreases due to the health pandemic.

The NMPED will continue to advocate for funding that supports extended learning time programs and initiatives in indigenous, multilingual, and multicultural programs, the recruitment and retention of high-quality educators, additional opportunities for students, and programs aimed at improving science and math education.

Budget Priorities

» SEG	\$3.17 billion
» Indigenous, Multilingual, Multicultural, and Special Education Initiatives	\$4.56 million
» Early Literacy and Reading Support	\$1.66 million
» Principal Professional Development	\$2.49 million
» Teacher Recruitment, Mentorship, and Professional Development	\$2.87 million
» Community School Initiatives	\$3.32 million
» Culturally and Linguistically Relevant Curriculum and Instruction	\$2.00 million
» Career Technical Education	\$2.50 million
» Breakfast for Elementary Students	\$1.32 million
» School Lunch Copayments	\$540 thousand

Accountability Metrics



- » The NMPED will continue its implementation of SB96 and refine the Educational Plan process to ensure school districts and charter schools plan for and use operational funds efficiently and effectively
- » Increased access to high quality teacher preparation and mentorship
- » Fewer teacher vacancies
- » Increased access to culturally and linguistically relevant instruction and instructional materials
- » Improved literacy instruction
- » Improved academic performance
- » Improved graduation rates
- » Increased access to social and emotional learning supports and resources
- » Improved student nutrition



Martinez Yazzie Remediation Strategies \$151 MILLION

Key Points

The NMPED asks the Legislature to expand the use of funds earmarked for K-5 Plus and Extended Learning Time Programs (ELTP) to allow LEAs access to that money to fund career technical education (CTE) and community school initiatives if they also choose to participate in extended learning time initiatives. This proposal does not require new appropriations.

This year alone, more than \$80 million will go unspent and revert to the Education Reform Fund because of low participation in K-5 Plus and ELTP. In total, by the end of FY21 there will be nearly \$200 million in that fund. By expanding the use of these appropriations, this proposal creates incentives for school districts and charter schools to participate in K-5 Plus and ELTP, while also expanding the support for CTE and community schools. Additionally, demand for community school and CTE funding has exceeded current appropriations, demonstrating school district and charter school desire to implement these evidence-based programs. This proposal will also mean money reaches students instead of sitting unused.

Budget Priorities

- » K-5 Plus
- » Extended Learning Time Programs
- » Career Technical Education
- » Community School Initiatives

Accountability Metrics

- » Increased instructional days
- » Increased instructional hours
- » Improved academic performance
- » Improved graduation rates
- » Increased access to social emotion supports and resources
- » Improved attendance rates
- » Decreased discipline referrals
- » Fewer suspensions and expulsions



Family Income Index \$80 MILLION

PRIORITY # **3**

Key Points

The purpose of the legislation is to ensure that schools, as well as the families, in economically disadvantaged communities receive support to implement evidence-based strategies to improve outcomes. While current at-risk factors provide additional funding based on district-wide percentages of economically disadvantaged students, the Family Income Index would use individual student and family data to ensure money reaches the school level as well. The proposal recognizes that schools serving large populations of economically disadvantaged students face not only the challenges of serving individual students but also the compounded and whole-school effects of community poverty.

The NMPED strongly supports past investments in the at-risk index and statutory guidance about how to best spend those funds. This proposal limits the use of funds distributed through the Family Income Index to those evidence-based strategies already approved by the legislature for implementation with at-risk funding. Some strategies include tutoring, reading intervention, culturally relevant professional development and curriculum, school-based health centers, community schools, and family engagement—all of which have been found to have meaningful effects in schools serving large populations of economically disadvantaged students.

Evidence

Research has found that,

“Concentrated poverty in schools creates and sustains disparities in academic outcomes.”²

High concentrations of students living in poverty complicate learning and teaching in schools, and reduce the effectiveness of other educational interventions designed to address gaps in academic outcomes.”²

Furthermore, studies “demonstrate that

students who attend schools that have high concentrations of disadvantaged students are less likely to score well on tests, earn high grades, graduate from high school, and succeed in college

than their otherwise comparable peers who attend socioeconomically diverse schools.”²

Additional financial support has been found to lead to improvement in performance and analyses have determined, “the robustness of the patterns across a variety of settings is compelling evidence of

a real positive causal relationship between increased school spending and student outcomes on average.”³

Student Support

- » School counselors & social workers
- » Family information & resource centers
- » Culturally and linguistically diverse classroom texts
- » Innovative professional learning opportunities
- » After-school enrichment programs
- » Robust community needs assessments
- » Academic interventions & mentoring supports

Increase School Spending

Accountability Metrics

- » Improved academic performance
- » Improved graduation rates²
- » Increased access to social emotional supports
- » Improved attendance rates
- » Decreased discipline referrals
- » Fewer suspensions and expulsions



Increase Student Outcomes

² Mickelson, R. A. (2018). *Is There Systematic Meaningful Evidence of School Poverty Thresholds?* Washington, DC: National Coalition on School Diversity

³ Jackson, C. K. (2018). *Does School Spending Matter? The New Literature on an Old Question* (No. w25368). National Bureau of Economic Research

Eliminate the Impact Aid Credit \$35 MILLION

PRIORITY # **4**

Key Points

Federal impact aid payments are intended to support communities whose ability to levy local taxes is impacted by their location on federal property or by their proximity to federal installations, such as military bases and national laboratories. In New Mexico, school districts on tribally owned lands have received the large majority of these payments, most of which the state has taken credit for in the form of a reduction in state aid. By proposing to cease this practice, the NMPED acknowledges the need for additional resources for students in tribal communities and will fully fund these districts, resulting in a significant impact for communities serving Native American students.

Because this proposal would result in an increase in operational funds, it gives local school districts and charter schools the autonomy and flexibility to use those resources in ways that best fit local community needs, which will vary in different communities.

Budget Priorities

- » Eliminate Impact Aid Credits

Accountability Metrics

- » Increased instructional days
- » School districts and charter schools should use findings from their Native American Needs Assessment to ensure resources are supporting students effectively
- » Improved academic performance
- » Improved graduation rates
- » Increased access to social and emotional learning supports and resources
- » Improved attendance rates



Funding for Work-Based Learning

\$15 MILLION

Key Points

The NMPED proposes funding to support salary matching for work-based learning and paid internships for high school juniors and seniors. This funding will be instrumental in three ways: supporting students with successful pathways out of high school, supporting statewide economic recovery, and supporting long-term shifts in high school redesign that will result from lessons learned through the pandemic.

Budget Priorities

» Work-Based Learning



Accountability Metrics

- » Improved academic performance
- » Improved graduation rates
- » Improved attendance rates
- » Decreased discipline referrals
- » Fewer suspensions and expulsions



Evidence

A recent report from the Brookings Institute advocates work-based learning as a key lever in addressing inequalities that may be exacerbated by COVID-19. The report notes,

“Through WBL experiences such as internships and apprenticeships, young people can learn the technical, academic, and interpersonal skills they need to function in a workplace—

an environment they will enter in just a few years and where they will spend decades of their lives.” The report identifies three components of WBL that will benefit students: developing positive relationships with adults that support growth and development, increasing social capital that provides information and contacts regarding employment, and providing work experiences that offer opportunities for hands-on learning and expose young people to new environments and expectations.

Further, data from the National Center for Education Statistics illustrates that students who earned three or more career technical education credits while in high school had lower unemployment rates three years after graduating than peers who earned fewer than three. Those same graduates received health insurance and retirement benefits at higher rates than peers who earned fewer than three credits.

Closing the Digital Divide \$10 MILLION

PRIORITY # **6**

Key Points

The NMPED acknowledges that despite huge financial and logistical efforts to ensure all New Mexico students have both the digital devices and the Internet connectivity they need to effectively access distance education, there is still much work to do. This proposal would continue efforts to ensure every student has a device and the connection needed to use it, so that they can access digital content and instruction, both during the health pandemic and in the future.

Budget Priorities

» Digital Devices and Connectivity

Accountability Metrics

- » Increased access to digital devices
- » Increased access to broadband connectivity

