



*Discussion Draft*

## **Action Plan**

Decisions about Martinez/Yazzie v. State of New Mexico

**Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham Administration**

Lead Agency: New Mexico Public Education Department

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This document is a Discussion Draft State Action Plan (M/Y Discussion Draft) in response to the decisions in *Martinez/Yazzie v. State of New Mexico*. It should be considered as a companion to the *New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) [2022 Comprehensive Strategic Plan](#)* with remedies to the *Martinez/Yazzie* decisions embedded throughout.

The work that lies ahead for NMPED and schools will require systemic change to address the needs of the students and families impacted by decades of neglect and underfunding, including students with disabilities, Native American students, English learners, and economically disadvantaged students. These students account for over 70% of the population in New Mexico's public schools. For New Mexico students and their families to realize their full potential, it is incumbent upon both NMPED and its partners, especially the school districts, to do their part in ensuring educational equity, excellence, and relevance for all students.

By implementing the recommendations in this plan, all of New Mexico's public school students will benefit.

## II. VISION

NMPED is planning a future in which students are engaged in a culturally and linguistically responsive educational system that meets their academic, social, and emotional needs.

To that end, this action plan is focused on the following long-term goals:

1. Assuring external factors like race, language, economic status, and family situations do not equate with lower rates of success in educational achievement and career prospects.<sup>1</sup>
2. Increasing academic proficiency in math, science, and languages to ensure that all students graduate well prepared for the ever-changing world of college, career, and civic engagement.
3. Eliminating achievement gaps among New Mexico students, particularly English learners, economically disadvantaged students, Hispanics, Native Americans, African Americans, and students with disabilities.
4. Respecting, honoring, and preserving students' home languages and cultures by implementing culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and learning for all students.

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<sup>1</sup> This has been referred to by some as the *Opportunity Gap*.

### III. OUTCOME TARGETS FOR SPECIFIC POPULATIONS

This section describes actions taken and expected outcomes for specific populations: teachers, at-risk students, Native American students, English language learners, and students with disabilities. Where possible, a snapshot of the current baselines and the expectations for improvements are provided. While these are by no means exhaustive lists of everything that NMPED and its partnering agencies have done, they do offer specific insight into NMPED’s vision for New Mexico’s students and their families. Additionally, Section IV of this plan (page 32) contains a comprehensive explanation of strategies to improve access to educational technology, college and career readiness, and extended school programs, all working toward the goal of ultimately improving outcomes for students.

It should be noted at the outset that outcomes are best measured by comparing “before” and “after” statistics. NMPED has found that some statistics and data points that it would like to use as baselines are unavailable. In certain cases, data may be available, but that collection period may not always be the same. In other words, some data may be available from 2018, while other data sets were not measured until 2020. All the metrics described in this document will be tracked and collected on a regular basis going forward.

#### Educators

Quality teachers are the foundation of the public education system. We need to focus on three primary areas to provide the number of high-quality teachers that are necessary to make our education system a model for the rest of the country:

1. Retaining the teachers we have;
2. Recruiting more teachers to join the ranks; and
3. Developing a pipeline of home-grown teachers.

Class-size reduction has been linked to student success and can have a significant impact on the success of at-risk students. Some research suggests that a meaningful reduction in class size could increase achievement by an amount equivalent to three additional months of school.<sup>2</sup> Having a sufficient roster of educators is the key to reducing class size, which, in turn, increases productivity for students.

#### **Data Snapshot**

1. In 2019, there were 644 **teacher vacancies** in New Mexico, 571 teacher vacancies in 2020, and 1,048 teacher vacancies in 2021. (Source: NMSU Southwest Outreach Academic Research Evaluation and Policy Center.) The increase in vacancies in 2021

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<sup>2</sup> “What research says and what it means for state policy.” Chingos & Whitehurst, Brookings Institute. 05/11/11. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/class-size-what-research-says-and-what-it-means-for-state-policy/> for a summary of the research on class size and its implications for state policy.

demonstrates the toll that the COVID-19 pandemic had on our teacher population and increases the urgency for hiring more educators.<sup>3</sup>

2. During the 2020-21 school year, Caucasian teachers represented 59% of the teacher workforce, Hispanic teachers 34%, Native American teachers 3%, and African American teachers 2%. In contrast, Caucasian students represented 23% of the overall student population, Hispanic students 62%, Native American students 10%, and African American students less than 5%. (Source: NMPED.) The difference between the teacher and student percentages for each of these categories is the **“teacher-student” diversity gap**. It is well-established that students thrive when their teachers reflect the community in which they work, and we therefore must prioritize obtaining a more diverse workforce.<sup>4</sup>
3. Statewide average **class size** (Source: NMPED):

Grade Level	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1-3	14.2	14.9	14.0	14.0
4-6	16.0	15.9	14.9	14.0
7-12	9.3	9.1	9.8	8.9

### **Funding**

**Teacher salaries** have consistently increased over the past three years. In FY2019-20, teachers received a 6% salary increase and the minimum salaries for teachers was increased to \$41,000 for level one teachers, \$50,000 for level two, and \$60,000 for level three. In FY2020-21, teachers received an average 1% pay increase at the height of the pandemic. In FY2021-22, teachers received a 1.5% salary increase. Finally, during the 2022 legislative session, all school educators received an average 7% pay increase (3% in FY22 fourth quarter and average 4% in FY23), and the minimum salaries for teachers was increased again to \$50,000 for level one teachers, \$60,000 for level two, and \$70,000 for level three. Teachers participating in K-5 Plus or the Extended Learning Time Program will receive an additional average 3% raise.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA1108-1.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1108-1.html).

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Thomas Dee, [“Teachers, Race, and Student Achievement in a Randomized Experiment”](#), Review of Economics and Statistics, 2004; Thomas Dee, [“A Teacher Like Me: Does Race, Ethnicity, or Gender Matter?”](#), American Economic Review, 2005; Anna Egalite, Brian Kisida, and Marcus Winters, [“Representation in the Classroom: The Effect of Own-Race Teachers on Student Achievement”](#), Economics of Education Review, 2015; Stephen Holt and Seth Gershenson, [“The Impact of Teacher Demographic Representation on Student Attendance and Suspensions”](#), IZA discussion paper 9554, 2015; and Constance Lindsay and Cassandra Hart, [“Exposure to Same-Race Teachers and Student Disciplinary Outcomes for Black Students in North Carolina”](#), Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 2017. There exists evidence for similar relationships in higher education as well. Seth Gershenson, Stephen Holt, and Nicholas Papageorge, [“Who Believes in Me? The Effect of Student-Teacher Demographic Match on Teacher Expectations”](#), Economics of Education Review, 2016.

Below are just a few examples of funding that the state has already provided to achieve the goal of keeping, hiring, and training more teachers.

- The Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) established a **PreK Scholarship Program**, which pays 100% of tuition and books for preschool personnel seeking AA and BA degrees. During Fall 2021 (the most recent semester), 102 Community Based PreK educators and 171 public school PreK educators were awarded scholarships toward achieving their Child Development Certificate (CDC), AA, or BA degree. Scholarships are also awarded to educators working in Child Care, Head Start, and Home Visiting programs. All programs included, a total of 785 scholarships were awarded in Fall 2021.
- NMPED has awarded \$2 million in grants for **Teacher Residencies** to educator preparation programs over FY21 and FY22. Teacher Residency Programs, considered a gold standard in educator preparation, allow teacher candidates a full year of clinical practice in a classroom alongside a master educator while receiving a salary as they learn. Benefits of these programs include reduced disciplinary referrals, stronger novice teachers, reduced teacher turnover to stabilize schools, cost savings due to reduced turnover, stronger student outcomes, and whole-school transformation. Retention rates more than double for teachers who participate in a residency model.<sup>5</sup> In FY22, NMPED is funding the University of New Mexico and New Mexico State University for a total of 40 teacher residents. Looking ahead, an additional \$15.5 million has been appropriated for use in FY23 to support teacher residencies.
- NMPED awarded \$450,000 in grants for **creative recruitment efforts**, such as signing bonuses and outreach, for the following schools and districts through a Request for Application (RFA) award process: Zuni Public School District, Roswell Independent School District, Española Public Schools, Solare Charter School, Siembra Leadership High School, and Health Leadership High School.
- NMPED awarded \$500,000 in grants to educators to become **National Board Certified** in FY21 with an additional \$500,000 for FY22. The National Board Certification is the highest level of recognition an educator receives nationally, certifying them as experts in a particular area of instruction. These teachers must demonstrate over the course of a year a rigorous reflection of masterful teaching through videos submitted to the National Board of Teaching. National Board-Certified Teachers lead to better school stability and whole-school transformation, strong mentor teachers, and increased retention in the profession. Just over 400 educators were reimbursed through this program with scholarship funds to pursue National Board Certification. More than 100 school districts and charters and over

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<sup>5</sup> Learning Policy Institute, Sept 15, 2016, <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/teacher-residency>.

225 schools have benefited from the NBCT scholarship program.<sup>6</sup> Looking ahead, an additional \$500,000 has been appropriated for use in FY23 to assist teachers seeking National Board Certification.

- In 2020, NMPED funded \$430,000 in **professional development** through a collaboration with Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) to provide free professional development to all educators as they transitioned into remote instruction that included knowledge of using basic learning management systems like Canvas and Google Classroom as well as apps and tools to increase student engagement in a virtual space. Just over 3,000 educators participated.

### ***Non-Monetary Supports***

In addition to the salary increases discussed above, the ability to retain current educators and recruit new ones depends on the ability to give teachers the tools they need to be successful. Since 2019, NMPED and partnering agencies have implemented programs designed to provide teachers with the optimal working environment. Some examples of those include:

- In school year 2020-21, NMPED launched the **Elevate NM teacher evaluation system**. The system was developed based upon input from the New Mexico Teacher Evaluation Task Force and was designed to provide more accurate teacher evaluations. All teachers in the state are expected to be evaluated this school year.
- NMPED has established an improved process to review and approve all **Educator Preparation Programs**. Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) ensure alignment between PED educator competencies, licensure, and programs of study. Following this, the EPPs collaborate and provide data for the Educator Accountability Reporting System (EARS). This report meets statutory requirements for a statewide educator accountability reporting system that measures and tracks teacher and administrator education candidates from pre-entry to post-graduation. PED staff provide technical assistance and accountability to offer a meaningful platform for feedback and continuous improvement.
- NMPED has streamlined the **online licensure portal** so that educators can efficiently submit their paperwork and expedite the overall licensure process. Additionally, NMPED will hire five new staff members to support the Licensure Bureau beginning in July 2022. This additional staff capacity will increase support for all educators applying for licensure.
- In June 2020, NMPED launched the **NM Instructional Scope**, an online tool that helps support teachers in the classroom. NM Instructional Scope assists with

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<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.nbpts.org/> for more information about National Board Certification.

teaching challenges, such as lesson planning and designing learning environments that minimize barriers and optimize learning for all students.

- NMPED is providing multiple **literacy** supports for educators, including Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training for elementary educators, Structured Literacy 101 supports, drafting of a biliteracy framework, and professional learning for bilingual literacy development. As of January 2022, 328 teachers and administrators have successfully completed the full LETRS-EC (early childhood) professional learning series, and 157 are currently in progress. Additionally, NMPED has trained 5,333 elementary teachers, reading interventionists, and special education teachers, as well as 696 administrators. To sustain this initiative, NMPED has also trained 104 LETRS facilitators who can then train teachers in their respective districts. In addition, NMPED provides structured literacy 101 supports and courses specific to adolescent struggling readers and disciplinary literacy with over 4,000 educators accessing these courses.

In order to fast-track hiring in the midst of the pandemic, NMPED, in collaboration with the Department of Workforce Solutions, conducted a **hiring blitz** in Spring 2021 for STEM, IT, and trades teachers with career technical education (“CTE”) licenses and math and science teachers with alternative licenses. These efforts resulted in 20 new CTE teacher candidates plus 80 potential alternative licensees.

NMPED no longer grants automatic **class size waivers**, ending a practice that allowed class sizes in many schools to exceed legal limits. Districts and schools are now required to submit a waiver request and are not granted approval unless a plan is in place to address the educator shortage. This requirement ensures district participation in solving the teacher shortage problem.

### ***Planning for the Future***

The third prong of the plan to hire more educators and reduce class size involves creating a pipeline of homegrown educators from within New Mexico. In 2019, New Mexico implemented the **Grow Your Own Teachers Scholarship**. The program provides for professional leave and scholarship awards to qualified school employees who may want to attend a public post-secondary educational institution in New Mexico to earn a bachelor’s degree in education. To date, approximately 180 scholarships have been awarded to students totaling \$1,004,000. Looking ahead, an additional \$500,000 has been appropriated for use in FY23 to continue this program.

NMPED launched the **Educator Fellows Program** in 2021, which provides grants to districts and charter schools to recruit and retain educational assistants who want to become teachers. The program provides full salary and benefits for each fellow, boot-camp style training for the fellows prior to their start in the classroom, coaching and support throughout the program, a \$4,000 stipend to the local education agencies for each fellow to



support their postsecondary education, and funding for all licensure and background fees. NMPED will spend \$35 million on this effort, supporting 490 educator fellows beginning spring 2022.

The **Educators Rising Career Technical Student Organization** guides young people in high school and college into careers in teaching. New Mexico now has 32 active chapters, with over 500 participating students. NMPED increased participation by funding programs with the increased dollars for career-technical education (CTE) programs. In 2021-22, NMPED provided \$25,000 in federal CTE funds and \$40,000 in state CTE funds to support a director at New Mexico State University, who runs the program. This employee is also responsible for raising additional funds to help pay operating costs for the program. Additionally, NMPED provided \$86,675 in 2020-21 and \$42,212 in 2021-22 to five local education agencies to support their educator pathway program costs.

Under HB73, which was signed into law during the 2022 legislative session, the State of New Mexico will expand access for educators to **return to work** by shortening the amount of time they have to wait before re-entering the profession upon retirement. The expected impact is threefold. First, there would be an immediate decrease in educator vacancies. Second, veteran educators provide needed expertise and mentorship to young professionals and support a healthy school culture. Third, as a result of strong educator leadership and mentorship, overall teacher retention will improve.

NMPED will work to amend state law to eliminate barriers to level 2 and level 3 licenses for **career technical education (CTE) educators** by providing experience reciprocity. Under current law, all teachers must have a master's degree to progress to a level 2 license, but for some CTE educators, that would require them having to return to school to get an academic degree that may not be needed in their trade or field. Experience reciprocity instead allows NMPED to consider industry-relevant national credentials, in addition to academic degrees, to evaluate a teacher's application for leveling up.

NMPED will implement the use of "**microcredentials**" to give teachers more opportunities to obtain recognized areas of expertise. These certificates will help educators move to higher levels of licensure with accompanying increases in pay.

NMPED plans to focus efforts on **bilingual students** who want to pursue a career in education. Currently, New Mexico high school students may obtain a biliteracy seal on their diplomas when they graduate. NMPED hopes to attract these and other bilingual students into teaching through the Educators Rising program, as well as through recruitment in college.

NMPED supports Indigenous language teachers with "520 certificates" by honoring their expertise through MOUs with sovereign tribes and has worked hard to ensure salary parity for these individuals. NMPED advocated for, and the Legislature approved, a \$1.25 million increase in the budget to support this important priority.

In addition to the Grow Your Own Teachers Scholarship, the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) has also instituted two programs designed to educate new teachers.

- The **Teacher Loan Repayment Program** aims to increase the number of teachers in public schools across New Mexico by paying toward the outstanding student loan debt collected by teachers during their time enrolled in college. The program provides up to \$6,000 per year for licensed teachers in high-need areas across New Mexico, including bilingual education, early childhood education, special education, high-need population schools, STEM, and career technical education (CTE). Since 2016, approximately 822 teachers have benefited from the program, totaling \$6,302,714. This year, NMHED increased the number of awardees by 56%, with 604 awardees at 66 school districts across the state. Looking ahead, \$5 million has been appropriated from the Teacher Loan Repayment Fund for use in FY23.
- The **Teacher Preparation Affordability Scholarship** incentivizes students to attend and complete an accredited NMPED-approved teacher preparation program at a public college or university in New Mexico. The scholarship helps to defray educational expenses associated with college, including tuition, fees, books and course supplies, and living expenses. Students may receive up to \$6,000 per year to cover these expenses. In 2020, the agency awarded \$4,904,237 in scholarships to 2,169 students enrolled at public colleges and universities in New Mexico, and to date, approximately 3,615 scholarships have been awarded to students at a total of \$7,673,305. Looking ahead, \$5 million has been appropriated for the Teacher Preparation Affordability Scholarship Program for use in FY23.

**Early career educators** will soon have the opportunity to participate in at least two years of mentorship when they begin employment. Under state law, all first-year teachers are required to have a mentor assigned to them by their school or district to ensure support. Research shows extended and solid mentorship significantly increases retention, particularly for educators of color. In FY2022-23, the Legislature appropriated an additional \$10 million through the school funding formula to support increased early career mentorship opportunities.

Finally, it is worth noting that with the implementation of free college for all state residents through the **Opportunity Scholarship**, graduates will not be crippled with debt when they obtain their degrees. They will have more flexibility to pursue careers in education without worrying about how they will pay their student loans. In Fall 2021, over 18,000 students benefited from Opportunity and Lottery scholarship programs.

### ***Targets for Improvement***

1. Decrease the number of statewide teacher vacancies by 25% in each of the 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26 school years, decreasing vacancies by a total of 75%.
2. By the 2025-26 school year, close the teacher-to-student diversity gap by increasing Hispanic teacher representation by 20 percentage points, Native American teacher representation by 7 percentage points, and African American teacher representation by 3 percentage points.
3. Increase the retention rate among newly recruited teachers by 50% by the 2025-26 school year.
4. Ensure that the average statewide class size continues to remain below the statutory maximum (22 for grades 1-3 and 24 for grades 4-6) and examine opportunities for class size reduction in schools and secondary content areas that skew toward the higher end of the class size range.

### **“At-Risk” Students: Economically Disadvantaged**

The term “at-risk” is used to describe students who are considered to have a higher probability of failing academically or dropping out of school. Judge Singleton’s opinion also defined “at-risk” in terms of four student subgroups: economically disadvantaged students, Native American students, English learners, and students with disabilities. In her opinion, she made it clear that New Mexico’s at-risk students remain especially likely to receive a sub-par education. In order to keep our promise to New Mexico’s at-risk students and families, that obviously must change, and fast. The next four sections provide some examples of both monetary and non-monetary supports that NMPED has provided to improve outcomes for at-risk students. This section focuses on economically disadvantaged students, a subgroup comprising approximately 73% of the state’s entire student population.

### ***Data Snapshot***

1. In 2019, 28% of economically disadvantaged students tested proficient and above in reading and 15% in math.<sup>7</sup> (Source: NMPED.)
2. The four-year high school graduation rate for economically disadvantaged students was 69.0% in 2018, 70% in 2019, and 71.8% in 2020. (Source: NMPED.)

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<sup>7</sup> Annual, statewide summative assessments in reading and math will resume in spring 2022.

## **Funding**

The “**at-risk funding factor**” is a term defined in state statute to identify funding directed toward providing at-risk students with necessary educational supports (such as school lunches or extended learning). In 2018, the statewide funding formula allocated \$100,306,648.30 for at-risk funding. That funding was increased nearly 300% by 2021, when NMPED provided \$296,237,171.91 in at-risk funding to school districts and charter schools. After school districts and charter schools receive their share of at-risk funding, it is the responsibility of local school boards and governing councils to ensure that the funding is allocated for its intended purpose, thereby ensuring that at-risk students are adequately supported.

In FY2022-23, the Legislature appropriated \$15 million for **at-risk student interventions**, over and above the at-risk funding factor, which can be used to support at-risk student groups identified in the Martinez/Yazzie rulings.

**Community schools** are an evidence-based strategy for increasing student success and reducing gaps in both opportunity and achievement. They are particularly effective in communities of concentrated poverty in which few families and neighborhoods can supplement what traditional schools provide. Funding for community schools increased from \$2 million in FY20 to \$6.635 million in FY22 (the FY22 funding includes \$4.798 million in state funds and \$1.836 million in federal school improvement funds). Looking ahead, the Legislature appropriated \$8 million for community schools in FY23.

The **Extended Learning Time Program** allows for schools to add at least 10 additional days to each school year to increase the amount of time students are learning, especially for the purposes of improving academic achievement, addressing unfinished learning, and reducing achievement gaps. NMPED was able to increase funding for this program from \$62,497,500 in 2019-2020 to \$160,222,500 in 2021-2022, a nearly 256% increase that allowed for a total of 139,067 students to participate. For the 2022-2023 school year, funding for ELTP stabilized at \$95 million (a decrease of \$65 million). However, \$64,027,500 was set in the budget to incentivize the program by funding an increase in targeted compensation for school personnel with an average 3% salary increase for those participating. For more information on the Extended Learning Program, see p. **Error! Bookmark not defined..**

The **K–5 Plus program** is designed with the understanding that increased time in kindergarten and the early grades narrows the achievement gap between at-risk students and other students, increases cognitive skills, and leads to higher academic achievement for all participants. The K-5 Plus program also saw significant spending increases over the last three years. In FY19, the program received \$30,200,000. For FY22, the funding increased to \$119,895,900, amounting to a nearly 300% increase. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, participation in K-5 Plus decreased from 20,126 in 2018-19 to 16,067 in 2020-21; however, NMPED expects participation in the program to increase in coming years. For the 2022-2023 school year, funding remains at \$119,895,900. To incentivize school participation, a 3%

salary increase for school personnel participating in K-5 Plus is budgeted as part of the \$64,027,500 mentioned in the preceding paragraph. For more information on this program, see p. 34.

**Transportation** is a major barrier to the ability of economically disadvantaged students to participate in the Extended Learning Time and K-5 Plus programs. Consequently, NMPED increased transportation funding for the Extended Learning Time Program from \$2,745,600 in FY20 to \$4,675,600 in FY22, as well as transportation funding for the K-5 Plus program from \$3,744,000 in FY20 to \$3,933,900 in FY22. For FY23, transportation for Extended Learning stabilized at \$3,175,600 and again \$3,933,900 for K-5 Plus.

In addition to the above programming, NMPED was able to secure funding for districts to participate in a “**K-12 Plus Pilot**” or “**K-12 Plus Planning Grant**” model. Funding supports programming for the 2022-2023 school year at \$22,183,800. Additionally, funding supports planning grants and incentives to support this increase in calendars district-wide at \$21,000,000. Transportation for these pilot programs is supported at \$1,551,000.

For the 2022-23 school year, an additional \$13.3 million will be allocated for New Mexico **tribal departments of education for extended learning programs**.

Established in 2021, the **Family Income Index** is a two-year \$30 million pilot project directing additional aid to schools serving the most economically disadvantaged students. Funds must be used for evidence-based programs known to improve academic outcomes, including reading and math interventions; hiring school counselors and social workers; creating family information and resource centers; adopting culturally and linguistically diverse classroom texts; offering innovative professional learning opportunities for educators; and providing after-school enrichment programs. To date, funds have been awarded to 108 public schools, of which 10 are charter schools. For the 2022-23 school year, an additional \$10 million will be distributed to schools using the Family Income Index.

### ***Non-Monetary Supports***

In 2019, NMPED launched **Equity Councils**, the first phase of a long-term initiative aimed at correcting systemic obstacles to success for all children in New Mexico, particularly the “at-risk” students identified in the Martinez/Yazzie rulings. Each school district and charter school in New Mexico is required to establish an Equity Council, the purpose of which is to convene stakeholders to drive local, community-based, transformative solutions that will establish equity in education. Of the 185 school districts and charter schools in New Mexico, 98.4% have an Equity Council lead, 42.7% have a superintendent or charter school leader serving as the Equity Council lead, and 29.9% have yet to establish the members of their Equity Council (as of Summer 2021).

NMPED developed an online **financial reporting system**, known as Open Books, so that the public can view school budgets to learn how money is being spent. The Open Books website includes financial data for school districts, state-chartered schools, and regional education cooperatives, as well as financial data for special and at-risk programs. More comprehensive school-level data collection and reporting will begin in FY2022-23. To view the site, navigate to <https://openbooks.ped.nm.gov/>.

School districts and charter schools are also required to align their annual budgets with their **Educational Plan** submitted for NMPED approval. This alignment helps to confirm that school budgets are built to authentically and consistently address needs of at-risk, economically disadvantaged students. Budgets that do not clearly show how at-risk dollars will be used to support economically disadvantaged students will not be approved until adequate corrections are made.

The State of New Mexico revised the state Medicaid plan to include **behavioral health services** for general education students. Beginning during the 2022-2023 school year, this change will have a major impact on the ability of schools to provide support to economically disadvantaged students who do not have Individualized Education Programs (IEP).

### ***Planning for the Future***

Beginning in Spring 2022 and continuing through FY23, NMPED will create a **Martinez/Yazzie Response Team** consisting of eight members. Team members will include the following: Identity, Equity, and Transformation Division Director; two At-Risk Program Coordinators; Equity Specialist; Students with Disabilities Specialist; Hispanic Education representative; Indian Education representative; and a Community/Stakeholder Engagement Specialist. One primary focus of the Response Team will be to provide assistance, oversight, and financial review of at-risk programs and related spending. The team, with direct oversight from the At-Risk Program Coordinators, will review applicable data and provide technical assistance for school districts and charter schools in regard to applying for additional funds to implement at-risk programs based on district/school/student/family-specific needs. The team will also work with NMPED finance and operations staff to review at-risk funding allocations, provide program compliance monitoring, conduct site visits, and assist districts and charter schools with completing their Educational Plans. In addition to this work, the Response Team will work with interagency, NMPED, and other relevant stakeholders to implement/monitor actions outlined in this document while managing accountability and alignment of the work.

NMPED will study the effectiveness of the **Family Income Index** and the ways in which school districts are using this funding to improve student outcomes.

NMPED will create a new process for **community schools** to get “certified” after successful completion of the grant program and secure recurring funding for certified community schools. The certification process will ensure that community schools, as they develop and

mature, are fully implementing the community school framework, as specified in state statute. According to the research, full implementation is an important precondition for community schools to support at-risk students in achieving greater academic and social-emotional outcomes.

### ***Targets for Improvement***

1. Increase student achievement in English Language Arts and math by 50% for economically disadvantaged students by the end of the 2025-26 school year.
2. Increase the four-year high school graduation rate for economically disadvantaged students by 15 percentage points by 2025.

### **“At-Risk” Students: Native American**

In addition to providing Native American Students with all the tools they need to obtain a high-quality education, NMPED and its partners in other executive agencies are working to guide school districts and tribes to ensure resources are allocated to implement and develop culturally relevant curricula and Indigenous education programs. We must make every effort to ensure that Native languages and cultures are preserved.

NMPED is working with tribal leaders to develop a Tribal Consultation Guide. It will serve as a resource for New Mexico Local Education Agencies, school administrators, school boards, educators, tribal leaders, and tribal education departments. This consultation guide will ensure that Native American students receive an equitable education by proactively addressing the unique educational needs of New Mexico’s Native American students, their families, and communities, and by facilitating cooperation and collaboration among the State of New Mexico, NMPED, and New Mexico’s 23 federally recognized Native American Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations. It is the goal of NMPED to ensure that tribal consultation is a priority at every level that impacts Native American students and families, especially when developing, implementing, and supporting equitable programs and services that will result in positive outcomes.

Below are some examples of both funding and non-monetary improvements designed to improve outcomes for Native American students.

## **Data Snapshot<sup>8</sup>**

1. In 2019, 25% of Native American students tested proficient and above in reading and 12% in math.<sup>9</sup> (Source: NMPED.)
2. The four-year high school graduation rate for Native American students was 65.8% in 2018, 69% in 2019, and 72.3% in 2020. (Source: NMPED.)

## **Funding**

The **Indian Education Fund** has seen 822% increase from \$1.824 million in FY2018-19 to \$15 million in FY2022-23. The Fund is allocated through a grant to local education agencies that serve significant numbers of Native American Students and Tribal Education Departments to improve academic and cultural achievement opportunities; to develop and implement educational blueprints and governance structures; to facilitate collaboration among the local community and schools to plan and deliver community-based education programs and social support services for Native American students; to support “grow your own” Indigenous educator pathways; and to fund Native American teacher pathways.

In FY2021-22, \$10.6 million was allocated for **Tribal Education Departments (TEDs)**, tribal libraries, and tribally-based Native American language programs. The funding was allocated over a two-year period for the purposes of establishing educational blueprints/governance structures, establishing after-school programs in tribal libraries, and establishing or supplementing existing Native American Language programs. Tribes had access to the first year of funding, and many have begun the initial phases of planning and designing programs or structures. The remaining balance will be used to implement these plans.

\$4.5 million has been appropriated for **Tribal Library After-School and Summer Programs** through FY2022-23.

The Indian Affairs Department (IAD) administered the following **capital outlay projects** to increase resources in tribal communities and promote Indigenous education sovereignty, recognizing that tribal communities have a fundamental right to shape their children’s education.

- \$2,505,000 for the Education Resource Center and Early Childhood Center at Pueblo of Jemez;
- \$1,305,000 for the Zia Pueblo Early Childhood Development Center;
- \$1,700,000 for the Sandia Pueblo Early Childhood Development Center;
- \$55,000 for the Pojoaque Pueblo Early Childhood Center; and

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<sup>8</sup> Additional data for New Mexico's Native American students are collected and reported annually, as required by state law, in the Tribal Education Status Report. The 2021 report can be viewed at <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/TESR-NMPED-2020-2021.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Annual, statewide summative assessments in reading and math will resume in spring 2022.



- \$5,000,000 to Santa Fe Indian School to extend a fiber optic backbone from Santa Fe to Bernalillo in conjunction with the Middle Rio Grande Pueblo Tribal Consortium, a consortium of four tribes that own and operate a 60-mile fiber optic network. The creation of a network and security operations center at the Santa Fe Indian School serves two roles: First it creates a multi-use network facility to monitor member networks, provide advanced gateway security services, and to provide off-site data storage for tribes. Secondly, this facility serves as a “teaching” center to provide experiential learning in the field of Information Technology to foster a first generation of tribal IT professionals.

In FY2020-21, the Tribal Education Departments received \$1 million for the development of **early childhood culturally and linguistically relevant curriculum**. To date, 22 of the 29 school districts and charter schools located within tribal lands or within its boundaries have created culturally relevant curricula.

In FY2021-22, the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department, in partnership with the New Mexico Higher Education Department, received a \$2 million appropriation to increase the number of **Indigenous and bilingual early childhood educators**.

In the Spring of 2020, NMPED created the **Indigenous Education Initiative (IEI)**, a pilot program awarded to four school districts and a charter school – Santa Fe Public Schools, Bernalillo Public Schools, Cuba Independent School District, and Vista Grande High School. The program was funded with a non-recurring legislative appropriation in the amount of \$1 million. The intent of the pilot program is for participants to redesign their district, school, or programming to better serve Indigenous students and communities through three phases – designing, piloting, and relaunching. Through each step of the process, community input and feedback were incorporated. The objective is to expand and/or replicate successful programs based on community needs and desires in Indigenous education. The IEI is in the third year of funding, and NMPED is requesting additional funds to provide this opportunity to other schools that serve significant numbers of Native American students. In the first year, 1,143 students were served, in year two 1,097, and in year three 1,128.

NMPED launched the **Expanded Opportunities Project (EOP)** in October 2020. This 5-year, \$9 million initiative is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Goals of the project include: increasing the number and quality of mental health service providers in high need schools, particularly in rural and Native American communities; providing additional resources to students enrolled in partnering universities’ behavioral health programs; and supporting school behavioral health personnel currently working in those identified communities.

See also, Teacher Quality Goals, page 11; At-Risk Students, page 11.

## ***Non-Monetary Supports***

NMPED, through the rule-making process established by the Legislature, is charged with creating content standards. To that end, New Mexico's new **social studies standards**, written by 64 teachers from 34 districts and charters across the state, were adopted in February 2022 following a rigorous process of research, writing, review, and public feedback. The final standards, which hadn't been updated since 2009, incorporate many excellent revisions suggested by stakeholders to make the standards better and more representative of our state. Professional development and supports will continue for the next two years as districts and schools begin to learn about and adopt the new standards. Ultimately, the redevelopment of the standards will help serve as the backbone for future curriculum that is culturally responsive and sustainable.

NMHED is working with the University of New Mexico's College of Education to increase support for the **Bilingual, Indigenous Educator Pipeline Project**. In the past three years, over 130 Native-language teachers and 119 Spanish-language teachers have participated. The program is critical to providing pathways to apply for alternative licensure, bilingual degrees, and ultimately in helping to increase the number of bilingual, Indigenous educators. Many, if not all, Native American languages are endangered, which highlights why this program is important. Getting more Native language teachers in the classroom will help combat language loss. Increasing bilingual educators is also critical to meeting bilingual students' needs in the classroom.

NMPED created a **Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Guidance Handbook** to support shared language and implementation by district, school, and charter school leadership. NMPED's Language and Culture Division has procured training for 500 educators since Fall 2018.

NMPED's Indian Education Division (IED) worked with school districts within tribal lands or located within its boundaries to provide a districtwide **tribal education status report** (TESR) to all New Mexico Tribes represented within the school district boundaries. The overall intent of this annual report is to inform New Mexico Tribes and stakeholders about the educational achievement of Native American students at the elementary and secondary levels within the state of New Mexico. To that end, the report provides current and historical data on a variety of student well-being metrics, including risk and resilience factors, school discipline, academic achievement, graduation rates, attendance rates, and student mobility, in addition to measures of school safety and parent and community involvement. Additionally, the report provides information about initiatives in each of New Mexico's school districts that are designed to support Native American students. The TERSR was distributed to Tribes, Nations, and Pueblos on November 13, 2021.

NMPED's IED developed a **technical assistance manual** for school districts and charter schools to develop a student needs assessment, systemic framework, and accountability tools, as required by the Indian Education Act. The needs assessment is critical for the

school district or charter school because it provides direction for programming, projects, and activities, while helping staff align goals, strategies, professional development, and desired outcomes. Using the needs assessment, school districts and charter schools then develop a systemic framework designed to improve Native American student outcomes. The framework includes programs, services, culturally relevant activities, and professional development. Finally, the accountability tool measures the success or failure of a public school’s efforts pursuant to the systemic framework. Under the Indian Education Act, the role of NMPED’s Indian Education Division is to assist the school district as required during the development and implementation of the framework.

**All staff positions** within NMPED’s IED were reclassified to align with the Indian Education Act. One new position was added, a **Native Language Specialist**, which supports the creation of formal agreements between NMPED and Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations to define standards and competencies for approving a language and culture certificate. The Native Language Specialist also works directly with school districts, charter schools, and the Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations on professional development and technical assistance. IED now includes seven full-time staff positions, and additional staff will be added as new opportunities are identified.

NMPED established a partnership with the Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest to develop and provide training specifically for serving **Native American English Learners**. The first training had 20 participants, and the training remains available to any educator interested in participating.

The **Library Broadband Infrastructure Fund** is investing in tribal library broadband access. To that end, the New Mexico State Library (NMSL) has directly assisted six tribal libraries with their E-rate projects and provided matching funds from the library broadband infrastructure fund. (E-rate is the FCC’s program that helps schools and libraries obtain affordable broadband.) Five of the six tribal libraries that have completed their projects and received funding have been connected at 100 Mbps or greater and/or have had their network equipment refreshed (see table below). The sixth (San Ildefonso Library) remains under E-rate review.

<b>Library Name</b>	<b>Project Accomplishments</b>
Santa Clara Pueblo Community Library	200 Mbps internet, refreshed network equipment
Zia Enrichment Library	Refreshed network equipment
Mescalero Community Library	110 Mbps internet, refreshed network equipment
Jicarilla Tribal Library	100 Mbps internet, refreshed network equipment
Acoma Learning Center	100 Mbps internet (construction)
Pueblo de San Ildefonso Library	100 Mbps internet (construction)

## ***Planning for the Future***

As mentioned above, NMPED’s FY2022-23 budget request to the Legislature included significant increases for Indian education, Indigenous language and culture preservation, and implementation of the Indian Education Act. In February 2022, the Legislature approved the following amounts:

- \$15 million for the **Indian Education Fund**—triple the appropriation from FY22. This funding will support Tribal education departments, as well as school districts and charter schools that serve significant numbers of Native American students. Additionally, this funding will support Indigenous Language and Culture programs, Indigenous Educator Pathways, and community-based education programs, among others.
- \$1.25 million to fund **salary equity for Indigenous language and culture teachers** certified by Tribes, Nations, and Pueblos (i.e., 520 certificate holders).
- \$12 million for **tribal libraries** for the purposes of planning and designing.
- Additional funding to Tribal Education Departments to partner with school districts and charter schools to offer **K-12 Plus programs** for Native American students.

The Legislature also included specific funding in FY2022-23 for school districts and charter schools to address the Martinez/Yazzie ruling, including:

- \$5.1 million for **Indigenous, multilingual, multicultural, and special education programs**.
- \$15 million for **interventions for at-risk students**, prioritized to schools with the highest Family Income Index that provide supplemental, evidence-based services for at-risk students.
- \$10 million for **educational technology and staffing**.
- \$13.3 million for tribes and tribal education departments to increase **community-based extended learning** for Native American students to engage with their teachers.

NMHED, in partnership with NMPED and colleges throughout New Mexico, is developing a “**Bilingual Language Teacher Consortium**” among several schools. NMHED is also supporting the deans at colleges of education in developing a bilingual license for teachers. The Bilingual Language Teacher Consortium builds a structure and system of colleges, universities, and faculty members that offer necessary courses for students to meet the requirements of a bilingual teaching license. There are bilingual specialists in different subjects (e.g., math, science, and literature) across higher education institutions from different backgrounds and perspectives. A consortium of these experts at their schools can help harness the support and expertise for the bilingual educator pipeline and teacher preparation. Developing this consortium will help make bilingual teacher education more seamless for students without having to transfer to another school for a certain course.

NMPED will develop and implement **community-based Native American language programs**. To begin early instruction in Native language for Native American students, competitive grants will be issued to five entities for three years to develop Indigenous language programs, best practices for language immersion, and culturally responsive and sustaining education. This effort is aligned to one of the major purposes of the Indian Education Act—ensuring the maintenance of Native languages.

NMPED staff will continue to participate in **Indian Parent Advisory Council** meetings for school districts and charter schools to engage with families and provide support.

### ***Targets for Improvement***

1. Increase student achievement in English Language Arts and math by 50% for Native American Students by the end of the 2025-26 school year.
2. Increase the four-year high school graduation rate for Native American students by 15 percentage points to 87% by 2025.

### **“At-Risk” Students: English Learners**

Students who are learning to speak English at the same time as they are learning other classroom subjects are vulnerable to having their academic, social, and emotional needs going unmet. NMPED is committed to removing such barriers to education. Some of the actions taken by NMPED and its partners to improve outcomes for English learning students can be found below.

### ***Data Snapshot***

1. The percentage of English Learners on track toward achieving English proficiency within five years<sup>10</sup> decreased from 40% in 2018 to 29% in 2019. (Source: NMPED.)
2. In 2019, 15% of English Learners tested proficient and above in reading and 8% in math.<sup>11</sup> (Source: NMPED.)
3. The four-year high school graduation rate for English Learners was 71.1% in 2018, 73% in 2019, and 75.8% in 2020. (Source: NMPED.)

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<sup>10</sup> The five-year English Learner progress goal is established in New Mexico’s Consolidated State Plan under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

<sup>11</sup> Annual, statewide summative assessments in reading and math will resume in spring 2022.

## ***Funding***

In FY20, \$2.5 million in non-recurring funding was appropriated to NMPED for **English Learner and Bilingual Multicultural Education programs**.

NMPED allocates \$4 million annually in subgrants to districts and charter schools from federal “Title III” funding to support **English Language Acquisition**.

English Learners are included in the **at-risk funding** that districts and charter schools receive. The amount of at-risk funding has increased over the past three years. (See At-Risk Funding, p. 12.)

See also, Teacher Quality Goals, p. 11, and Native American Students, p. 15.

## ***Non-Monetary Supports***

NMPED offers **professional learning and development** specifically on serving ELs for teachers, LEA leadership, and other educators free of charge. Between 2018 and 2021, 1,469 educators were served.

In addition to using “sheltering” methods in content areas, NMPED’s Language and Culture Division (LCD) now requires that English Learners receive at least 45 minutes of specific **English-language development instruction** per school day. (Sheltering is an approach that integrates the development of English language proficiency and the acquisition of grade-level academic content area knowledge and academic skills.)

NMPED partnered with the Comprehensive Center Network Region 13 at WestEd to train 1,149 teachers from August 2020 through January 2021. The training covered “**Designated English Language Development**” (ELD), **sheltering instruction** in content courses for specific content areas and grade levels, and **family engagement** during the pandemic.

The **WIDA eLearning program** has been available to all New Mexico teachers since school year 2019–2020. WIDA includes on-demand self-paced eWorkshops to support English learners. WIDA self-paced eLearning workshops have been completed by 485 New Mexico educators since 2019-2020. (WIDA is a consortium of state agencies that supports students, families, educators, and administrators with high-quality, research-based tools and resources, dedicated to language development for multilingual learners.)

NMPED has updated the **Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)** endorsement based on stakeholder feedback to ensure more educators have the skills to serve English Learners in all courses and content areas.

NMPED and Dual Language Education of New Mexico (DLENM) have partnered to provide guidance for teachers on using **Structured Literacy for biliteracy instruction** for emergent

bilinguals in Bilingual Multicultural Education Programs (BMEP) in New Mexico. The guidance provided will help teachers understand how to generalize features of effective instruction with evidence-based practices for English literacy to Spanish literacy. Specific guidance on how these practices and strategies converge for instruction in English and Spanish will be provided with a focus on alignment and adherence to Structured Literacy. Attention will be given to areas of divergence for literacy instruction in English and Spanish to support teachers who teach in biliteracy settings. (For more information on Structured Literacy, see Research-Based Reading Programs below, p. 39.)

### ***Planning for the Future***

In 2022, NMPED, in partnership with the REL Southwest, released a new resource for educators called “Promising Practices to Support English Learner Students.” The release of the document included training for administrators on how to evaluate and transform English Learner programs and services in districts and charter schools. The NMPED will also partner with WestEd to create a guidance document on serving English Learners who are also students with disabilities.

NMPED will create a certification for district and charter school staff on the **Language Usage Survey (LUS)** used in the identification process of potential English Learners at school sites. The certification will focus on how to support parents and families in understanding the purpose of the LUS to provide needed language supports to their children.

NMPED will formalize required English Learner Programs in state law to provide both **English Language Development (designated ELD) and sheltered content instruction (integrated ELD)** for all English Learners and ensure that at-risk funding that is earmarked for English Learners is further leveraged. These changes will ensure that all ELs across the state are served in an EL program, even in the absence of a bilingual program (which is only one EL program option). This includes many microdistricts and charter schools that received at-risk funding, but not bilingual or Title III funding.

### ***Targets for Improvement***

1. By the end of the 2025-26 school year, 75% of English Learners will be on track toward achieving English proficiency within five years.
2. Increase student achievement in English Language Arts and math by 50% for English Learners by the end of the 2025-26 school year.
3. Increase the four-year high school graduation rate for English Learners by 15 percentage points to 85% by 2025.

## **“At-Risk” Students: Students with Disabilities**

NMPED’s Special Education Division (SED) has undergone intensive transformation over the past three years. As described below, significant improvements have been made in staffing, federal compliance, parent and family partnerships, relationships with stakeholders, and school customer service. These improvements ensure that our students with disabilities, often among the most vulnerable in our population, have access to the tools they need to obtain an education and, more, to excel and thrive with their non-disabled peers.

It will take everyone working together – including NMPED, school districts and charter schools, families, and community partners – to ensure that students with disabilities receive the support they need to thrive. Each child with a disability has their own specific set of individualized needs. School districts and charter schools, in particular, are responsible to each child for making sure their Individual Educational Programs (IEPs) contain each student’s roadmap to academic success by ensuring IEPs are current with student abilities, contain all of the student’s required services, and are written in a way that guarantees that students with disabilities are able to pursue reasonable grade level progress.

The SED’s response to the Martinez/Yazzie lawsuit focuses on four strategies:

1. Academic support, including evaluating dyslexia
2. Educator, training, recruitment, and retention
3. Family advocacy and support
4. Dispute resolution for students with disabilities

Ultimately, the overarching goal is to increase academic support for students with disabilities.

### ***Data Snapshot***

1. In 2019, 12% of students with disabilities tested proficient and above in reading and 8% in math.<sup>12</sup> The breakdown by grade level and subject is as follows:

2019 Academic Proficiency, Students with Disabilities (Source: NMPED.)		
Grade	Reading	Math
3	20%	17%
4	5%	7%
5	5%	4%
6	20%	16%
7	4%	3%
8	4%	3%
9	4%	3%

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<sup>12</sup> Annual, statewide summative assessments in reading and math will resume in spring 2022.



10	7%	2%
11	14%	14%

2. The four-year high school graduation rate for students with disabilities was 65.6% in 2018, 64% in 2019, and 66.4% in 2020. (Source: NMPED.)

### **Funding**

As discussed below, NMPED’s approach to structured literacy is, first, to ensure that all elementary educators know how to teach reading according to the “science of reading” (i.e., the science of how to teach reading by understanding how the brain learns to read) and, second, to ensure that all elementary students are reading at grade level with appropriate support systems in place at every school to address both minor reading challenges and serious issues. This new approach ensures not only that all students across the state benefit from instruction by educators who are well-trained in the science of reading, but also that **all students get screened in first grade for dyslexia** to ensure that they receive appropriate support at an early age. See page 40 for a summary of funding associated with this initiative.

In Fall 2021, NMPED’s Special Education Division (SED) implemented **ClassWallet**, providing \$342,680 directly to 1,929 special education teachers to support their students’ transition back into regular classroom routines. This initiative marks the beginning of eliminating the unfair practices that sometimes compel teachers to use personal funds to purchase student supplies. ClassWallet provides special education teachers with discretionary funds to purchase instructional resources for their classrooms including classroom supplies and materials and other behavioral aids and supplies. The platform maintains strict accountability of expenditures and expedites the processing of reimbursements with minimal paperwork and maximum efficiency.

NMPED’s Special Education Division sponsored **Advocate, Innovate, and Renew (AIR)**, a statewide special education summit attended by 751 parents and educators. The NMPED provided \$750,000 for the virtual conference, which was held in June 2021. The summit provided families with training on a variety of topics, including transition strategies, procedural safeguards for students and families, parent participation in the IEP process, and facilitated IEPs. Additionally, sessions for teachers included accommodations and modifications in the general education classroom, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), partnering with stakeholders, and culturally and linguistically responsive teaching.

In 2018, NMPED’s Special Education Division initiated “**Stay in School,**” a five-year program targeting low graduation rates in Farmington and Deming school districts. Stay in School was based on five evidence-based practices proven to keep students with disabilities in school. For the last four years, the SED’s allocation of \$400,000 annually has yielded

impressive results. Fifty students with disabilities, who were contemplating dropping out, stayed in school and graduated.

The **Maintenance of Effort (MOE)** is a requirement of Part B of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A local education agency (LEA) must spend (except in specified situations) as much or more of their state and federal funding for the education of children with disabilities. NMPED released an MOE online calculator in May 2021 to LEAs. The online calculator generates real-time data, which is used for reporting purposes and posting MOE determinations and liabilities. NMPED's Special Education Division also provided training to over 200 LEA participants. These efforts have enabled districts to submit clear, accurate MOE data and ensure compliance with IDEA.

The Special Education Transformation Team, in collaboration with the Governor's office, developed legislation to create a special education ombud. The bill was passed by the Legislature in 2021 and included a \$250,000 appropriation for the newly created **Office of the Special Education Ombud (OSEO)**, which is housed at the New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC). The OSEO serves as an advocate for public education students and their families to provide comprehensive knowledge, resources, and support for those navigating the special education system in New Mexico. The OSEO works to ensure students receive the necessary services and supports to which they are entitled. In addition, the OSEO collects and analyzes special education data and provides annual recommendations to the Governor and state agencies about needed system reforms.

### ***Non-Monetary Supports***

NMPED amended **restraint and seclusion**<sup>13</sup> rules in the fall of 2020 to clarify existing requirements and add a requirement for reporting restraint and seclusion to the state. A memorandum providing updates on restraint and seclusion information was provided to all superintendents, charter school administrators, special education directors, and Regional Education Cooperative (REC) directors in July 2021 that included: the scope of the law in New Mexico; use of restraint and seclusion techniques; development of policies and procedures; designated, trained school personnel; incident reviews; annual reviews; documentation; and reporting. The memorandum addresses the importance of employing social emotional learning and de-escalation methods to mitigate the potential for explosive behavior and avoid drastic measures such as restraint and seclusion.

In the past, school data on restraint and seclusion were provided by districts and charter schools to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), and the reports bypassed NMPED. To address this, NMPED added restraint and seclusion information to the agency's Student Teacher

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<sup>13</sup> Restraint and seclusion are reactionary crisis or emergency responses. School personnel should only use restraint or seclusion in extreme situations, such as when a student exhibits dangerous behaviors toward self or others, or when a risk of serious and imminent physical harm or injury is evident. Restraint and seclusion is to never be used as a planned part of a behavior support plan, as a therapeutic intervention, or as a consequence for behavior.

Accountability Reporting System (STARS) and now collects information about the instances when restraints and seclusions occur in schools at each of the four designated reporting periods (40 day, 80 day, 120 day, and End of Year) every school year. The data reported by Local Education Agencies is as follows for students with disabilities:

- School Year 2020-2021: 0 instances of restraint, and 0 instances of seclusion. (Note: The majority of the school year took place online.)
- School Year 2021-2022 (as of December 2, 2021): 2 instances of restraint, and 0 instances of seclusion.

NMPED's Special Education Division, working collaboratively with Region IX Education Cooperative and the University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability (UNM-CDD), expanded the **New Mexico Autism Project (NMAP)** to support school districts statewide. This allowed school districts to use coaching services, staff development opportunities, and modeling for school staff. NMAP provides access to online statewide portals through Region IX and UNM-CDD, archived webinars, coaches, and other technical guidance. Districts have statewide access to NMAP by request.

NMPED's focus on **career technical education** has been of particular benefit to students with disabilities. Transition planning, required by the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, is a formal process to assist young people with deciding on their best course of action after high school, and how to best navigate through high school to arrive at that goal. To support transition, the SED has implemented the following improvement strategies:

- NMPED began a project in partnership with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Central Region Educational Cooperative (CREC) to provide individually customized **pre-employment transition services** to students with disabilities.
- Federal law requires transition plans to be in place for students with disabilities by age sixteen (16), and New Mexico requires them by age fourteen (14), and in cooperation with CREC, NMPED has increased focus on establishing **transition plans** for students at that younger age.

NMPED's Special Education Division provided training regarding **graduation options** for special education directors and transition coordinators during the 2021-22 school year. NMPED is evaluating graduation options for students with disabilities with the support of the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: The Collaborative. This is a technical assistance center co-funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).

NMPED's Special Education Division developed a **website to provide information and support to families**. Vetted resources with links to other agencies and support services are critical to families of children with disabilities. In addition, the website includes links to resources that are frequently requested by parents via the parent liaison. Resource topics

include parents' rights, resolution resources, student assessment, accommodations, and transition processes.

NMPED's Special Education Division, in partnership with the University of New Mexico's Center for Development and Disability and the New Mexico Department of Health, created an **Autism Portal** to support individuals with a diagnosis of autism, their families, and those who support individuals with autism. The portal provides recorded webinars, information briefs on various topics related to autism, community resources, and parent trainings. The portal was originally created by the Department of Health's Family, Infants, and Toddlers (DOH-FIT) program in response to a family's request for a one-stop location for information on autism. The SED began contributing funds to expand the portal and contracted with UNM to develop educator trainings as well as family trainings along with the NMAP manager. To build on the success of the portal, the SED plans to expand the trainings and create a training library to increase access to various developmental and autism topics statewide.

NMPED's Special Education Division updated **procedural safeguards** (Parent Rights) for parents, teachers, and communities. SED translated the new Procedural Safeguards document into multiple languages including Spanish, Russian, and Diné. The information is important for families to know and to understand their rights. The document is distributed to all families at least once annually.

In collaboration with the NMPED Special Education Division, Cooperative Educational Services' **Leading Educators through Alternative Pathways** (LEAP) initiative has improved outcomes for all New Mexico students and increased the number and quality of new teachers entering the field with a special education license. The program is helping to close the gap created by vacant positions, as evidenced by the numbers of teachers going through LEAP. These teachers receive training in special education, even if the teachers intend to teach in general education. The training prepares all participants to better serve students in all settings. Additional impacts of the program are as follows:

- Over 400 teachers have been trained with the LEAP framework grounded in culturally responsive teaching. All LEAP teachers are trained in their content areas, special education, and literacy. NMPED intends to continue this training with a rate of 200 new candidates per year.
- In three years, LEAP has licensed 116 New Mexico teachers in the area of special education (including dual licenses).
- LEAP special education teachers receive one-on-one support in the area of documentation, organization, processes, and strategies.
- LEAP candidates have a 100% pass rate on the Praxis special education licensure exam.
- In 2021, LEAP partnered with NMPED and the May Center to expand dyslexia expertise throughout our state. The goal is to continue these efforts at a rate of 15 Dyslexia Practitioners per year across New Mexico. The impact of this program will

be measured in post-intervention data collection and analysis following the end of the 2021-22 school year.

To support the unique needs of special education teachers, NMPED's Special Education Division launched the **Special Education Mentorship Program** in Fall 2021. Six hundred special education teachers and inclusion partner teachers will be participating in the inaugural program. They receive the support of an experienced mentor teacher, who helps them navigate the challenges of teaching during a pandemic.

For the last year, NMPED's Special Education Division has redesigned **Excellence from Coaching in Literacy for Intensive Preparation in Special Education (ECLIPSE)**, a program that provides direct support to kindergarten through third grade special education teachers in New Mexico's lowest performing schools with the goal of improving literacy for students with disabilities. ECLIPSE provides instructional coaching, targeted assistance, family literacy events, and curriculum support at 77 schools in 24 districts across New Mexico. By supporting teachers in those schools and implementing evidence-based practices, ECLIPSE is impacting the literacy success of 3,936 students. From August to November 2021, 1,198 hours of instructional coaching were provided to ECLIPSE teachers.

NMPED's Special Education Division believes all students belong in an educational environment in which they feel safe, have a sense of belonging, and have access to high quality curriculum and instruction alongside their peers. Students with disabilities are general education students who receive specialized instruction. Their education is the responsibility of all educators, not just special education teachers. Through **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**, educators proactively plan to identify and eliminate barriers, promoting student variabilities through engagement, representation, action, and expression. Designing learning in this way supports all students in every classroom. The SED has promoted UDL via a variety of avenues:

- Since the initiation of UDL support in 2021, 867 educators across New Mexico have received training and support for incorporating UDL theory with their existing best practices for special education and regular education classrooms.
- There were 30 teachers in 2021 who attended the Early Childhood Coaches training for UDL training to incorporate learning into the Practice Based Coaching (PBC) to support teachers in both general education and special education classrooms.
- UDL "cafes" support teachers with implementing the UDL framework to enhance their daily practices. In one month, 82 educators voluntarily registered for UDL Cafes and Office Hours and received direct support from UDL coaches and peer collaborators.<sup>14</sup>

NMPED's Special Education Division has facilitated two trainings annually for **special education directors**. Each month, additional trainings have been offered to Special

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<sup>14</sup> See <https://www.crecnm.org/UDL-Professional-Learning> for more information.

Education Directors and members of their teams who the directors invite based on specific students' needs and training content. The SED has hosted directors' meetings for well over a decade, with about 250 educators in attendance annually.

NMPED's Special Education Division has provided **monthly webinars** specifically for new special education directors with fewer than two years' experience, to encourage and support longer term retention of high-quality special education directors, and increase continuity in this community of education professionals. For over a decade, between 20 to 100 educators have attended the monthly SED webinars.

NMPED's Special Education Division improves compliance with state and federal mandates by reviewing and revising processes and procedures and providing high-quality guidelines about processes and procedures to stakeholders. For example, SED staff has been revising technical assistance manuals that are housed on the SED website. Since April 2021, 7,316 website visitors accessed the **Technical Assistance Manual** page of the SED website.

NMPED's Special Education Division employs a **Parent Liaison** to assist parents with resources and questions about the special education process and to explain options for resolving disputes with districts regarding special education. Requested information includes mediation, facilitated IEP meetings, state complaints, and due process hearing requests for students with disabilities. Since 2020, the Parent Liaison has responded to more than 520 inquiries from parents, LEAs, teachers, and other stakeholders about a variety of concerns, including COVID-related questions. Additionally, the Parent Liaison and State Ombud have developed a collaborative partnership to support families. For example, the Parent Liaison refers families to the Ombuds Office as a resource, when appropriate. Also, the Ombuds Office consults with the Parent Liaison as needed.

In 2020, at the suggestion of Gov. Lujan Grisham, NMPED convened the **Special Education Transformation Team** to recommend stronger advocacy for parents of students with disabilities and to work with NMPED to develop a plan with specific, measurable outcomes. The team formed several workgroups focused on behavioral needs, family advocacy and support, initial evaluation, educator training and support, and the role of NMPED. One of the notable successes from this effort was the creation of the Office of the Special Education Ombud in state statute (see above), and staff from the new office are now actively participating in the team.

### ***Planning for the Future***

In 2022, the **Special Education Transformation Team** will continue to provide recommendations to PED for changes in special education to improve academic, employment, and social outcomes for students with disabilities.

NMPED's Special Education Division will continue to support special education teachers and expand on the next round of funds for **ClassWallet**. Funding for \$600,000 was allocated in

the first distribution round and \$1,000,000 has been allocated for the second distribution round with plans to continue the project moving forward. This project allows teachers to buy items for their classrooms. This funding directly impacts student outcomes because it provides teachers with the tools they need to specialize instruction.

NMPED's Special Education Division will develop a **special education teacher portal** to support the unique needs of special educators. While there are other portals, none target topics that are specific to special education. This portal will support educators with quickly finding vetted resources related to IEP procedures, questions about caseloads, evidence-based instructional practices, IDEA B, and more. This resource will impact student outcomes by providing teachers with the information they need to serve their students.

NMPED's Special Education Division is committed to strengthening stakeholder understanding of "**Part C to B Transition**"<sup>15</sup> process and compliance. This process can be challenging for families, and there is a need to ensure seamless transitions for children and their families as they leave Part C and other early childhood programs so that they have timely access to appropriate services. Families need to move smoothly from one program or system to another, or among services within a program or system. State and local structures, policies, interagency agreements, personnel development processes, and other mechanisms must be in place to support the transition process. Key activities focus on creating training webinars, reviewing and aligning processes, and improving communication about processes with stakeholders. To measure the effectiveness of this strategy, the SED will gather pre-and post-surveys measuring participant understanding of the processes and will track the number of support requests for C-to-B Transition. In addition, a family-facing brochure has been developed outlining the transition process, the difference between Part C and Part B, and each agency's contacts within their community for parents to see options when their child moves from early intervention services at age 3. If a child qualifies for special education, the IEP team, including the parent(s), plan the best program and placement options for that child. If the child does not qualify, other options are provided to the parent to help support the needs of the family.

### ***Targets for Improvement***

1. Increase student achievement in English Language Arts and math by 50% for students with disabilities by the end of the 2025-26 school year.
2. Increase the four-year high school graduation rate for students with disabilities by 15 percentage points to 81.4% by 2026.

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<sup>15</sup> Part C of IDEA deals with early intervention services (birth through 36 months of age), while Part B applies to services for school-aged children (3 through 21 years of age).

#### **IV. WIDE-RANGING STRATEGIES**

While Section III illustrated some of the strategies that have been implemented for improvement among specific subgroups, and the targeted outcomes, this section is meant to provide a broader picture of the infrastructure NMPED and its partnering agencies have and will put into place in order to support better outcomes for all students.

##### **Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD)**

In 2020, Governor Lujan Grisham established a cabinet-level Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) to coordinate an aligned early childhood system and ensure access to PreK services across the state. Having an executive level agency dedicated to PreK has been a critical component to improving services and outcomes for our younger students.

##### ***Data Snapshot***

1. New Mexico PreK enrollment for 4-year-olds increased from 9,821 in FY2018-19 to 11,918 in FY2021-22. New Mexico PreK enrollment for 3-year-olds increased from 1,167 in FY2018-19 to 2,316 in FY21-22. Additionally, Head Start programs in New Mexico, both tribal and regional, were federally funded to serve an additional 6,431 preschool-age children. An increase of \$5.1 million in FY23 will expand services to an additional 550 preschool-age children and expand full-day services to 200 additional students. In FY24, the administration will request an additional \$20 million in funding from the Early Childhood Trust Fund to expand PreK services to more than 2,000 students. Achieving universal access to high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive early care and education for all 3- and 4-year-olds in New Mexico by 2026 is a top priority of this administration. (Source: ECECD.)
2. The number of school districts and charter schools offering free PreK services increased from 71 in 2018-19 to 82 in 2021-22. The 2021-22 data include 75 school districts, or 84% of all school districts in the state. (Source: ECECD.)
3. The number of *part-day* PreK slots for 4-year-olds decreased from 48% in 2018-19 to 13% in 2021-22, allowing 2,000 more students to receive *full-day* PreK. (Source: ECECD.)



## Funding

PreK funding has increased consistently since FY20, as shown in the following table. The FY22 funding supports enrollment for 11,918 4-year-old students and 2,316 3-year-olds. The funding also supports staffing, program monitoring, literacy coaching, family engagement, and evidence-based approaches to social and emotional development.

Fiscal Year	Amount	Increase over FY20 Baseline
2019-20	\$ 88,494,800	-
2020-21	\$102,218,500	15.5%
2021-22	\$108,935,649	23.1%
2022-23	\$114,216,227	29.1%

ECECD issues four-year grant awards to **school- and community-based PreK programs** to provide New Mexico PreK services. Full-day programs receive \$7,000 per pupil and part-day programs receive \$3,500 per pupil. Mixed age and 3-year-old PreK programs receive \$8,750 per pupil. Some programs also receive funding in their grant awards to cover transportation costs for students if needed.

A \$300 million **Early Childhood Trust Fund** was established in 2020. The trust fund is growing exponentially. Annually ECECD receives 5% of a three-year rolling average of the corpus of the fund or \$30 million, whichever is greater.

House Joint Resolution 1, passed during the 2021 state legislative session, put forward a constitutional amendment to access the **Land Grant Permanent Fund** for early childhood and K-12 programs.

Governor Lujan Grisham created a **pay parity** initiative for community-based PreK teachers in FY2021-22, ensuring teachers in community-based programs with equivalent credentials to school-based educators, receive the same salary. To date, 54 PreK educators have been awarded PreK pay parity for an estimated total cost of \$763,048. Payments are issued monthly throughout the fiscal year with \$288,881 paid to date.

ECECD launched the **PreK Scholarship Program**, which pays 100% of tuition and books for public school preschool personnel seeking AA and BA degrees. During Fall 2021, 273 PreK educators were awarded scholarships toward achieving their Child Development Certificate (CDC), AA, or BA degree. Scholarships are also awarded to educators working in Child Care, Head Start, and Home Visiting programs. All programs included, a total of 785 scholarships were awarded in Fall 2021 with \$730,720 paid to date. With the passage of the Opportunity Scholarship Act in February 2022, ECECD scholarship funds will be used for completion assistance (e.g., transportation, utilities, rent, etc.) and for students who take fewer than six credits per semester.

## ***Non-Monetary Supports***

ECECD is monitoring all **quality standards** across public and private sector programs to ensure early childhood professionals have access to the supports they need to achieve higher credentials with subsequent compensation. In 2020, New Mexico met nine of the 10 National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) Benchmarks for Quality and ranked 14th for access for 4-year-olds and 16th for 3-year-olds, and 9th in overall state spending.

ECECD now monitors the **availability of public, private, and Head Start PreK** by school district and maintains data that captures the number of Head Start, public, and private sector slots available in each school district.

## ***Planning for the Future***

In November 2021, ECECD released a **Four-Year Finance Plan** to convert the remaining 1,600 part-day slots to full-day by 2026, as well as an analysis of what it will cost to provide PreK funding to 85 percent of all 4-year-olds and 50 percent of all 3-year-olds.

ECECD will require all New Mexico PreK teachers in the public and private sectors to have **BA degrees in early childhood** by 2026. To that end, ECECD will continue to create opportunities for scholarships and continue pay parity for educators in the private sector who hold BA degrees.

In FY2021-22, ECECD funded 15 **local early childhood system building coalitions to improve coordination** between school-based PreK, community-based PreK/child care programs, and Head Start programs to ensure all families have access to high-quality, full-day, full-year services that meet their children's needs. The coalitions will also focus on increasing parent engagement and leadership in program and service design.

## ***Targets for Improvement***

1. By 2026, convert all part-day slots to full-day and ensure that 85 percent of 4-year-olds and 50 percent of 3-year-olds have access to a free, high-quality PreK program across a mixed delivery system (e.g., public school, community based, and Head Start).
2. By 2026, all New Mexico PreK teachers will be required to have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education.
3. Annually, 75 percent of students who had access to high-quality New Mexico PreK programs will enter kindergarten ready as measured by the PED Kindergarten Observation Tool (KOT). The KOT is administered during the first two months of a student's kindergarten year.

## **Extended Learning Programs**

NMPED is working to increase student participation in afterschool, summer enrichment, and extended learning time programs through several mechanisms: (1) the Extended Learning Time Program; (2) K-5 Plus; (3) K-12 Plus; (4) Community Schools; and (5) the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Program.

The **Extended Learning Time Program (ELTP)** is a strategy intended to increase the amount of time students are learning, especially for the purposes of improving academic achievement and test scores, or reducing learning loss, learning gaps, and achievement gaps. ELTP is different from K-5 Plus in that ELTP captures a broader scope of students. Moreover, every K-5 Plus school is expected to include extended learning time services through ELTP; however, not every ELTP site is a K-5 Plus school.

The purpose of **K-5 Plus** (formerly K-3 Plus) is to demonstrate that increased time in kindergarten and the early grades narrows the achievement gap between at-risk students and other students, increases cognitive skills, and leads to higher academic achievement for all participants. In its early years, the K-5 Plus (then K-3 Plus) program required the implementation of 25 additional days before the beginning of the regular school year. Recent legislation mandates that the program be implemented school-wide – that every student enrolled at a campus participate. The program provides funding for additional instructional days in order to assist in the bridging of achievement gaps. As such, it is not designed to be a remedial program but is an extension of the regular school year.

New Mexico's 54 state-funded **community schools** provide expanded learning time and social and health services. Community Schools is a strategy that supports students and families impacted by poverty and trauma by building a robust, local community school organization that emphasizes the whole child, whole family, and whole community. At the heart of a community school is the on-site, full-time community school coordinator who builds trusting relationships with students and their families and who connects them to valuable community resources. In addition to supporting student-focused instruction in classrooms, community schools provide students with as much as one-third more learning time, in which they experience arts, physical activity, small group, or individualized academic support, and hands-on learning activities across a range of subject areas. These activities are implemented during after-school, weekend, and summer programs, providing academic instruction and individualized support.

The **21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Program** provides students exceptional out-of-school time (OST) learning and developmental experiences. Learning centers are located in elementary or secondary schools, or other similarly accessible facilities, provide a range of high-quality services outside of the traditional learning day or during periods when school is not in session (such as before and after school, or summer break). The learning centers foster student achievement through programming that complements and reinforces content introduced during the traditional learning day.

## **Data Snapshot**

1. Participation in ELTP increased from 83,293 students in 2019-20 to 139,067 students in 2021-22. This represents a substantial increase in the percentage of K-12 students participating in ELTP from 26.2% in 2019-20 to 43.6% in 2021-22. (Source: NMPED.)
2. Participation in K-5 Plus decreased from 20,126 in 2018-19 to 16,067 in 2020-21 due to the pandemic. These numbers are expected to increase significantly in coming years. (Source: NMPED.)
3. Participation in K-5 Plus among students meeting the definition of economically disadvantaged under Title I decreased from 19,581 in 2018-19 (16.8% of all K-5 Title I students) to 11,150 in 2020-21 (10.9% of all K-5 Title I students). The decrease is attributable to the pandemic. (Source: NMPED.)
4. The number of schools receiving state-funded community schools grants increased from 32 in 2019-20 to 54 in 2021-22, an increase from 10,268 students in 2019-20 to 18,401 students in 2021-22. (Source: NMPED.)
5. Since the 2019-20 school year, participation in 21st Century Community Learning Center program has decreased 55%, with 4,655 students served during the 2021-22 school year. This represents a decrease in the percentage of K-12 students participating in 21st CCLC from 3.30% in 2019-20 to 1.46% in 2020-21. This decrease was due to the pandemic. (Source: NMPED.)

## **Funding**

Recurring funding for **Extended Learning Time Program** (ELTP) increased from \$62,497,500 in 2019-20 to \$160,222,500 in 2021-22 (256% increase). For the 2022-2023 school year, funding for ELTP stabilized at \$95 million (a decrease of \$65 million). However, \$64,027,500 was set in the budget to incentivize the program by funding an increase in targeted compensation for school personnel with an average 3% salary increase for those participating.

**Transportation** funding for the Extended Learning Time Program increased from \$2,745,600 in FY20 to \$3,175,600 in FY23.

Funding for **K-5 Plus** expanded nearly 300% since FY2019 from \$30,200,000 to \$119,895,900 in FY23. Additionally, to incentivize school participation, a 3% salary increase for school personnel participating in K-5 Plus was appropriated in FY23.

**Transportation** funding for K-5 Plus increased from \$3,744,000 in FY20 to \$3,933,900 in FY23.

In addition to the above programming, NMPED was able to increase funding for districts moving to a “**K-12 Plus**” model. Funding supports programming for the 2022-2023 school year at \$22,183,800. Additionally, funding supports planning grants and incentives to support this increase in calendars district-wide at \$21,000,000. Transportation for these pilot programs is supported at \$1,551,000.

NMPED initiated an “**equivalent hours**” **pilot program** in the amount of \$20 million over two years, beginning July 2021, to allow for flexibility. Under this pilot program, school districts and charter schools were allowed to add hours to the school day by extending the Instructional Day by 140 hours throughout the school year, which is equivalent to the traditional K-5 Plus 25 Days requirement. In school year 2020-21 the traditional K-5 Plus 25 days were required to be added to the beginning of the school year. The 25 days are an extension to the school year.

Funding for **community schools** increased from \$2 million in FY20 to \$6.635 million in FY22 (the FY22 funding includes \$4.798 million in state funds and \$1.836 million in federal school improvement funds).

\$4.5 million for **Tribal Library After School and Summer Programs** has been appropriated through FY2022-23.

### ***Non-Monetary Supports***

**Eligibility for K-5 Plus** is no longer tied to a school’s letter grade, allowing program eligibility to be expanded to include all elementary school students.

NMPED is working to increase the number of students participating in locally customized K-5 Plus programs by offering **increased flexibility** to school districts and charter schools and priority funding for applicants serving high percentages of students named in the Martinez/Yazzie consolidated lawsuit. In school year 2020-21, some districts and charter schools did not participate in K-5 Plus because the program required each teacher to remain with the same group of students from the summer to the school year. In response, the Legislature enacted Senate Bill 40, which allows school districts and charter schools to make a good-faith attempt to keep all students with the same teacher and cohort (group).

Additionally, NMPED has **reduced the administrative burdens** related to reporting by collecting data from school districts and charter schools on the Student Daily Attendance Template.

The Adult Education Division at NMHED offers free **high school equivalency courses and workforce programs** to over 5,000 New Mexicans across 26 programs in small rural and large urban communities across the state. NMHED adult education programs help New Mexicans to:

- Earn a High School Equivalency (HSE) credential;
- Strengthen literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, and workplace readiness skills;
- Learn English as a second language (ESL);
- Become college ready and enter a career pathway; and
- Enhance parent and caregiver ability to support children’s learning needs.

NMHED’s college and readiness program, **GEAR UP New Mexico (GUNM)**, works directly with seven school districts and charter schools in New Mexico to improve access and opportunities to our state’s colleges, universities, and vocational education programs. Throughout the school year, GUNM schools provide tutoring and mentoring services, college and career counseling, financial aid awareness, college tours, and other activities designed to help students enroll and succeed after graduating high school. Last grant cycle, the GUNM program reported the following information to the U.S. Department of Education:

- The percent of GUNM students passed pre-algebra by the end of middle school rose from 75% in 2012 to 96% in 2019.
- The four-year cohort high school graduation rate for GUNM students rose from 63% in 2012 to 76.5% in 2019.
- The percent of GUNM students who graduated from high school and immediately enrolled in college rose from 42% in 2012 to 63% in 2019.
- During the FY2021 grant cycle, 6,153 students participate in GUNM.

### ***Planning for the Future***

NMPED will increase the number of students participating in **Extended Learning Time Programs** through increased flexibility and priority funding for applicants serving high percentages of at-risk students, particularly those districts and schools serving students most impacted by the pandemic, students from historically underrepresented groups, and students with other risk factors. NMPED is also working with the New Mexico Out of School Time Network (NMOST), a nonprofit organization serving out-of-school-time providers, to align funding priorities to the needs identified by NMOST. Finally, NMPED will continue providing professional development and best practices from the field on what has been working.

NMPED will create a new process for **community schools** to get “certified” after successful completion of the grant program and secure recurring funding for certified community schools.

### ***Target for Improvement***

1. Increase the percentage of students participating in the Extended Learning Time Program (ELTP) to at least 85% of the state’s K-12 student population by the 2026-27 school year.<sup>16</sup>
2. Increase to 50% the number of economically disadvantaged students (under Title I) who participate in locally customized K-5 Plus programs by the 2026-27 school year.
3. Increase to a minimum of 100, the number of state-funded community schools by the 2024-25 school year.
4. Maintain and improve student academic achievement in language arts and math among 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center participants, such that 75% of students earning a passing grade after the first grading period will maintain a passing grade by the close of the academic year, and 50% of students earning below a passing grade after the first grading period will raise their grade by the close of the academic year.

### **Research-Based Reading Programs**

NMPED’s approach to structured literacy, or “research-based reading programs,” ensures that all elementary educators know how to teach reading according to the “science of reading” (i.e., the science of how to teach reading by understanding how the brain learns to read). Additionally, structured literacy ensures that all elementary students are reading at grade level with appropriate support systems in place at every school to address both minor reading challenges and serious issues. This approach is a departure from previous administrations in which non-recurring funding was used to support “Reads to Lead” programs in only a small number of school districts. The new approach ensures not only that all students across the state benefit from instruction by educators who are well-trained in the science of reading, but also that all students get screened in first grade for dyslexia to ensure that they receive appropriate support at an early age.

### ***Data Snapshot***

1. In 2019, 34% of New Mexico students tested proficient and above in reading.<sup>17</sup> (Source: NMPED.)
2. In 2019, the gap in reading achievement proficiency between the highest performing and lowest performing student groups was 40 percentage points, with the distribution as follows: African American 30%, Asian 52%, Caucasian 48%, Hispanic 30%, Native

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<sup>16</sup> Meeting this target depends in large part on increasing the number of schools offering ELTP programs.

<sup>17</sup> Annual, statewide summative assessments in reading and math will resume in spring 2022.

American 25%, Economically Disadvantaged 28%, English Learners 15%, and Students with Disabilities 12%. (Source: NMPED.)

### ***Funding***

Since FY20, NMPED has used a total of \$30.5 million to build **literacy programs** for all elementary school students:

- Training for educators in the “science of reading” (described in the introduction to this section) at a cost of \$1,300 per teacher, used with non-recurring appropriations (\$2.4 and \$1.6 million from FY20 and FY21).
- NMPED used \$4.5 million from federal relief dollars (ARP) to match and supplement training costs in the “science of reading” for all early elementary teachers (grades K-2) and to hire four staff devoted to the project.
- Schools and districts also received \$8 million in each of FY21 and FY22 from state equalization guarantee (i.e., the recurring funding that school districts and charter schools receive from the state each year) to provide stipends for teachers and build out their local literacy programs.

### ***Non-Monetary Supports***

The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) has launched a statewide literacy initiative, **Structured Literacy New Mexico**, to support our state’s Structured Literacy and Dyslexia Interventions legislation, which was signed into law in April 2019. This initiative is focused on a mindset shift, moving from being reactive to proactive in order to increase the number of students reading at or above grade level and decreasing the number of students requiring special education services.

- The NMPED is providing multiple literacy supports, including Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training for all educators teaching reading with a focus on kindergarten through fifth grade. *LETRS* professional learning provides educators and administrators with deep knowledge to be literacy and language experts in the science of reading. *LETRS* teaches the skills needed to master the fundamentals of reading instruction—phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and language.
- The NMPED has trained 5,333 teachers, reading interventionists, and special education teachers and 696 administrators. To sustain this initiative, NMPED has also trained 104 LETRS facilitators who can then train teachers in their respective districts.



- In addition, NMPED provides structured literacy 101 supports and courses specific to adolescent struggling readers and disciplinary literacy with over 4,000 educators accessing these courses.

NMPED and Dual Language Education of New Mexico (DLENM) have partnered to provide guidance for teachers on using **Structured Literacy for biliteracy instruction** for emergent bilinguals in Bilingual Multicultural Education Programs (BMEP) in New Mexico. The guidance provided will help teachers understand how to generalize features of effective instruction with evidence-based practices for English literacy to Spanish literacy. Specific guidance on how these practices and strategies converge for instruction in English and Spanish will be provided with a focus on alignment and adherence to Structured Literacy. Attention will be given to areas of divergence for literacy instruction in English and Spanish to support teachers who teach in biliteracy settings.

All school districts and charter schools have submitted a **literacy plan** to NMPED for approval. The literacy plan includes assurances that the district or charter school is using state funds toward research-based curriculum, professional development, and tools or resources that support literacy. The plan also requires a strategy for literacy development from each district or charter school and their long-term plan to address achievement gaps in reading.

### ***Planning for the Future***

NMPED will **expand training** to include all elementary teachers and administrators, including third through sixth grade teachers.

NMPED will build a **statewide literacy institute** in collaboration with a New Mexico university and private sector experts as a center of excellence in reading and early literacy.

The Legislature appropriated \$11.5 million for **literacy initiatives** in FY2022-23. This funding would support the new literacy institute, additional training, and the development of 10-20 “model schools” that would serve as prototypes for schoolwide literacy from which other schools could learn.

### ***Targets for Improvement***

1. All kindergarten through fifth grade teachers will be enrolled and trained in the science of reading and structured literacy by the end of the 2024-25 school year.
2. Increase the English language arts achievement growth rate by 50% for all students and for each student subgroup by the end of the 2026-27 school year.

3. By the end of the 2025-26 school year, close the achievement gap in English Language Arts so that there is no more than a 10 percentage point difference between the highest and lowest performing subgroups.

### **College and Career Readiness**

A New Mexico high school graduate today faces a radically changed post-secondary and career landscape. Our current graduation rate significantly trails that of most other states. Creating an educational system that enables all youth to successfully chart a path to and through graduation will require intentional alignment of the PreK–12 system with higher education institutions and with the workforce. NMPED is committed to helping school districts and charter schools provide students with research-based and relevant career and college pathways while recognizing that there is not a “one size fits all” path to success. NMHED is also dedicated to making sure that our students who enroll in college are able to succeed.

### ***Data Snapshot***

1. New Mexico’s four-year high school graduation rate was 73.9% in 2018, 74.9% in 2019, and 76.9% in 2020. (Source: NMPED.)
2. The four-year high school graduation rate in 2020 for Asian students was 87.1%, Caucasian students 80.9%, Hispanic students 76.9%, African American students 73.8%, Native American students 72.3%, economically disadvantaged students 71.8%, and students with disabilities 66.4%. (Source: NMPED.)
3. The college remediation rate (the percentage of students that arrive at college needing in math, English, or both) for students enrolling in a New Mexico institution of higher education was 35.0% in 2018, 30.8% in 2019, and 25.2% in 2020. (Source: NMHED.)

### ***Funding***

NMPED began using state funding to support **career-technical education (CTE) programs**, starting with \$5 million in FY2019-20, \$4.49 million in FY2020-21, \$3 million in FY2021-22, and \$10 million in FY2022-23. This state funding is a complement to the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act grant that NMPED receives annually (federal fiscal year 2021 \$9.73 million). In school year 2020-21, 65,759 students were enrolled in CTE courses, and 12,724 achieved CTE concentrator status. CTE concentrators are students who participate in two unique CTE courses from an approved program of study, while attending grades 9-12. These concentrators graduate at very high levels (over 97% in SY2020-21). Combined state and federal funding is being used to increase the percentage of CTE concentrators beyond the current rate of 12.4% of high school students.

NMPED supports access to **Advanced Placement** courses by paying the exam fees for any family that would not otherwise be able to do so. Over the past three years, PED has allocated \$1 million for this purpose. This funding also includes support for educator professional development.

NMPED started a **summer enrichment internship program** in 2021 with \$9.89 million in federal funding. The funding covered the cost of summer internships for New Mexico high school students, who had the opportunity to participate in high-quality internships (20 hours per week for six weeks) in government agencies, including county, tribal, and/or municipal placements. Approximately 2,300 students were placed in 22 tribal and county government offices.

NMPED launched a **Near-Peer Tutoring Program** during the 2021-22 school year with \$2 million in federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding. Recipients of the funding provide high school students with the opportunity to be paid as reading and mathematics tutors for middle and/or elementary school students. Not only does funding provide wage compensation to high school student tutors, it also covers program costs, including training tutors in the basics of teaching as a career. During the 2021-22 school year, 25 school districts and charter schools were approved for funding under this program. Collectively, they proposed to provide tutoring services to 14,497 students via 614 tutors. The actual data for the 2021-22 school year are still in the process of being gathered and will be available by June 2022.

### ***Non-Monetary Supports***

NMHED's college and readiness program, **GEAR UP New Mexico** (GUNM), works directly with seven school districts and charter schools in New Mexico to improve access and opportunities to our state's colleges, universities, and vocational education programs. Throughout the school year, GUNM schools provide tutoring and mentoring services, college and career counseling, financial aid awareness, college tours, and other activities designed to help students enroll and succeed after graduating high school. Last grant cycle, the GUNM program reported the following information to the U.S. Department of Education:

- The percent of GUNM students passed pre-algebra by the end of middle school rose from 75% in 2012 to 96% in 2019.
- The four-year cohort high school graduation rate for GUNM students rose from 63% in 2012 to 76.5% in 2019.
- The percent of GUNM students who graduated from high school and immediately enrolled in college rose from 42% in 2012 to 63% in 2019.
- During the FY2021 grant cycle, 6,153 students participate in GUNM.

NMPED started the **New Mexico Graduation Equity Initiative** (NMGEI) in collaboration with Future Focused Education. The goal of the NMGEI is to "address the education system's

history of structural and inherent racism” by piloting a new project-based graduation pathway that culminates with senior exhibitions to demonstrate learning, as an alternative to graduation options that require traditional testing.

NMPED and Future Focused Education have begun work with local communities to develop culturally relevant **graduate profiles** that inform course offerings and graduation pathways. A graduate profile is a document that specifies the cognitive, personal, and interpersonal competencies that students should have when they graduate. Co-created with input from key stakeholders, the profile provides a clear visualization of priority goals for teaching and learning that can be easily communicated to students, parents, faculty, and staff to align their collective efforts. The development of local graduate profiles is also a key strategy in NMPED’s strategic plan, because profiles define the educational, social, and civic skills every New Mexico high school graduate should possess, and they guide the state in developing robust and relevant college and career pathways that position every young person to enter the world after high school ready for success.

The **Opportunity Scholarship** now makes college tuition free for New Mexico students. The Opportunity Scholarship covers any gap in tuition and fees owed by a student after other forms of state aid are applied. In Fall 2021, over 18,000 students benefited from Opportunity and Lottery scholarship programs.

In 2021, NMHED, the Department of Workforce Solutions, and New Mexico Workforce Connection, launched **Ready NM**, a free resource that links New Mexicans with job opportunities and career education pathways that lead to family-sustaining careers in high-demand industries in New Mexico. Seven new fast-track career-training programs have been created under this program in partnership with employers in high-need areas such as information technology, hospitality, and fiber optic installation. More than 140 New Mexicans have already completed these trainings and over 180,000 New Mexicans have visited the Ready NM website since August 2021 to explore training programs at colleges and job openings across the state.

The Adult Education Division at NMHED is leading a statewide **education-to-employment effort** that includes the NMPED, Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS), New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD), New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD), and the national non-profit Jobs for the Future’s (JFF) Pathways to Prosperity Network. Key features of this partnership include building high-quality, work-based learning opportunities and other pathways to postsecondary education and career training for both youth and adults. In Phase 1 of this initiative, cross-agency partners worked with JFF to create a landscape analysis. This analysis yielded a comprehensive roadmap that emphasized a sector-based strategy for pathways that move learners from our adult education programs to community college degree or certification programs in growing sectors of the economy. Phase 2 has been guided by this roadmap and has emphasized the development of a cross-agency partnership and identification of shared priorities, including addressing the statewide literacy crisis and breaking down systemic barriers to

postsecondary education and employment. As a shared vision and list of core projects emerge from this work in 2022, the participating agencies intend to continue collaborating over the next several years and beyond to support the development of education and career pathways that lead to high-wage, in-demand jobs, with a clear emphasis on equity and sustainability.

### ***Planning for the Future***

Completing Phase 2 of “The Big Blur” will involve ongoing cross-agency collaboration with the Department of Workforce Solutions to reduce or eliminate barriers for adult learners as they seek **pathways to family-sustaining careers**. The program targets intergenerational and family literacy efforts, works strategically with colleges to more fully integrate adult education into the institutional landscape, and builds more work-based learning opportunities for youth and adults.

NMPED will establish a **public-private partnership** among state government, the business sector, the non-profit sector, local governments, and philanthropic organizations, to fund and implement a system of high-quality college and career pathways that integrate CTE, work-based learning, and core academic curriculum, and align secondary and postsecondary programs.

NMPED will increase **Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities** across the state for all students, including work-based learning opportunities, dual credit and early college opportunities, and community service-based opportunities.

NMPED will create a **matching fund** for approved employers to provide paid internships.

NMPED will ensure all students have **access to a counselor** able to meet their transition support needs, some of which may include interest inventories, paid work experiences, self-advocacy training, and guidance and counseling services.

### ***Targets for Improvement***

1. Increase the statewide four-year high school graduation rate to 90% by 2027.
2. By 2027, close the graduation rate gap among Asian, Caucasian, Hispanic, African American, Native American, and economically disadvantaged students, as well as students with disabilities, so that there is no more than 5 percentage point difference between the highest and lowest performing subgroups.
3. Reduce the college remediation rate to 15% or less by 2026-27.

## **Technology**

NMPED’s goal is ensure that (1) all students and their teachers in the 23 focus districts<sup>18</sup> identified by the court have access to a dedicated digital device; (2) all students have access to high-speed internet allowing them to work remotely from home; and (3) school districts have sufficient funding for information technology (IT) staff to support and maintain digital devices, internet access, remote learning, teacher training, and IT professional development. To that end, NMPED has convened a cross-agency Broadband Working Group to implement the initiatives described below. Connectivity remains a major challenge, however, as many New Mexico students live in communities without ready access to broadband. Despite these hurdles, the State of New Mexico is confident that the action plan described below will address students’ immediate need for access to devices and connectivity.

### ***Data Snapshot***

1. Within the 23 focus districts identified by the court, districts report that 97.3% of all students have a dedicated digital device to use at home. (Source: NMPED STARS data warehouse and District Emergency Connectivity Fund applications, as of 1/14/2022)
2. Within the 23 focus districts identified by the court, districts report that 87.5% of all students have internet connectivity at home. (Source: NMPED STARS data warehouse and District Emergency Connectivity Fund applications, as of 1/14/2022)

### ***Funding***

The Broadband Working Group conducted direct outreach and support to districts to submit **Emergency Connectivity Fund** (“ECF”) applications to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). This funding will accomplish several goals:

- It will pay for mobile devices and internet connectivity for students who lack these resources.
- The funding will reimburse districts for purchases made on devices and connectivity after July 1, 2021.
- It will allow for planned purchases, through June 30, 2022, of devices and services for students with unmet device and connectivity needs.

Results to date: Submitted ECF applications from the 23 focus districts totaling \$39,388,685. Funding will provide over 70,000 laptops/tablets to students and teachers in need of devices and internet service to over 30,000 households via hotspots, cable, or satellite.

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<sup>18</sup> The 23 focus districts identified in the May 2021 court order are Alamogordo, Albuquerque, Bernalillo, Cuba, Española, Gadsden, Gallup-McKinley, Grants-Cibola, Hatch, Jemez Valley, Lake Arthur, Las Cruces, Los Lunas, Magdalena, Moriarty-Edgewood, Peñasco, Pojoaque, Rio Rancho, Santa Fe, Silver City, Taos Tucumcari, and Zuni.

## ***Non-Monetary Supports***

The Broadband Working Group provided **Information Technology (IT) assistance** for students and parents who need a device or internet service. Assistance was provided to families applying for the **Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB)**, a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program that offers a subsidy to any eligible family that cannot afford to purchase a computer or internet service for their home. As of October 25, 2021, total EBB enrollment in New Mexico was 59,462. Additionally, the New Mexico Student Connect (NMSC) call center has directly assisted 6,924 families in signing up for the program.

During the 2021-22 school year, the Broadband Working Group contracted with the **Starlink Satellite** internet service provider to offer internet connectivity for hard-to-connect students. During the 2021-22 school year, Starlink Satellite receivers were set up and installed at 913 student residences.

The Broadband Working Group contracted with NMPBS to install four “**Datacasting**” transmitters at PBS stations throughout the state for broad coverage. The transmitters are capable of sending educational materials to students’ and teachers’ homes covering a wide area (96%) of the state.

The **Library Broadband Infrastructure Fund** is investing in tribal library broadband. To that end, the New Mexico State Library (NMSL) has directly assisted six tribal libraries with their E-rate projects and provided matching funds from the library broadband infrastructure fund. Five of the six tribal libraries that have completed their projects and received funding have been connected at 100 Mbps or greater and/or have had their network equipment refreshed (see table below). The sixth (San Ildefonso Library) remains under E-rate review.

<b>Library Name</b>	<b>Project Accomplishments</b>
Santa Clara Pueblo Community Library	200 Mbps internet, refreshed network equipment
Zia Enrichment Library	Refreshed network equipment
Mescalero Community Library	110 Mbps internet, refreshed network equipment
Jicarilla Tribal Library	100 Mbps internet, refreshed network equipment
Acoma Learning Center	100 Mbps internet (construction)
Pueblo de San Ildefonso Library	100 Mbps internet (construction)

## ***Planning for the Future***

The Legislature appropriated \$10 million in FY23 to NMPED for **educational technology** and other information technology (IT) staffing needs. This funding will be used to maintain progress toward addressing the 2021 technology court order. The funds appropriated will sustain educational technology expenditures on devices, connectivity, and IT staffing through FY23.

Working with the State Educational Technology Directors Association, the FCC extended the deadline for school districts and charter schools to receive requested **Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF)** funded services and equipment from June 30, 2022, to June 30, 2023. This will allow more districts and charter schools to participate in the program.

NMPED is collaborating with the Public School Facilities Authority, New Mexico Broadband Office, Department of Information Technology, Higher Education Department, University of New Mexico, New Mexico Tech, New Mexico State University, Western New Mexico University, and others on establishing a **Statewide Education Network** with a mission of providing technology infrastructure, including hardware and services to connect students, teachers, and schools necessary for remote learning. This network will eventually connect all students in early childhood to higher education to high-speed internet. To support the development of the network, the state is using federal Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) II funding to establish the UNM-Gallup datacenter as an initial node on the network.

The **Navajo Nation** has leveraged E-Rate for \$70 million for construction of new fiber on the Navajo Nation. These additional internet services will help address mobility between tribal schools and public schools. The first location to come online after working out the final permit issue will be the Ramah and Pine Hill area of the Navajo Nation with fiber to the home, connecting the school, chapter house, and health center in Pine Hill.

NMPED will conduct **data analytics** that merge information from the ECF applications, the District Connectivity Plans and the NMPED Student and Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS) 40 Day data collection. The STARS data collection from the LEAs now includes a new component called Digital Equity Data Collection that is required for all future STARS data collection periods beginning with the SY2021-22. This new dataset will allow NMPED to track school, device, and connectivity needs statewide, at four different time periods each school year, for all subgroup populations.

NMPED will support districts with their **inventory tracking** by providing tools they can use to match device ID numbers with student ID numbers, test the speeds delivered by the devices they've procured through the ECF, and allow students to electronically certify the need that has been met by the ECF-funded device.

NMPED will install and configure three of the remaining four PBS transmitters for **Datacasting** coverage.

During the 2022-23 school year, NMPED will collaborate with school districts to purchase and deploy additional **Starlink Satellite** receivers in areas where this technology has proved to be successful at connecting students with limited options.



NMPED will continue to assess viability of **long-term wireless mesh networks** (or other solutions) and deployment opportunities in districts with little to no current internet connectivity options.

### ***Targets for Improvement***

1. Each year, ensure that every student in the 23 focus districts continues to have access to a dedicated digital device to support his or her education.
2. By the end of the 2022-23 school year, ensure that every student in the 23 focus districts has access to high-speed internet service sufficient to reliably upload assignments, stream instructional videos, and participate in individual and/or group video conferencing.
3. By the end of the 2023-24 school year, ensure that every student in New Mexico (as opposed to those in the 23 focus districts) has access to a dedicated digital device to support his or her education.
4. By 2025-26 ensure that that every student in New Mexico (as opposed to those in the 23 focus districts) has access to high-speed internet service sufficient to reliably upload assignments, stream instructional videos, and participate in individual and/or group video conferencing.

### **Counselors, Social Workers, and Other Non-Instructional Staff**

An integral part of student success is access to adults focused on supporting their wellness, social relationships, transitions, healthy habits, and opportunities. School counselors, social workers, psychologists, and other instructional support providers maximize student potential by providing one-on-one guidance, often vital to the most at-risk students. Adults who serve students in this capacity can advocate, provide referrals for long-term support, support individual goal setting, and provide data analysis that helps identify student issues, needs and challenges. They are also key to promoting schoolwide equity and fundamental in establishing positive school culture and climate.

### ***Data Snapshot***

1. The average statewide **student-to-counselor ratio** in New Mexico was 445:1 in 2018-19, 426:1 in 2019-20, 408:1 in 2020-21, and 426:1 in 2021-22. (Source: NMPED.)
2. The number of state-funded **school-based health centers** (SBHCs) operating in New Mexico increased from 47 in 2018-19 to 54 in 2021-22. The total number of state- and non-state-funded SBHCs has remained steady at 78 between 2018-19 and 2020-21. (Source: NM Alliance for School-Based Health Care.)

## ***Funding***

NMPED released the **Social Emotional Learning (SEL)** framework in 2021. NMPED is using federal GEER/ESSER funds for two rounds of grants to schools/districts. Through Round 1, NMPED awarded 78 grants for a total of \$786,000 to 80 schools; through Round 2, NMPED awarded 60 grants for a total of \$894,000 to 62 schools.

Funding for community schools increased from \$2 million in FY20 to \$6.635 million in FY22 (the FY22 funding includes \$4.798 million in state funds and \$1.836 million in federal school improvement funds). Looking ahead, the Legislature appropriated \$8 million for community schools in FY2022-23. **Community school coordinators** facilitate better coordination between school officials and community support providers, including behavioral health services.

The **at-risk funding factor** increased from .13 in 2018 to .30 in 2021, resulting in \$296 million in 2021 (three times the previous funding level). This funding was spent directly for classrooms, students, and teachers, including counselors, social workers, and other non-instructional staff.

The **Expanding Opportunities Project (EOP)**, launched in October 2020, works to recruit and retain school-based mental health providers to serve the needs of students across the state, with a focus on rural and frontier communities that have a high percentage of at-risk and vulnerable student populations. This 5-year, \$9 million initiative is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Goals of the project include: increasing the number and quality of mental health service providers in high need schools, particularly in rural and Native American communities; providing additional resources to students enrolled in partnering universities' behavioral health programs; and supporting school behavioral health personnel currently working in those identified communities. Since the inception of the grant, 68 students have received tuition assistance and 17 have received stipends. Additionally, 114 existing mental health providers have received salary enhancements as retention incentives.

## ***Non-Monetary Supports***

NMPED engaged UNM Project ECHO to provide a training series on **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)** for educators in SY2020-21. The aims of this program were to help educators develop their knowledge in six core areas: (1) incorporating social-emotional learning into distance learning; (2) mindfulness practices and activities for self-care and learning; (3) strategies and practices that maximize emotional safety and health for students and staff; (4) the framework of supports for students and families, especially in rural areas; (5) effective communication and building relationships with students and parents; and (6) the core SEL competencies and activities that build them. Between September 2020 and April

2021, 212 educators participated in 23 sessions, representing 486 hours of professional learning. According to the program evaluator, an estimated 15,409 students were reached through their teachers' participation in ECHO. NMPED is again working with Project ECHO in SY2021-22 to conduct an SEL for School Leaders and SEL for Leaders training series. Evaluation data will be available at the end of the school year.

NMPED launched a free **Social-Emotional Learning web portal** for schools in August 2021 using the "7 Mindsets" platform (see <http://www.NewMexicoSELportal.com>).

### ***Planning for the Future***

NMPED will expand access for students to **school counselors** who are able to meet their social-emotional, behavioral health, and college/career support needs.

NMPED will train counselors in **community engagement**, particularly around school transition points and working culturally and linguistically diverse families and communities.

NMPED will continue implementing the **Teacher Residency and Teacher Fellows programs**, which allow participants to pursue AAs in counseling and/or social work. This is administered and funded by NMPED.

NMPED will fund **licensure/certification programs for social workers and counselors** to increase the number of professionals working in schools, ensuring adequate holistic support and services for at-risk students.

NMPED will ensure that districts and charter schools allocate dollars from the **At-Risk Index, Family Income Index, and other allowable revenue services** to provide counseling, social work, nursing services (social services provision), etc., to address the needs of at-risk students as appropriate.

During the 2022-23 school year, NMPED will launch **Project Aware**, a 5-year, \$9 million grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The purpose of the program is to expand the capacity of NMPED, in partnership with CYFD and Socorro, Farmington, and Santa Fe school districts to promote the healthy development of school-aged youth and prevent youth violence.

NMPED will create a **School Behavioral Health License** to allow more school employees to provide routine behavioral health services that are within their scope of practice. The agency will combine existing behavioral health requirements with NMPED's license to expand the number of qualified behavioral health professionals. Currently, only school psychologists and school social workers can provide Medicaid billable behavioral health services based on the scope of their license.

Beginning July 2022, **behavioral health services for all Medicaid-eligible students** will be billable due to revisions to the federal Free Care Rule. The revision of the Free Care Rule will allow for those services to be billed for non-IEP students. Between 30% and 40% of the billed services comes back to the school and can support partial salaries and behavioral health supports in the schools. HSD's budget request reflects expanded capacity for supporting this program, and NMPED plans to request additional matching funds to support providers in schools.

### ***Targets for Improvement***

1. Ensure that every high school in the state has at least one fully certified school counselor and the social emotional supports to succeed in school.
2. Reduce the average statewide student-to-counselor ratio and/or student-to-social-worker ratio to 250-to-1 by the 2026-27 school year. This is the level recommended by the American School Counselor Association and the National Association of Social Workers.
3. In collaboration with NMDOH add a minimum of 25 school-based health centers by 2027 to better meet the physical and behavioral health needs of all students.

## V. A CALL TO ACTION

NMPED wholeheartedly accepts the challenge of leading New Mexico’s students and their families into a future where their education prepares them for a successful life and career, whatever that may be. To achieve the outcomes identified in this action plan, we all have a role to play in bringing about the changes to our educational system that our students and their families deserve.

Who	Role
<b>Governor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets educational priorities for state agencies</li> <li>• Coordinates implementation and ensures accountability for this action plan among state agencies</li> <li>• Advocates for needed statutory changes with the Legislature</li> <li>• Monitors and communicates progress to the public</li> </ul>
<b>Legislature</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enacts statutory changes and appropriates sufficient funding for state agencies, school districts, and schools to carry out the actions identified in this plan</li> <li>• Funds PreK, ELTP, K-5 Plus, reading interventions</li> <li>• Provides instructional materials, technology, curricula, and transportation</li> <li>• Improves teacher pay, preparation, certification, and working conditions</li> <li>• Closes formula loopholes and increase at-risk student funding</li> </ul>
<b>Public Education Department</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides overall state leadership for implementation of this action plan</li> <li>• Conducts monitoring and oversight of school districts and charter schools to ensure that funding provided via this action plan is used as intended</li> <li>• Develops curriculum standards and monitors student performance</li> <li>• Enforces provisions in the Bilingual Multicultural, Indian Education, and Hispanic Education Acts</li> <li>• Provides support and technical assistance to school districts and charter schools to carry out the actions in this plan</li> <li>• Gathers data, monitors progress, and makes adjustments to achieve the stated outcomes in this plan</li> </ul>
<b>Other State Agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides support and technical assistance to school districts, charter schools, and other key stakeholders for those actions outside of the purview of NMPED</li> </ul>
<b>School Districts and State-Chartered Charter Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepts state and federal funding from NMPED and other state agencies to implement the programs and initiatives in this plan</li> <li>• Provides oversight of schools</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitors student outcomes and provides interventions to close achievement gaps</li> <li>• Implements tribal consultation, as appropriate</li> <li>• Provides professional development and training for school employees</li> <li>• Provides support and technical assistance to schools</li> </ul>
<b>Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides direct services and support to students and families</li> </ul>
<b>Parents and Families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides support for students to succeed in school</li> <li>• Advocates for students with teachers and other school staff</li> <li>• Provides feedback to local and state officials about the impact of this plan on their children’s educational success</li> </ul>
<b>Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shares their experiences and gives voice to the changes they would like to see in schools</li> </ul>
<b>Community Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners with schools and school districts to provide services and support for students and families in alignment with this plan</li> </ul>

In short, improving New Mexico’s educational system requires a team effort.

## VI. DIRECTIONS FOR SUBMITTING INPUT

Your commentary is critical to this process, please send your written input to [draft.actionplan@state.nm.us](mailto:draft.actionplan@state.nm.us) no later than **Friday, June 17, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.**

Please include the following:

- Your name (title optional)
- Designate whether you're representing yourself or an organization
- Phone Number (include area code)
- Email address
- For submitting specific commentary, please always include the page number and other identifying information, such as the specific paragraph you are referencing, or note that the commentary is general
- Commentary will be accepted as an attachment in pdf or MS Word format, or you may provide your commentary in the body of the e-mail itself.

Following the public comment period, NMPED will compile all comments and create an official response, incorporating changes to this draft action plan as appropriate.

We thank you in advance for your input.