

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In 2008, the Legislature commissioned the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to study and determine the cost of a sufficient education for all public schools in New Mexico. Findings suggested at the time that state support for public schools should increase by \$335.8 million to extend the school year, add afterschool hours, provide summer programs, reduce class sizes, and hire appropriate school personnel. The most expensive component of AIR’s cost proposal was extending the school year to include 185 instructional days for students and four planning days for teachers (about 1,512 hours).

In 2009, the Legislature appropriated \$14 million to the state equalization guarantee (SEG) distribution for schools to add one additional instructional day. However, a 2018 LFC evaluation found school calendars shrunk by about 3 days between FY09 and FY18. Despite funding to expand the school year, schools shortened calendars by moving from 5-day school week to 4-day school week schedules or by decreasing total days while adding minutes to each day.

In 2018, the 1st Judicial District Court ruled in the *Martinez-Yazzie* education sufficiency lawsuit that New Mexico’s education system was not constitutionally sufficient nor uniform for all students. The court found evidence-based interventions that added instructional time like prekindergarten, K-3 Plus extended school year, summer school, afterschool, and extended learning time programs could help students close achievement gaps. However, the state had not provided sufficient funding to cover programming for all students needing intervention, and administrative hurdles and timing of funds limited some participation in the interventions. The court also found the state lacked adequate numbers of quality educators and school leaders to provide appropriate instruction and support for at-risk students, noting the state should increase compensation and training for teachers to provide a constitutionally-sufficient education.

In response to the court’s findings, the Legislature significantly increased at-risk funding, educator pay, and early childhood programming in FY20. Additionally, the state expanded its existing instructional time intervention, K-3 Plus (now K-5 Plus), which allowed elementary schools to add 25 days, and created a new Extended Learning Time (ELT) program, which allowed any school to add 10 days, afterschool programming, and 80 hours of professional development. Despite these investments, participation in K-5 Plus and ELT continues to fall short of appropriation levels.

Evidence on Extended Learning Time

Preliminary LFC analysis of interim iStation assessment data suggests K-5 Plus had a positive impact on student learning outcomes during the pandemic. Adjusted mean iStation growth between FY22 beginning-of-year (BOY) and middle-of-year (MOY) assessments showed students in schools with K-5 Plus experienced greater growth, compared to students who did not attend these schools. This result was statistically significant, even after controlling for student demographics. In

AGENCY: Public Education Department (PED)

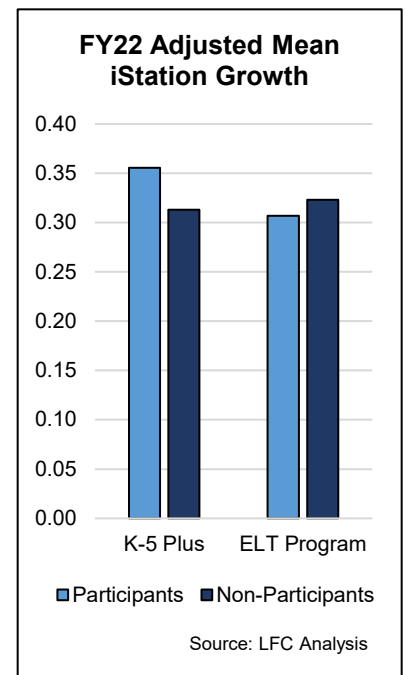
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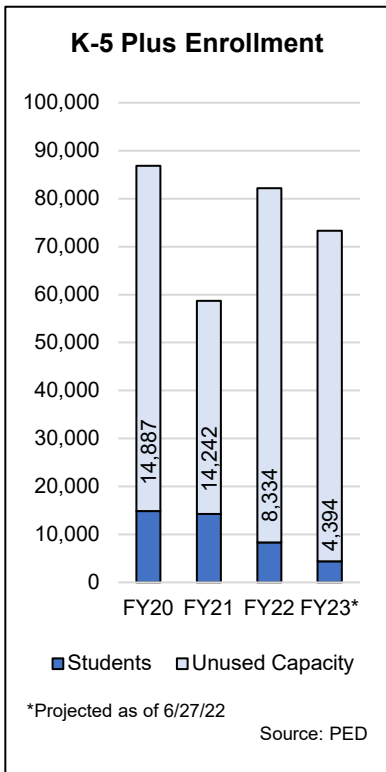
PURPOSE OF HEARING: Extended Learning Time Proposals

WITNESS: Charles Sallee, Deputy Director, LFC; Dr. Gwen Perea Warniment, Director, Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC); Dr. Kurt Steinhaus, Secretary, PED

PREPARED BY: Sunny Liu, Senior Fiscal Analyst, LFC; Rachel Mercer-Garcia, Program Evaluator, LFC; John Sena, Deputy Director, LESL; Tim Bedeaux, Senior Policy Analyst, LESL

EXPECTED OUTCOME: Informational





contrast, students in ELT programs did not show greater growth between FY22 BOY and MOY assessments when compared to students who did not participate. Both of these analyses should be interpreted with caution, as end-of-year (EOY) data was not included in the analysis and other factors during the pandemic may have affected results. The full effect of K-5 Plus and ELT would be better understood with EOY assessment data, and the state should evaluate the effect of stacking both programs over time.

Even before the pandemic, LFC studies found large learning gaps existed among New Mexico’s most at-risk students. K-5 Plus was scientifically shown to improve student performance relative to peers when programs were executed correctly. Numerous LFC evaluations and early childhood reports showed students who participated in K-5 Plus were more likely to perform on grade level, and the benefits of K-5 Plus were even more pronounced for low-income students and Native American students.

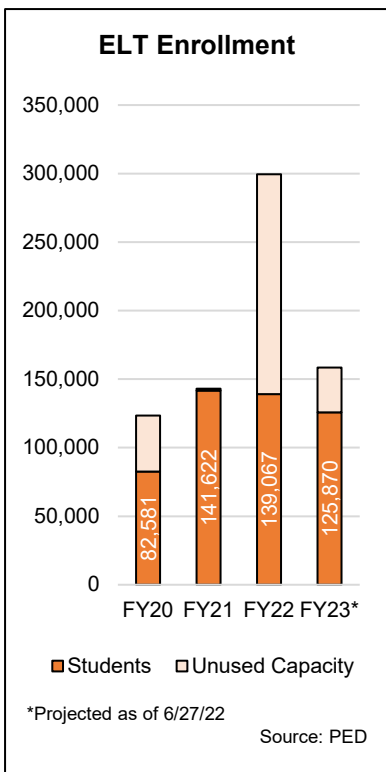
These findings were similar to the 2015 Utah State University independent scientific evaluation of the K-3 Plus program. The evaluation assessed students over 4 years and found students enrolled in K-3 Plus the summer prior to kindergarten were more ready for school and outperformed their peers.

Issues with Program Participation

Since FY21, participation in K-5 Plus and ELT programs has decreased, and schools have forgone nearly \$400 million of available state funding for these interventions. School closures during the Covid-19 pandemic reduced instructional time for all students and further exacerbated existing achievement gaps for at-risk student groups. Despite this lost instructional time, attempts to require statewide participation failed, and schools continued to opt out of both programs.

The General Appropriation Act of 2022 provided \$279 million in recurring SEG appropriations for K-5 Plus and ELT, including additional salary incentives and transportation funds for participating schools. Unused funding will revert at the end of the fiscal year to the public education reform fund (PERF), and projected FY23 general fund reversions are currently over \$130 million based on anticipated enrollments for both programs.

School officials and community stakeholder groups continue to advocate for increased flexibility in program designs and local decision-making on providing additional time. Concerns about educator burnout during the pandemic, disruptions to summer plans, worries about “more of the same,” and pushback against state directives have slowed implementation for K-5 Plus and ELT. While most stakeholder groups agree more instructional opportunities can benefit students, many argue the quality of instruction and how time is used is more important.



Implementation continues to be the primary issue for extended learning time in New Mexico. Current statute still contains loopholes, given the existing mixture of hourly requirements for instruction, days for K-5 Plus and ELT programs, and choice in weekly schedules. For example, Central Consolidated Schools switched from a 5-day school week to a 4-day school week and added K-5 Plus days to keep the same schedule with more funding. Elementary schools adding hours through additional days can still reduce instructional hours (given only a 990 hour minimum) to offer early release days every week. As such, solutions must consider these loopholes and be designed to substantially change instructional practice rather than merely encourage compliance.

Districts often cite the need for flexibility in the form of adding instructional hours to each school day (rather than adding days), sometimes with very small increments. For example, 10 days, or 60 hours, could be allocated in 15 minute daily increments. Converting 25 days would yield about 45 minutes each day.

However, extending the day may be a result in some exceptionally long school days. Districts have not only extended the school day to make up the time for shortening the year, but have added even more time per day to boost instructional time by 11 percent in elementary school and 5 percent in secondary school. Stubbornly low student test scores for the last decade indicate this approach has not been constitutionally sufficient, and longer school days may have diminishing returns, particularly for very young students, as an individual’s ability to retain information for long sustained periods of time during a day wanes.

Policy and Budget Considerations

Absent changes to existing statute and funding mechanisms for K-5 Plus and ELT programs, schools will continue reverting hundreds of millions of dollars into PERF while exacerbating inequities in instructional time across the state. To maintain evidence-based programs, provide flexibility for program designs, and ensure high-quality time is added, the state could consider:

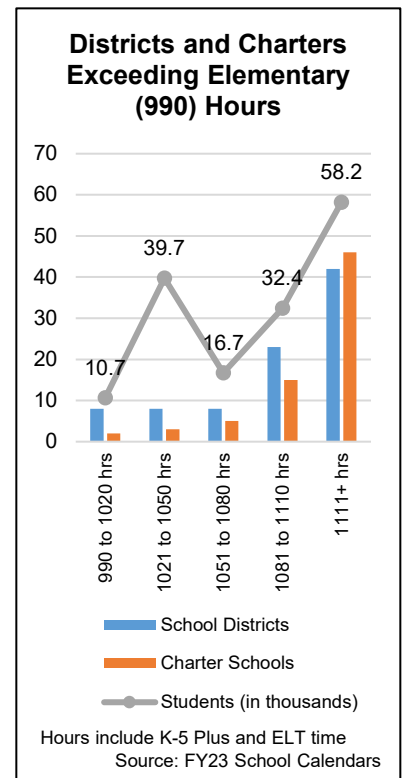
- Increasing instructional hours and local flexibility,
- Professionalizing the educator workforce,
- Increasing incentives for K-5 Plus and additional days,
- Right-sizing appropriations, and
- Supporting alternatives for high-performing schools.

Increasing Instructional Hours and Local Flexibility. The Legislature should continue to invest in learning time. Quality learning time is the foundational input needed for student improvement. By embedding additional time into the minimum instructional hours required within the school year and funding components crucial to high-quality instruction, the Legislature can ensure funding for quality learning time does not continue to go unused by districts and charter schools. The Legislature could consider:

- Providing flexibility through instructional hours to districts and charter schools to meet local needs for students and educators throughout the school year;
- Expanding learning opportunities for students by embedding enriched instruction in school-directed programs; and
- Embedding and funding comprehensive professional work time for New Mexico’s educator workforce.

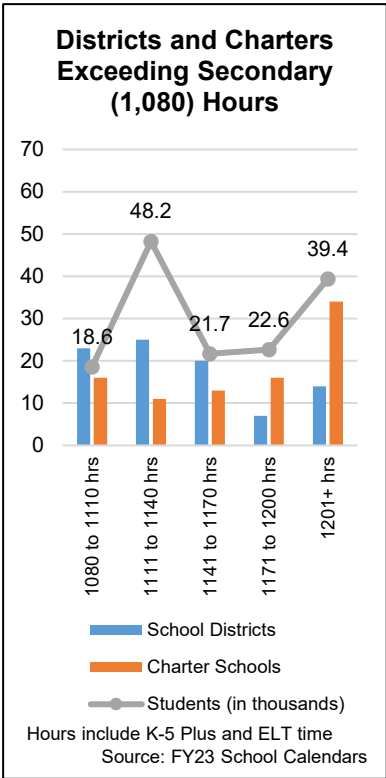
Current school-directed program hourly minimum requirements for elementary are 990 hours and 1080 hours for secondary schools. For FY23, districts plan to provide an average of 1,098 hours for elementary instruction and 1,172 hours for secondary instruction (including K-5 Plus and ELT time). Both averages exceed the statutory minimums for elementary and secondary instructional hours. Although the vast majority of New Mexico school districts exceeded minimum instructional hours, few districts provided a traditional 180-day school calendar. For FY23, only 21 out of 89 districts and 48 out of 100 charters are providing 180 days or more of instruction. Of these entities, only seven districts and 19 charters are providing at least 180 days without participating in K-5 Plus or ELT.

In response to Covid-19, Congress appropriated three rounds of emergency relief aid to schools, colleges, and other educational entities. New Mexico schools will receive \$1.5 billion from this aid, including \$979 million from the third and largest round—the American Rescue Plan (ARP). Schools must reserve 20 percent of ARP funds for evidence-based extended day, comprehensive afterschool, summer enrichment, or extended school year interventions to address learning loss for at-risk students.



House Joint Resolution 1, passed in the regular 2021 legislative session, will ask voters to increase annual distributions from the land grant permanent fund by 1.25 percent, about \$211.5 million, for the following purposes:

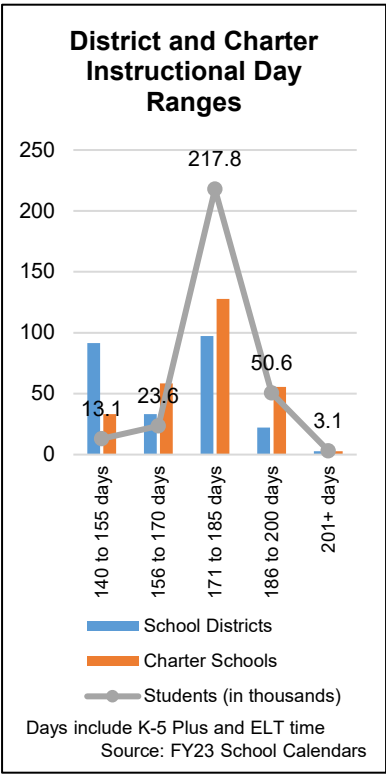
- 40 percent, or \$84.6 million, to enhance instruction for at-risk students, extend the school year, and increase teacher compensation
- 60 percent, or \$126.9 million, for the provision of early childhood education



By increasing the minimum number of school-directed program hours, the Legislature can ensure every elementary student has a greater opportunity to avoid summer learning loss and support students with recovering from the academic and socioemotional consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic. By converting hours previously embedded in school-directed programs for parent teacher conferences and next step plans for students to professional work hours, secondary students will also gain additional hours of instruction.

Most schools provide professional work hours in concurrence with school-directed programs and many districts and charter schools choose to provide students with more than the minimum of school-directed program hours. To support the authentic engagement necessary for academic learning, which comes when students are immersed in work with clear meaning and immediate value, school-directed programs should include:

- Teaching and learning aligned with content and performance standards;
- Enrichment programs that focus on problem solving and cognitive skills development directly aligned to academic content and performance standards;
- Research-based or evidence-based social, emotional, or academic interventions;
- Content that provides technical knowledge, skills, and competency-based applied learning.



Professionalizing the Educator Workforce. Of the over 250 distinct factors or activities that influence student achievement identified in a 2019 report by Hanover Research and the Utah State Board of Education, educators were identified as the most impactful school-based factor. This indicates educator quality should be a primary focus for stakeholders working to improve student outcomes. National research also indicates effective professional work to improve educator quality incorporates: specific content supports, hands-on experience, collaboration, modeling of instruction, coaching support, built-in time for reflection, and providing teachers adequate time to implement a new skill. Although national data consistently emphasizes a need for quality professional learning supports over quantity, research is mixed on the number of hours required to provide supports within components of high-quality professional work, especially since many components commonly overlap.

Based on a survey of national research and state requirements, recommended allotted time for components of professional work throughout a calendar year range from:

- Professional Development: 49 to 91 hours
- Mentorship: 35 to 50 hours
- Coaching: 21 to 54 hours
- Collaboration: 18 to 54 hours
- Planning Time: 130 to 190 hours

Depending on the needs of the school, professional work time should include a combination of time for licensed school employees to participate in educator professional development, mentorship, coaching, collaboration, planning, home visiting, parent teacher conferences and consulting with parents to develop next step plans for students. By incorporating time provided by public schools for professional work, the Legislature can support the continuous improvement of New Mexico educators while leading the nation in building the most professionalized educator workforce in the country.

Incentives for K-5 Plus and Additional Days. With ongoing evidence that K-5 Plus improves student achievement, the state should encourage the addition of significant instructional days and increase incentives for participation. If 60 hours, or two weeks, are added to the base instructional requirement for all schools, reaching the number of days for K-5 Plus would only require schools to add 3 more weeks of school. The state should consider adjusting this requirement to lower barriers to participation.

To help schools phase in additional days for K-5 Plus, the state could prorate the formula factor to allow increments of days at a time (e.g. adding 5 days instead of 15 days or 25 days). Allowing secondary schools to participate (i.e. K-12 Plus) could also help districts align calendars across all schools and coordinate transportation schedules more efficiently.

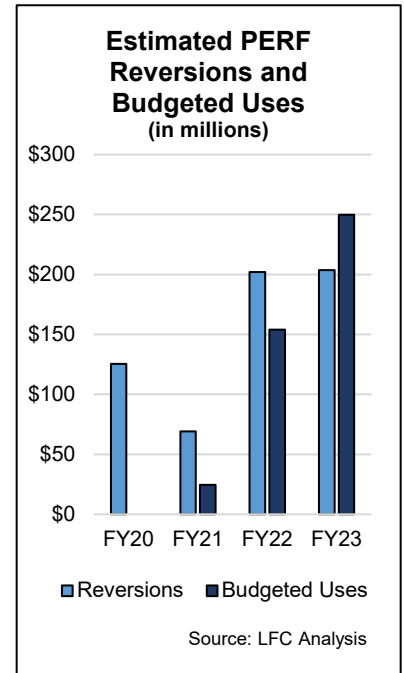
The state could further incentivize the addition of days, particularly if baseline instructional time requirements are in hours, by providing incremental funding through the formula for extra days beyond the base time assumed. Each incremental day would be an average of 0.012 units per student. The Legislature could provide these units for each day added beyond 190 days for schools with a 5-day school weeks or 152 days for schools with a 4-day school week (about 38 weeks) to encourage extending the calendar. Increasing the weight to 0.015 would make it a greater incentive – 25 percent higher than the current K-5 Plus weight of 0.3 on a daily basis – and would allow schools to customize the number of extra days while closing loopholes currently allowed under existing statute.

Right-sizing Appropriations. Most reversions to the public education reform fund (PERF) are due to unspent K-5 Plus appropriations, which total \$120 million in the SEG distribution. Costs for 4,394 students to participate in K-5 Plus amount to \$7.2 million, leaving over \$112 million available to reallocate for this purpose. Repurposing part of this appropriation would reduce future PERF reversions and provide a funding source to raise instructional hour requirements. Given large PERF balances, the Legislature may also want to consider using the fund as a transitional funding source as well.

At the FY23 preliminary unit value of \$5,451, the estimated cost of raising instructional hour requirements by 10 days (i.e. ELT, including the 3 percent salary incentive) statewide is currently \$187 million. The FY23 SEG appropriation includes \$159 million for ELT in the base and \$120 million for K-5 Plus, which is largely unused.

Alternatives for High-performing Schools. One of the intended goals for increasing instructional time is to improve student academic performance. For communities that are not ready to add new instructional hours, the state could authorize PED to phase-in new instructional hour requirements if schools are demonstrating high levels of performance or facing unique challenges (e.g. long transportation routes in rural areas) and requesting an exemption.

The state could also authorize uses of instructional time that align with community needs, such as additional time for afterschool programming, career technical education, community school initiatives, tribal education, and other academic or extracurricular interventions.



Instructional Hours, Days, and Hours per Day				
District or Charter	Elementary Instructional Hours	Secondary Instructional Hours	Average Instructional Days	Instructional Time per Day
Alamogordo	1,089	1,137	179	6:39
Albuquerque	1,020	1,136	178	6:28
Animas	1,038	1,138	150	7:13
Artesia	1,101	1,133	157	7:13
Aztec	1,159	1,132	180	6:42
Belen	990	1,080	158	6:31
Bernalillo	1,122	1,130	177	6:21
Bloomfield	1,012	1,080	176	6:17
Capitan	1,093	1,124	145	7:38
Carlsbad	1,139	1,159	178	6:28
Carrizozo	1,067	1,130	147	7:27
Central Consolidated	1,094	1,158	189	6:16
Chama	1,233	1,160	182	7:03
Cimarron	1,125	1,125	150	7:30
Clayton	1,102	1,136	170	6:59
Cloudcroft	1,105	1,105	149	7:25
Clovis	1,006	1,085	170	6:07
Cobre Consolidated	1,084	1,189	164	6:54
Corona	1,050	1,088	150	7:06
Cuba	1,289	1,211	199	6:49
Deming	1,074	1,244	184	6:16
Des Moines	1,169	1,157	175	6:45
Dexter	1,151	1,151	177	6:30
Dora	1,125	1,125	150	7:30
Dulce	1,327	1,327	183	7:15
Elida	1,017	1,095	151	6:58
Espanola	1,002	1,144	179	5:57
Estancia	1,142	1,142	178	6:25
Eunice	1,107	1,107	176	6:30
Farmington	1,052	1,105	175	6:28
Floyd	1,100	1,113	150	7:22
Ft Sumner	1,029	1,125	150	7:09
Gadsden	1,067	1,157	180	6:24
Gallup	1,241	1,336	181	7:05
Grady	1,095	1,095	146	7:30
Grants	1,200	1,203	203	6:13
Hagerman	1,206	1,206	180	6:42
Hatch	1,077	1,144	176	6:17
Hobbs	1,048	1,213	177	6:05
Hondo	1,088	1,088	145	7:30
House	1,146	1,146	146	7:50
Jal	1,133	1,133	150	7:32
Jemez Mountain	1,190	1,240	167	7:22
Jemez Valley	1,227	1,227	160	7:40
Lake Arthur	1,201	1,283	190	6:31
Las Cruces	1,091	1,196	179	6:11
Las Vegas City	1,125	1,140	180	6:27
Logan	1,095	1,095	146	7:30

Instructional Hours, Days, and Hours per Day				
District or Charter	Elementary Instructional Hours	Secondary Instructional Hours	Average Instructional Days	Instructional Time per Day
Lordsburg	1,117	1,117	150	7:30
Los Alamos	1,170	1,188	180	6:32
Los Lunas	1,140	1,299	190	6:22
Loving	1,091	1,110	150	7:19
Lovington	1,156	1,142	186	6:16
Magdalena	1,095	1,095	146	7:30
Maxwell	1,084	1,084	143	7:34
Melrose	1,095	1,095	151	7:15
Mesa Vista	1,125	1,125	150	7:30
Mora	1,233	1,146	173	7:13
Moriarty-Edgewood	1,079	1,186	183	6:27
Mosquero	1,080	1,080	144	7:30
Mountainair	1,119	1,130	152	7:27
Pecos	1,154	1,167	179	6:27
Penasco	1,098	1,200	160	7:09
Pojoaque	1,018	1,117	173	6:24
Portales	1,118	1,118	178	6:16
Quemado	1,123	1,123	150	7:28
Questa	990	1,163	150	7:07
Raton	996	1,101	181	5:46
Reserve	1,138	1,138	151	7:31
Rio Rancho	1,209	1,209	186	6:30
Roswell	1,229	1,229	189	6:30
Roy	1,088	1,088	145	7:30
Ruidoso	1,151	1,151	179	6:25
San Jon	1,092	1,088	147	7:30
Santa Fe	1,088	1,180	174	6:29
Santa Rosa	1,136	1,159	158	7:15
Silver City	1,095	1,095	151	7:15
Socorro	1,155	1,174	168	6:50
Springer	1,059	1,090	145	7:25
Taos	1,140	1,144	176	6:29
Tatum	1,160	1,160	160	7:15
Texico	1,114	1,168	152	7:29
Truth or Consequences	1,035	1,152	172	6:19
Tucumcari	1,092	1,104	150	7:18
Tularosa	1,050	1,123	175	6:11
Vaughn	1,126	1,126	158	7:08
Wagon Mound	1,125	1,108	150	7:26
West Las Vegas	1,048	1,125	180	6:17
Zuni	1,178	1,213	190	6:01
21st Century Public Academy	1,119	1,119	167	6:42
Albuquerque Charter Academy	-	1,200	150	8:00
Albuquerque School Of Excellence	1,112	1,211	174	6:37
Albuquerque Sign Language Academy	1,201	1,201	192	6:15
Academy For Technology & Classics	-	1,170	170	6:30
ACE Leadership High School	-	1,140	180	6:00
ACES Technical Charter School	1,191	1,207	190	6:17

Instructional Hours, Days, and Hours per Day				
District or Charter	Elementary Instructional Hours	Secondary Instructional Hours	Average Instructional Days	Instructional Time per Day
Albuquerque Bilingual Academy	1,283	1,283	190	6:45
Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School	1,254	-	170	6:58
Albuquerque Institute Of Math & Science	1,365	1,365	182	7:30
Aldo Leopold Charter	1,214	1,128	172	6:34
Alice King Community School	1,041	1,107	161	6:33
Alma D'Arte Charter	-	1,231	184	6:21
Altura Preparatory School	1,074	-	174	6:42
Amy Biehl Charter High School	-	1,159	173	6:19
Anansi Charter School	1,060	1,098	172	6:33
Cesar Chavez Community School	-	1,140	180	6:00
Christine Duncan Heritage Academy	1,298	1,163	155	7:26
Cien Aguas International	1,098	1,098	180	6:06
Coral Community Charter	1,086	-	167	6:30
Corrales International	1,083	1,145	187	6:09
Cottonwood Classical Prep	1,238	1,238	190	6:30
Cottonwood Valley Charter	1,177	1,177	181	6:30
DEAP	1,275	1,275	170	7:30
Deming Cesar Chavez	-	1,143	144	7:30
Digital Arts And Technology Academy	-	1,115	176	6:19
Dream Dine	1,311	-	202	6:30
East Mountain High School	-	1,189	180	6:45
El Camino Real Academy	1,261	1,337	191	6:47
Estancia Valley Classical Academy	1,138	1,181	175	6:36
Explore Academy	1,108	1,203	184	6:16
Explore Academy - Las Cruces	1,112	1,177	171	6:30
Gilbert L Sena Charter	-	1,140	180	6:00
Gordon Bernell Charter	-	1,190	160	7:00
Health Leadership High School	-	1,151	167	6:30
Hozho Academy	1,330	1,155	190	7:00
Horizon Academy West	1,000	-	150	6:40
International School At Mesa Del Sol	1,195	1,220	183	6:35
J Paul Taylor Academy	1,283	1,283	190	6:45
Jefferson Montessori Academy	1,277	1,331	181	7:10
La Academia De Esperanza	-	1,125	180	6:15
La Academia Dolores Huerta	1,180	1,180	182	6:30
La Tierra Montessori School	1,193	1,193	185	7:00
Las Montanas Charter	-	1,225	150	7:45
Los Puentes Charter	1,080	1,080	180	6:00
Mark Armijo Academy	-	1,157	178	6:30
McCurdy Charter School	1,081	1,211	173	6:35
Middle College High School	-	1,265	161	7:23
Mission Achievement And Success	1,365	1,365	182	7:30
Monte Del Sol Charter	-	1,099	173	6:21
Montessori Elementary School	1,050	1,131	188	5:40
Montessori Of The Rio Grande	1,092	-	172	6:00
Moreno Valley High	-	1,125	150	7:30
Mosaic Academy Charter	1,170	1,170	180	6:30
Mountain Mahogany Community School	1,102	1,263	187	6:04

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District or Charter	Elementary Instructional Hours	Secondary Instructional Hours	Average Instructional Days	Instructional Time per Day
Native American Community Academy	1,330	1,330	190	7:00
New America School	-	1,185	150	7:30
New America School - Las Cruces	-	1,185	150	7:30
New Mexico Academy for the Media Arts	1,093	1,093	173	6:15
New Mexico Connections Academy	1,080	1,080	180	6:00
New Mexico International School	1,044	1,084	167	6:19
Nm School For The Arts	-	1,238	183	6:46
North Valley Academy	1,132	1,179	186	6:35
Pecos Cyber Academy	1,260	1,260	180	7:00
Public Academy for Performing Arts	1,232	1,232	168	7:19
Raices Del Saber Xinachtli Community	1,110	-	185	6:30
Red River Valley Charter School	1,088	1,162	158	6:59
Rio Gallinas School	1,173	1,173	175	6:42
Rio Grande Academy of Fine Arts	1,196	-	180	5:49
Robert F. Kennedy Charter	1,235	1,235	190	6:30
Roots & Wings Community	1,191	1,241	167	6:49
San Diego Riverside Charter	1,221	1,089	174	7:00
Sandoval Academy Of Bilingual Education	1,217	1,217	180	6:45
School Of Dreams Academy	1,222	1,302	186	6:46
Sidney Gutierrez Middle	1,213	1,213	188	6:34
Siembra Leadership High School	-	1,164	169	6:30
Six Directions Indigenous School	1,085	1,085	155	7:00
Solare Collegiate Charter School	1,426	1,426	188	7:34
South Valley Academy	1,102	1,102	174	6:19
South Valley Prep	1,237	1,237	185	6:40
Southwest Preparatory Learning Center	1,020	1,105	170	6:12
Southwest Secondary Learning Center	-	1,218	164	7:00
Sw Aeronautics Mathematics And Science	1,107	1,104	156	7:00
Taos Academy	1,180	1,180	161	7:19
Taos Integrated School Of Arts	1,174	1,095	166	7:10
Taos International School	1,306	1,118	181	7:30
Taos Municipal Charter	1,116	1,183	182	6:12
Technology Leadership High School	-	1,151	167	6:30
The Albuquerque Talent Development Charter	-	1,091	154	7:04
The Ask Academy	1,122	1,122	153	7:19
The Great Academy	1,080	1,080	180	6:00
The Masters Program	-	1,197	171	7:00
Thrive Community School	1,138	-	175	6:30
Tierra Adentro	1,330	1,330	190	7:00
Tierra Encantada Charter School	-	1,267	150	7:55
Turquoise Trail Charter School	1,109	1,169	189	6:18
Vista Grande High School	-	1,181	175	6:22
Voz Collegiate Preparatory Charter School	1,420	1,420	189	7:31
Walatowa Charter High	-	1,489	182	7:45
William W & Josephine Dorn Charter	1,099	-	169	6:30

Days and hours include time added from K-5 Plus and Extended Learning Time (ELT) programs.

Source: PED FY23 School Calendars

K-5 Plus and Extended Learning Student Participation

District/Charter	K-5 Plus Students Actual (FY20)	K-5 Plus Students Budgeted (FY21)	K-5 Plus Students Budgeted (FY22)	K-5 Plus Student Budgeted (FY23)	Percent of K-5 Total ¹ Students	ELTP Students Actual (FY20)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY21)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY22)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY23)	Percent of K-12 Total ¹ Students
ALAMOGORDO								5,397		
ALBUQUERQUE	1,688	1,026				6,808	3,256	5,747	5,753	8%
ACE LEADERSHIP								186	203	100%
ALBUQUERQUE CHARTER ACADEMY							328	318		
THE ALBUQUERQUE TALENT AND DEVELOPMENT ACAD							130	109	111	100%
ALICE KING COMMUNITY SCHOOL							474	428	427	100%
CHRISTINE DUNCAN COMMUNITY	77	397		369	125%		399	366	369	100%
CIEN AGUAS INTERNATIONAL							425	414		
CORAL COMMUNITY	109	70	195	196	99%	253	213			
CORRALES INTERNATIONAL						244	260	233	230	100%
COTTONWOOD CLASSICAL ST. CHARTER							768	781	761	100%
DIGITAL ARTS & TECH ACADEMY							283	321		
EAST MOUNTAIN								363	364	100%
EL CAMINO REAL	70					315	273	297	308	100%
GILBERT L. SENA CHARTER							178	108	125	100%
GORDON BERNELL							134	164	170	100%
HEALTH LEADERSHIP CHARTER						228	212	232	242	100%
INT'L SCHOOL MESA DEL SOL ST. CHARTER						331	323	301	300	100%
LA ACADEMIA DE ESPERANZA										
LOS PUENTES										
MONTESSORI OF THE RIO GRANDE							216	216	214	100%
MOUNTAIN MAHOGANY	62					134	195	201	199	100%
NATIVE AMERICAN COMM ACAD.	41					455	477	479	477	100%
NEW AMERICA CHARTER SCHOOL							258	210	190	100%
NEW MEXICO INTERNATIONAL							386			
MARK ARMIJO (NUESTROS VALORES)						75		199		
PAPA										
ROBERT F. KENNEDY						342		355	345	100%
SIEMBRA LEADERSHIP HIGH SCHOOL							150	236	233	100%
SOUTH VALLEY						613				
TECHNOLOGY LEADERSHIP							249	302	296	100%
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY							380	364		
WILLIAM W & JOSEPHINE DORN CHARTER	32					32	54	61		
ANIMAS										
ARTESIA	389					1,785	480			
AZTEC	29					381	2,608	2,314		
MOSAIC ACADEMY CHARTER							180			
BELEN	155					510	665	3,519	3,504	99%
BERNALILLO	419					1,290	2,796		2,669	99%
BLOOMFIELD	193	1,378				1,189				
CAPTAN										
CARLSBAD	469									
JEFFERSON MONT. ACAD.							251	234	234	100%
PECOS CONNECTIONS										
CARRIZO	38		62							
CENTRAL CONS.		2,325	2,066	48			5,275	4,804	4,838	100%
DREAM DINE			44	183	100%		26	44	48	100%
CHAMA VALLEY	48		179	183	93%		386	357	364	100%

K-5 Plus and Extended Learning Student Participation

District/Charter	K-5 Plus Students Actual (FY20)	K-5 Plus Students Budgeted (FY21)	K-5 Plus Students Budgeted (FY22)	K-5 Plus Student Budgeted (FY23)	Percent of K-5 Total ¹ Students	ELTP Students Actual (FY20)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY21)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY22)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY23)	Percent of K-12 Total ¹ Students
CIMARRON							341			
MORENO VALLEY HIGH							62			
CLAYTON						415	415	372		
CLOUDCROFT								384		
CLOVIS										
COBRE CONS.	196	554				797	1,106	993	985	99%
CORONA							63			
CUBA	31	211	247	255	87%	255	547	646	647	100%
DEMING	1,742		2,218			3,572	5,046	4,988	4,954	99%
DEMING CESAR CHAVEZ							158	141	151	100%
DES MOINES										
DEXTER	96	150								
DORA										
DULCE	91							535	544	100%
ELIDA										
ESPAÑOLA								2,916		
ESTANCIA										
EUNICE	85									
FARMINGTON	169									
FLOYD										
FT. SUMNER	65	127				129	127	245		
GADSDEN	974	1,250				12,684	12,036	12,129	12,092	99%
GALLUP	1,112					10,665	11,197			
GRADY										
GRANTS	314		1,417	1,412	89%		3,250	3,100	3,063	99%
HAGERMAN	91		143					203		
HATCH	301					188	400	1,171	1,155	100%
HOBBS	238						10,300	9,527		
HONDO								135		
HOUSE										
JAL							509	484		
JEMEZ MOUNTAIN	43	145	109	110	104%			72	68	38%
JEMEZ VALLEY	30						258	297	291	99%
SAN DIEGO RIVERSIDE CHARTER	25		53	55	145%			53	55	100%
LAKE ARTHUR							106	114	117	98%
LAS CRUCES	2,377					10,080	8,035		23,111	100%
LAS VEGAS CITY	114	664						1,208		
LOGAN										
LORDSBURG	62	80								
LOS ALAMOS		1,875				307	695			
LOS LUNAS	292					8,540	8,208	7,970	7,922	100%
LOVING	28						619			
LOVINGTON	120					1,596	3,709	3,354	3,330	98%
MAGDALENA										
MAXWELL										
MELROSE										
MESA VISTA										
MORA			187	184	87%			397	400	99%

K-5 Plus and Extended Learning Student Participation

District/Charter	K-5 Plus Students Actual (FY20)	K-5 Plus Students Budgeted (FY21)	K-5 Plus Students Budgeted (FY22)	K-5 Plus Student Budgeted (FY23)	Percent of K-5 Total ¹ Students	ELTP Students Actual (FY20)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY21)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY22)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY23)	Percent of K-12 Total ¹ Students
MORIARTY							2,334	2,216	2,199	99%
MOSQUERO										
MOUNTAINAIR						224		484	476	99%
PECOS	91							317	312	100%
PEÑASCO							345	1,690		
POJOAQUE	76					777	1,817			
PORTALES										
QUEMADO										
QUESTA	27					219		791		
RATON							870			
RESERVE										
RIO RANCHO						2,900	16,866	16,717	16,639	99%
ROSWELL	1,375	4,288				6,447	9,962	9,234	9,136	99%
SIDNEY GUTIERREZ								196	196	100%
ROY										
RUIDOSO							260	1,755	1,744	99%
SAN JON										
SANTA FE	513					4,626	1,426	11,121		
ACADEMY FOR TECH & CLASSICS							397	397	393	100%
SANTA ROSA							608	587	583	99%
SILVER CITY CONS.										
SOCORRO	110		500	496	84%		1,396	999	763	60%
COTTONWOOD VALLEY CHARTER						170	170	170	170	100%
SPRINGER							132	117		
TAOS	43					378	2,056			
ANANSI CHARTER						30	195	195	195	100%
TAOS MUNICIPAL CHARTER							213	218	212	100%
VISTA GRANDE						24	24	82	84	100%
TATUM							337	295	298	99%
TEXICO										
TRUTH OR CONSEQ.							1,180			
TUCUMCARI							833			
TULAROSA										
VAUGHN							52	54	53	98%
WAGON MOUND	27						75			
WEST LAS VEGAS	62									
RIO GALLINAS CHARTER SCHOOL							72	81		
ZUNI							1,225	1,142	1,118	100%
ACES TECHNICAL CHARTER SCHOOL								66	228	356%
ALBUQUERQUE BILINGUAL ACADEMY		412					412	349	354	100%
ALBUQUERQUE COLLEGIATE						80	140	153	168	114%
AIMS @ UNM										
ALBUQUERQUE SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE							926	855	840	100%
ALBUQUERQUE SIGN LANGUAGE						40	103	113	118	100%
ALDO LEOPOLD ST. CHARTER						130	173	169	163	100%
ALMA D' ARTE STATE CHARTER							135	118	118	100%
ALTURA PREPARATORY SCHOOL										
AMY BIEHL ST. CHARTER						298	297	236	232	100%

K-5 Plus and Extended Learning Student Participation

District/Charter	K-5 Plus Students Actual (FY20)	K-5 Plus Students Budgeted (FY21)	K-5 Plus Students Budgeted (FY22)	K-5 Plus Student Budgeted (FY23)	Percent of K-5 Total ¹ Students	ELTP Students Actual (FY20)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY21)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY22)	ELTP Students Budgeted (FY23)	Percent of K-12 Total ¹ Students
ASK ACADEMY ST. CHARTER							141	187	193	100%
CESAR CHAVEZ COMM. ST. CHARTER								47	49	100%
DEAP										
ESTANCIA VALLEY										
EXPLORE ACADEMY							600	1,026	998	100%
EXPLORE ACADEMY - LAS CRUCES								94	148	169%
HORIZON ACADEMY WEST ST. CHARTER										
HOZHO ACADEMY			497	538	136%	233	418	497	538	109%
J. PAUL TAYLOR ACADEMY							200	200	200	100%
LA ACADEMIA DOLORES HUERTA							120	66	68	100%
LA TIERRA MONTESSORI							59	83	82	100%
LAS MONTANAS						120	120	167	173	100%
MASTERS PROGRAM ST. CHARTER										
MCCURDY CHARTER SCHOOL							548			
MEDIA ARTS COLLAB. ST. CHARTER										
MIDDLE COLLEGE HIGH						70	140	140	137	100%
MISSION ACHIEVEMENT & SUCCESS-MAS										
MONTE DEL SOL		1,117								
MONTESSORI ELEMINTARY ST. CHARTER							434	441	440	100%
NEW AMERICA SCHOOL - LAS CRUCES							175		159	100%
NEW MEXICO CONNECTIONS ACADEMY										
NEW MEXICO SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS ST. CH										
NORTH VALLEY ACADEMY ST. CHARTER	88					475	458	400	393	99%
RAICES DEL SABER XINACHTLI							60	93	87	100%
RED RIVER VALLEY				176	100%		76	59	63	98%
RIO GRANDE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS									176	100%
ROOTS & WINGS						50	50	51	51	100%
SANDOVAL ACADEMY OF BIL ED SABA								221	216	100%
SCHOOL OF DREAMS ST. CHARTER						443	437	496	482	96%
SIX DIRECTIONS							73			
SOLARE COLLEGIATE						131	195	297	294	100%
SOUTH VALLEY PREP ST. CHARTER								174	177	100%
SW AERONAUTICS, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE ACADEMY										
SOUTHWEST PREPATORY LEARNING CENTER								160		
SOUTHWEST SECONDARY LEARNING CENTER							186	145	147	100%
TAOS ACADEMY						55	235	267	262	100%
TAOS INTEGRATED SCHOOL OF ARTS ST.			193	199	128%		184	193	199	100%
TAOS INTERNATIONAL	61		186	177	126%		188	186	177	100%
THE GREAT ACADEMY								86		
THRIVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL										
TIERRA ADENTRO ST. CHARTER							278	221	232	100%
TIERRA ENCANTADA CHARTER							321	294	283	100%
TURQUOISE TRAIL ELEMENTARY						450	662	686	678	100%
VOZ COLLEGIATE								40	100	250%
WALATOWA CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL								39	40	100%
STATEWIDE	14,887	16,067	8,334	4,394	3%	82,581	141,622	139,067	125,870	41%
Participating Districts	40	13	11	6		25	45	43	43	1. FY23 preliminary data.
Participating Charters	9	4	6	8		27	67	74	74	Source: PED



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Nationwide, the pool of teacher candidates has been shrinking over the last decade, and states have responded by increasing teacher salaries and establishing pipeline programs to sustain the education workforce. New Mexico is no different. Since FY19, New Mexico has made investments aimed at increased recruitment and retention in the teaching profession, including changes to licensure and evaluation requirements, increased salaries for teachers, and investments in residency and financial aid programs.

However, declining student enrollments will require schools to be strategic about staffing levels, and recent growth in teacher licensure in shortage areas, like special education, may be alleviating chronic areas of need. Since FY11, enrollment in educator prep programs has declined by nearly 75 percent from nearly 6,000 students enrolled to 1,596 students in FY21, and findings in the *Martinez-Yazzie* lawsuit pointed to the lack of adequately-trained educators or school leaders teaching the most at-risk students. Given these complexities, without strategic support systems for both educators and school leaders, and a targeted approach to recruiting hard-to-staff positions, New Mexico will continue to experience inefficiencies and high costs, such as high teacher turnover, in providing students appropriate instruction and support services.

Teacher Workforce

While enrollments have decreased over the past 5 years, the total number of public school teachers in New Mexico grew by 996 from 23,314 teachers in FY17 to 24,310 teachers in FY21, including 470 teachers in charter schools. Teachers licensed in high-priority areas have risen, including an increase of more than 1,300 teachers with special education licenses.

However, the Southwest Outreach Academic Research (SOAR) center at New Mexico State University reported 1,078 teacher vacancies across New Mexico in 2021, an increase of more than 500 teacher vacancies from FY19. While the report implies the state had a teacher shortage, it does not show how long vacancies went unfilled, or average vacancies over months. Given a statewide student-to-teacher ratio (STR) well below statute, the exponential increase in vacancies reported by SOAR might not clearly reflect each district's unique needs for teachers in the short-term or long-term. Importantly, the report does not show which districts had the greatest staffing needs. Albuquerque Public Schools, for example, has begun to cut hundreds of funded but vacant positions.

Currently, the Public Education Department (PED) does not track teacher turnover, or principal turnover. Data from the Learning Policy Institute in FY12 and FY13 showed a 24 percent teacher turnover rate, the second-highest rate in the country and nine points above the national average.

AGENCY: Public Education Department (PED)

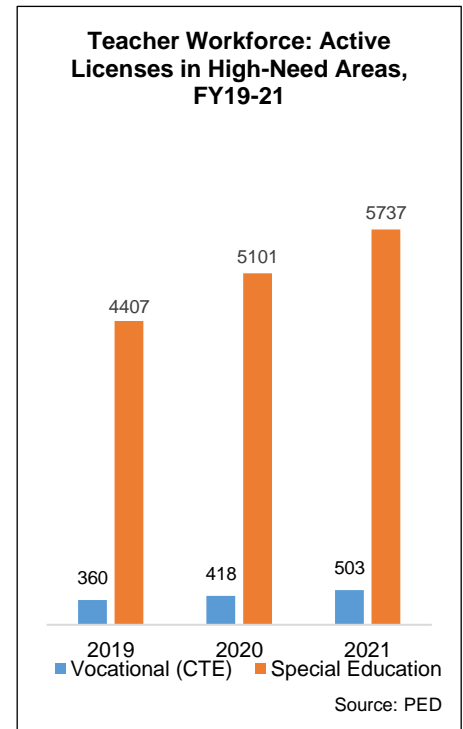
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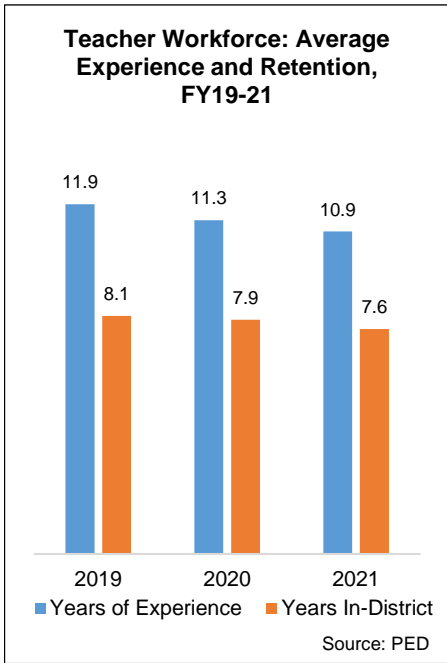
PURPOSE OF HEARING: State of the Education Workforce and Pipeline

WITNESS: Dr. Gwen Perea Warniment, Director, LESC; Charles Sallee, Deputy Director, LFC

PREPARED BY: Sarah Helms, Fiscal Analyst, LFC; Emily Hoxie, Senior Policy Analyst, LESC; Sunny Liu, Senior Fiscal Analyst, LFC; Arlo Menchaca, Intern, LFC; Cherrita Guy, Intern, LFC

EXPECTED OUTCOME: Informational



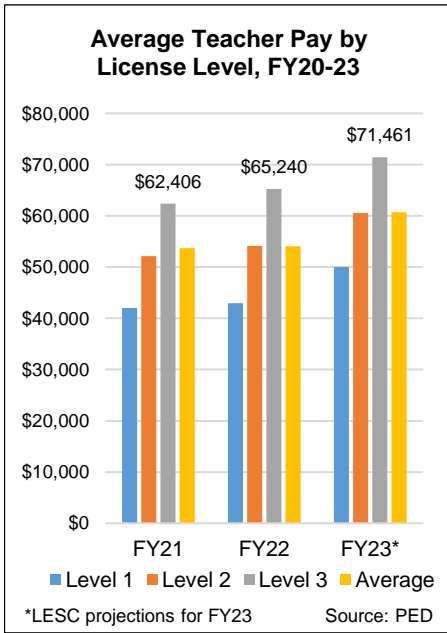


Preliminary data shows a slight decrease from FY19 to FY21 in working teacher experience and in years retained in-district, suggesting the overall pool of educators is becoming less experienced and leaving earlier in their careers.

Previous LFC reports indicate data from a state-wide exit survey could help address why teachers in unique districts leave the profession, as current reasons cited range from leadership to housing or financial reasons. New Mexico would benefit from linking data on teacher demand needs to EPP candidate supply in order to address vacancies in high-need areas and hard-to-staff schools.

Investments In and Limits of Wage Competitiveness

During the 2022 legislative session, the Legislature increased minimum teacher salaries to \$50 thousand for level 1 teachers, \$60 thousand for level 2 teachers, and \$70 thousand for level 3 teachers. The Legislature also appropriated \$196 million for a 7 percent average salary increase for all public school employees, providing a 3 percent salary bump in the fourth quarter of FY22 and an additional 4 percent in FY22.



Additionally, national research notes while teacher compensation is important for teacher recruitment, other factors beyond pay are important to consider, including investing in school leadership, investing in programs providing high-quality preparation, and investing in more intensive mentoring for new teachers.

Trends in Student-Teacher Ratios

From FY12 to FY23, student enrollments decreased by 8 percent, with sharper declines in the last 5 years. With declining enrollments, statewide student-to-teacher (STR) ratios decreased slightly from 15.2 in FY17 to 14.9 in FY21. However, seven districts saw significant increases in student-to-teacher ratios over the same period.

District	FY17	FY21	Change
Jemez Mountain	12.3	19.4	7.0
Dexter	14.5	19.0	4.5
Questa	11.5	15.6	4.1
Mesa	15.8	19.3	3.5
Jemez Valley	10.9	14.0	3.0
Dulce	11.9	14.8	2.8
Aztec	15.8	18.4	2.6

Source: PED

Microdistricts often maintain one teacher per subject or grade level across elementary, middle, and high schools. From FY17 to FY21, microdistrict student-teacher ratios were roughly constant at 8-to-1. Microdistricts do not considerably lower statewide STR values, as they constitute only less than 1 percent of the student population.

Investments and Needs in Teacher Preparation

Trends Across Educator Preparation Programs and the Teacher Workforce. Educator preparation program (EPP) enrollments have decreased 75 percent over the past 10 years, and educators are increasingly getting their highest degree from outside states.

PED data shows a 24 percent decrease in initial teacher license applications, from 3,471 total in July 2021 to 2,643 in July 2022.

In recent years, the Legislature has implemented multiple strategies to improve recruitment of high-quality teachers, including “grow-your-own” programs designed to recruit teachers from the community, financial assistance to college students pursuing education degrees, and teacher residencies. As the state continues to fund these initiatives, PED should monitor for impact.

Recent data from the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) shows program diversity in New Mexico EPPs is either within 5 percent, or broadly surpassing, diversity in New Mexico’s teacher workforce, it is often less diverse than the local population where programs are located. New Mexico’s EPPs fall behind national averages in elementary reading and math, which can help programs evaluate their levels of teacher preparation.

In FY22, the Legislature appropriated \$250 thousand for a teaching college consortium focused on course alignment across their programs. The Higher Education Department (HED) is currently requesting applications for the funds.

Investments in Residencies and Scholarships. National research indicates 80 percent of teacher residency program graduates remain in the teaching profession after 5 years, compared to 50 percent of non-residency program graduates. Additionally, researchers found statistically significant increases in teacher retention and student performance for residency graduates. National research further indicates the importance of underwriting the cost of teacher preparation as a key strategy to diversify the teaching workforce.

The Legislature significantly increased support for educator preparation programs in FY22. Programs now include:

\$15.5 million for teacher residency programs; PED has awarded grants to eight higher education institutions to fund 374 teacher residents, increasing teacher resident stipends from \$15 thousand to \$35 thousand;

1,880 need-based scholarships awarded by HED under the Teacher Preparation Affordability Act, which provides need-based scholarships up to \$6,000 per year for up to 5 years to pay for educational expenses in pursuit of a teaching license; and

35 scholarships via HED’s Grow Your Own scholarship; this program began in FY21 with preliminary costs for FY22 at \$73 thousand.

Currently, demographic data on teacher residency program participants is unavailable. Reporting on demographics, student outcomes, and teacher retention would inform knowledge of program efficacy and future funding decisions.

	FY19	FY21	% Change
New Mexico	69%	62%	-7%
Border States	14%	17%	3%
Other States	13%	16%	3%
Outside USA	4%	5%	1%

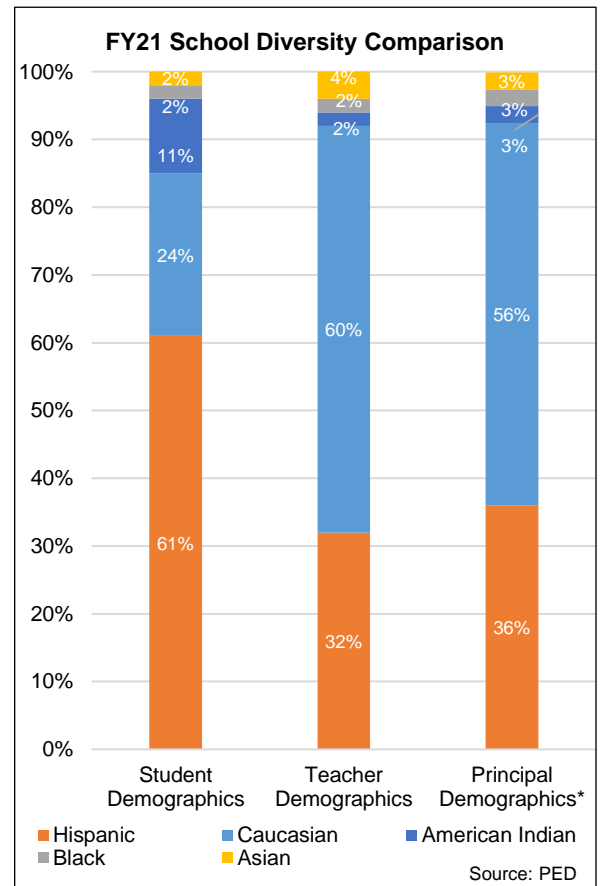
Source: PED

Grade	NM	OK	AZ	US
A	0%	29%	17%	15%
B	60%	29%	67%	38%
C	20%	29%	0%	13%
D	20%	0%	0%	13%
F	0%	14%	17%	21%

Source: NCTQ

Grade	NM	OK	AZ	US
A	0%	0%	0%	2%
B	0%	0%	0%	7%
C	0%	0%	0%	2%
D	33%	0%	0%	4%
F	67%	100%	100%	85%

Source: NCTQ



Source: PED

Recruitment at the High School Level. Building a sustainable pipeline includes recruiting students early. Educators Rising, an organization at NMSU supporting students interested in education careers, offers a “grow-your-own” strategy for high schools. In FY22, 554 students enrolled in an Educators Rising chapter in 35 high schools participating in teaching internships. However, the program has been unable to recruit teachers to sponsor new chapters, leading to slowed expansion. Educators Rising should begin to track outcomes to determine how many participants are effectively funneled into teaching programs or other programs contributing to school support. Strategies for expanding access to the Educator’s Rising program could include a guaranteed stipend for teachers sponsoring an Educators Rising chapter, the creation of a new scholarship for college-bound students, and additional staff to support statewide coordination.

Licensure Requirements in New Mexico

The licensure application process in New Mexico and other states is intended to ensure a level of quality but could provide barriers to entry potentially dissuading qualified applicants. Praxis exams, currently required by 48 states to gain licensure, show significant disparities in pass rates across demographic groups. Data from Educational Testing Service (ETS), which creates and administers Praxis exams, showed 92 percent of white test-takers passed the reading test, versus 80 percent of Hispanic test-takers and 68 percent of African American test-takers in 2019. Altogether, exams cost upwards of \$700, which may be a financial barrier for some applicants.

As of Spring 2024, New Mexico will no longer require the Praxis exams, except for elementary reading. PED will shift to a portfolio-based system. Removing testing requirements for licensure will likely increase the number of eligible candidates eligible but eliminate information showing whether candidates are proficient in the content knowledge they will be teaching. According to NCTQ, out of 15 research studies, 11 find a positive correlation between testing rates and student outcomes, with only one study finding a negative correlation. Additionally, creating and staffing a statewide portfolio review system could be more expensive than offering waivers or additional support programs for Praxis exams or other content-based tests. A rigorous portfolio system risks even longer wait times. As most other states still require Praxis exams, changes to teacher licensing in New Mexico may affect reciprocity in other states.

To improve access, the state could cover fees for the Praxis exams, or pay for preparation courses for qualifying applicants. There could also be stipends for hours spent needing to study for the exam, off-setting some of the loss in income that applicants already experience in waiting during the licensure process.

Assessing Teacher Quality

When teachers wish to advance in license level, they submit a dossier which PED approves or denies based on several indicators including performance data and mentorship requirements. However, PED contracts with evaluators to review the dossiers, and evaluators often rely heavily on the quality of writing in the dossier. Out of 2,259 dossiers processed from April 2020 to July 2022, PED rejected 133 dossiers (5.8 percent) in 39 districts. Dossier approvals were not more or less likely in high-performing districts. Because PED does not track teacher retention at the district or school level, it is not possible to link dossier outcomes to retention levels, and the dossier may not reflect teacher quality as intended.

By statute, every teacher in the state is required to participate in mentorship, but the quality of mentorship is not evaluated and can vary widely by school and district.

Supports for Leadership and Educators

Principal turnover can lead to higher teacher turnover, which negatively affects student achievement. Research from the Learning Policy Institute finds the relationship between principal turnover and teacher turnover is stronger in high-poverty schools. Survey data shows New Mexico teachers ranked school leadership as a top reason for leaving the profession. This mirrors a growing body of national research showing principal support is often the top reason teachers choose to leave or stay in the profession.

Investments in Principal Salaries and Professional Development

During the 2022 legislative session, the Legislature raised minimum principal salaries. A high school principal minimum salary is approximately 45 percent higher than a level 3 teacher salary and high school principal contracts are 250 days on average compared to the statewide average teacher contract of 190 days.

For FY23, the Legislature also appropriated \$2.5 million to PED to support principal professional development at different levels of their career. Approximately 270 principals, 20 percent of principals in the state, participated in one of PED's three programs in FY21.

Teacher Burnout and School Social Supports

Enhanced teacher support systems, including support for school leadership and addressing needs in student mental health, can improve teacher retention. Recent Gallup polls show high levels of teacher burnout nationwide, with 36 percent of surveyed teachers reporting burnout in 2020 rising to 44 percent in 2022. Seventy percent of public schools report increased requests for mental health service in schools, and a University of Michigan poll shows 99 percent of teachers surveyed feel they are a first defense for student mental health.

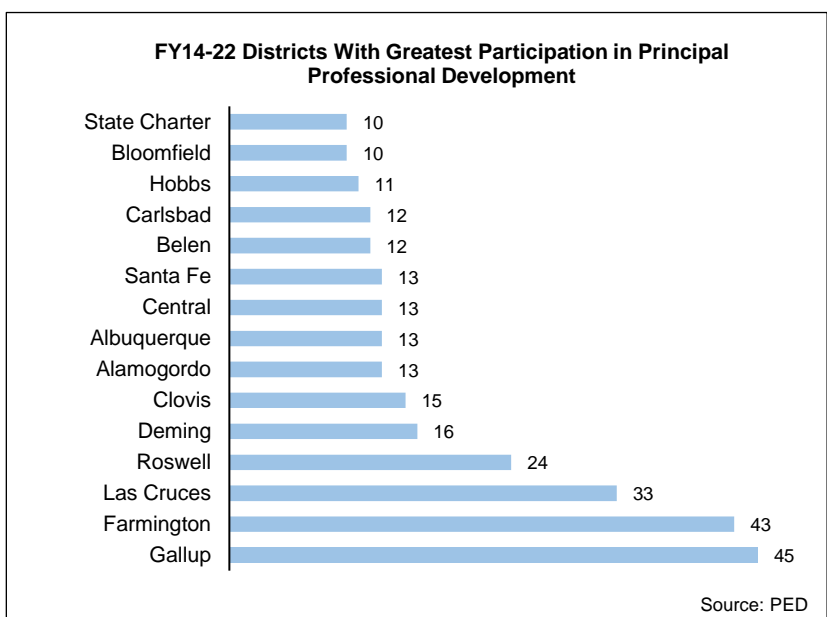
New Mexico's social worker to student ratio is 127-to-1 for school districts, or 2,453 total social workers, and 46-to-1 for state-authorized charter schools. 17

PED Programs for Principals, FY14 to FY22			
Program	Description	Funding	Participants
Lead	1-year program; provides early-career principals with best practices identified by experts' experiences working in New Mexico	\$2.5 million special appropriation to PED	31
Thrive	1-year program focused on developing essential competencies addressing needs in diverse student populations		132
RISE	2-year program; builds competencies of school leaders to assess school needs and establish effective Annual and 90-Day Plans (including data-driven instruction and school culture)		386

Source: PED

Changes in Principal Salaries, FY22 to FY23		
Principal Position	FY22 Minimum	FY23 Minimum
Elementary School	\$72,000	\$84,000
Middle School	\$84,000	\$98,000
High School	\$96,000	\$112,000

Source: PED



Source: PED

districts, representing 1.3 percent of the student population and 15 percent of the state’s geographic area, do not have a social worker at all. Districts that have social workers show a high variance, ranging from 1,544-to-1 in Grants to 26-to-1 in Cobre, and even smaller in some microdistricts.

Research on the 100 largest school districts shows schools with higher levels of social workers have higher graduation rates, which may correlate to stronger support systems in the school. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) cites an ideal ratio of students to social workers as 250-to-1, with that ratio reduced to 50-to-1 for students with intensive needs.

Social Worker Distributions, FY22			
Lowest (Best) Student to Social Worker Ratio		Highest Student to Social Worker Ratio	
Cimarron	14:1	Los Lunas	313:1
Magdalena	22:1	Gallup	357:1
Clayton	25:1	Alamogordo	362:1
Cobre	25:1	Belen	444:1
Espanola	28:1	Grants	1544:1

Source: PED

Social Worker Geographic Distribution, FY22			
Densest Geographic Coverage		Least Dense Geographic Coverage	
Los Alamos	0.4 student-social worker per sq. mile	Clayton	106 student-social worker per sq. mile
Ruidoso	0.6	Cimarron	101
Rio Rancho	1	W. Las Vegas	81
Pojaque	1.4	Socorro	74
Los Lunas	2.1	T or C	74

Source: PED

While NASW does not define “intensive needs” qualifying for their 50-to-1 ratio, student populations in New Mexico have higher-than-national rates of poverty and homelessness. Rates of student mental health disorders, homelessness, and household income insecurity increased after the Covid-19 pandemic. Students in New Mexico are also more likely to have lost a guardian during the pandemic than students nationally; in New Mexico specifically, American Indian children were 10 times more likely to have lost a caregiver from Covid-19 than their white peers.

The NASW-recommended ratio does not define social worker case load. For example, teacher unions in Santa Fe negotiated the maximum *case load* for a social worker would be 40 students, and Santa Fe’s ratio of social workers to total students is 164-to-1.

Given higher rates of at-risk students in New Mexico, more supports for student services are likely needed and could alleviate burden on teachers, in addition to creating programs supporting teacher mental health.

Guidance counselors and social workers are often grouped together, yet they have distinct responsibilities and different advanced degrees. Guidance counselors are likely to handle social-emotional conflict at the school level, whereas social workers have a broader outreach into community and social services, family, and overall student wellbeing. As such, the actual level of social support provided locally may vary, depending on the type of FTE available in certain communities. Despite significant investments in funding for at-risk students, which includes funds for social support services, rural schools and communities continue to struggle to attract and find appropriate providers.