

awarded cannot exceed the amount available. Lifting the limit could reduce the number of schools receiving grants but has no fiscal impact.

PED received 111 applications for community school funds from 38 school district in FY20 – 95 for planning grants and 16 for implementation grants. Altogether, applicants requested a little over \$6 million.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

In its June 2019 report, *The Community School Landscape in New Mexico* (<https://bit.ly/391ckbj>), LESC concludes community schools, which integrate social and health services with high-quality extended learning, could be a tool to better serve New Mexico’s poor students, but most New Mexico community schools appear to fail to adhere to the community school practices known to improve student success.

The report found community schools, whose approaches were promoted in the *Martinez and Yazzie* district court ruling on school sufficiency and which are accepted in federal law as an evidence-based intervention for low-performing schools, help close the opportunity gap for students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, and students with disabilities. However, New Mexico community schools have not seen similar results – the achievement gap between the statewide proficiency rate and students in schools that have operated as community schools for five or more years stayed relatively stagnant between 2015 and 2018, with no change in math proficiency.

The Learning Policy Institute, a nonprofit education policy and research group, found in a review of 143 studies of community schools that the most successful programs integrate student supports, expand learning time and opportunities, engage families and the community, and collaborate on leadership and practices – what community school experts call the “four key pillars.”

According to LESC, three of the state’s five largest school districts – Albuquerque, Las Cruces and Santa Fe – have increased the number of community schools in the state from one in the 2006-2007 school year to 39 in the 2018-2019 school year but do not appear to have implemented all four pillars with fidelity.

Amendments to the 2013 state law authorizing community schools, adopted during the 2019 legislative session, require community schools to align their policies with best practices and require the Public Education Department to appoint a statewide “coalition for community schools” with community school and multicultural education experts.

The 2019 LFC report *Results First: Educational Interventions* (<https://bit.ly/2RVzOHT>) found national research indicates community schools can increase academic achievement and improve student attendance compared with traditional public schools and reduce disparities in achievement. The community school model combines integrated student supports with extended learning time and robust family and community engagement. Local education agencies that want to implement a community school model can leverage funding for extended learning time programs, as well as at-risk funding for integrated student supports.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

HB236 changes the parameters PED administrators must consider in awarding grants but little else and is unlikely to have an impact on the agency.

DUPLICATION, RELATIONSHIP

The LFC recommendation for FY21 includes \$2 million for the community school fund.

House Bill 589 from the 2019 legislative session amended the 2013 Community Schools Act to require community school initiatives to implement a framework aligned with community school best practices and specifically require the framework to include strategies aligned with the “four key community school pillars.”

House Bill 79 from the 2019 legislative session would have appropriated \$400 thousand to PED for community schools but died on adjournment through lack of action.

HG/sb