

**EFFICIENCY EVALUATION:
A REVIEW OF PUBLIC EDUCATION REPORTING**

January 2017

BACKGROUND

- The Thornburg Foundation sponsored research aimed at identifying opportunities to improve the efficiency of public education reporting.
- The research was undertaken in partnership with the Public Education Department and included reviews of state reporting requirements as well as data collection and validation processes administered by PED.
- The evaluation identifies several statutory reporting requirements for review and recommends a series of steps that should be taken by PED as it continues to improve its data system.

HEADLINES

- School systems in New Mexico spend more resources complying with reporting requirements than those in other states studied.
- Other states have been able to reduce the workload associated with reporting by consolidating, automating and better coordinating required collections.

KEY FINDINGS:

LOCAL IMPACT

- * School systems must submit approximately 140 sets of information annually.
- * The research team interviewed administrators from a variety of school systems and found a pattern of redundant requests for information from PED.
- * Interviews also indicate that the local cost of state and federal reporting is 20-65% higher in New Mexico than in other states studied.
- * In the smallest systems, reporting requirements require system leaders to divert time and attention from students to compliance.

KEY FINDINGS:

LOCAL IMPACT

Salary Equivalent Per Student	New Mexico	Texas	Nevada	Delaware
Student Information System	\$ 38.48	\$ 24.85	\$ 5.52	\$ 11.36
Food and Nutrition	\$ 32.07	\$ 12.65	\$ 9.20	\$ 5.79
Budget/Revenue/Expenditures	\$ 53.59	\$ 61.01	\$ 20.53	\$ 51.43
Health Services	\$ 34.20	\$ 12.65	\$ 13.67	\$ 23.31
Academic Performance	\$ 53.59	\$ 57.42	\$ 20.53	\$ 43.71
Total	\$211.93	\$168.58	\$69.45	\$135.60

KEY FINDINGS

INEFFICIENCY

- Local school officials report that the burden associated with state data collection is often disproportionate to its value.
- In addition to the number and complexity of state mandated reports, school officials cite inefficiency in state data collection processes.
- Although PED collects key data via STARS, several program areas require resubmission to meet idiosyncratic reporting requirements.

SOLUTIONS:
SHORT TERM RELIEF

- State policymakers can provide immediate relief by modifying or eliminating a number of state mandated reports.
- The report identifies nine reports that warrant review. Six of these reports are required in statute. The other three reports are under the authority of PED and can be modified without legislative action.
- The appendices at the back of our evaluation offer a variety of options for changes that could provide relief to local school administrators.

SOLUTIONS:

COMPREHENSIVE RELIEF

- Narrowing state reporting requirements can provide immediate relief, but the larger problem relates to the way the state currently collects and validates information.
- STARS was a major step forward but New Mexico's education data system still lags behind other states.
- New Mexico has not kept up with the rest of the country in terms of standardizing, coordinating and continuously improving data collection and management.

SOLUTIONS:

COMPREHENSIVE RELIEF

CONTINUED

Federal Funding Opportunity

- Most states have leveraged federal funds to alleviate reporting burdens and improve utility of data.
- New Mexico is one of three states that has not secured federal data system funding.
- The next round of federal funding under this grant program has not been scheduled yet, but is anticipated in 2018.

SOLUTIONS:
COMPREHENSIVE RELIEF

CONTINUED

New PED INITIATIVE

- PED has made significant progress over the past several months, laying groundwork for potential federal support.
- Program areas are standardizing data requirements so that school officials can submit data *once* rather than resubmitting in various configurations multiple times.
- PED is also partnering with 10 school systems to pilot a user-friendly data submission system for local use.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Review Mandated Reports

State policy makers should review and modify or eliminate the following **statutory** reporting requirements:

Annual Parent Survey

Even Start Family Literacy Report

At-Risk Program Unit Report

Instructional Material Report

Elementary P.E. Report

Violence and Vandalism Report

RECOMMENDATIONS

Review Mandated Reports

State policy makers should review and modify or eliminate the following **administrative** reporting requirements:

Health Services Report

Charter School Annual Performance Report

Federal Title Funds Reporting

RECOMMENDATIONS

Apply Lessons from Other States

- * Ensure that PED leadership continues to make data coordination a priority for all program staff – significant shifts in practice will be required to improve efficiency.
- * Establish a data governance program and data governance board at PED.
- * Engage district and charter representatives regularly via formalized roles in the governance program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Apply Lessons from Other States

- Focus on better communication regarding district and charter data requirements.
- Prepare to seek grant funding to support state level system improvements and provide LEAs with the information they need to plan and seek funding for transition costs.
- Notify the Data System Council of PED plans.

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