

Minutes
Carlsbad, NM
October 13-15, 2023

Wednesday, October 13

The following voting and advisory members were present. Voting: Chair G. Andrés Romero, Vice Chair William P. Soules, Representatives Joy Garratt, Susan K. Herrera, Raymundo Lara, Tanya Mirabal Moya, and Senators Craig W. Brandt and Harold Pope Jr.

Advisory: Representatives John Block, Debra Sariñana, and Senators David M. Gallegos, Shannon Pinto.

Representatives Cathrynn N. Brown, Joanne J. Ferrary, and Senator Crystal Diamond attended as guests.

Call to Order, Introductions, and Approval of October Agenda and September Minutes. Representative G. Andrés Romero, Chair, Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC), called the meeting to order. Chair Romero facilitated introductions of the members of LESC and Gwen Perea Warniment, Ph.D., director of the LESC, provided introductions of LESC staff. In a motion by Senator William Soules, and a second by Representative Joy Garrat, the agenda for the October LESC meeting was approved. The meeting minutes for the September LESC hearing were also approved in a motion by Senator William Soules and a second by Representative Garratt.

Community Welcome. Gerry Washburn, Ed. D., Superintendent, Carlsbad Municipal School District (CMSD), and LaVern Shan, Deputy Superintendent, CMSD, presented to the committee their strategic plan and initiatives. Dr. Washburn gave an overview of the district's student and teacher demographics, including teacher salaries, teacher assistant salaries, and their New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement scores.

CMSD discussed a focus on attendance through academic redesign with the intention to increase student outcomes, including establishing pathways for students in energy and natural resources, culinary arts, and teaching. CMSD is also implementing Opportunity Culture in an effort to support and retain educators and optimize student learning outcomes.

Family Income Index Report. Daniel Estupiñan, Senior Fiscal Analyst II, LESC, Simone Vann, At-Risk Intervention Response Director, Public Education Department (PED), and Greg Frostad, Assistant Secretary of Policy, Research, and Technology, PED, presented policy and fiscal recommendations on the Family Income Index. Members asked whether an analysis had been completed of student outcomes associated with the

program and asked for context on the department's timeline for releasing its annual report on the program.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) - Project Search. Charlene Chavez, Statewide Transition Coordinator, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), and Casey Stone-Romero, Director, DVR, provided an informational presentation on Project Search. Charlene shared that Project Search is a one-year pre-employment transition service for students aged 18 to 22 with disabilities who meet the qualifications for vocational rehabilitation services. Charlene provided background information on the Project Search Model and the goals of the program. Students benefit from the program by gaining job skills, increased independence, and community connections.

Secondary Schools That Work: Redesigning for Student Success. Jessica Hathaway, Senior Policy Analyst II, LESC, introduced the panel and presented a staff brief that included information about the imperative of middle and high schools redesign, an overview of the history of school redesign both nationally and in New Mexico, a summary of legislative investments in New Mexico related to school redesign, and a list of policy and budget considerations that could contribute to a statutory framework that supports school redesign efforts. Ms. Hathaway noted that calls for school redesign are rooted in a lack of both student engagement and a lack of readiness for college, career, and civic life. It was also noted that while the secondary school redesign conversation is not a new one, it is increasingly important to address given current economic, technological, and workforce demands. While New Mexico has made many investments in discrete components of school redesign, such as career and technical education funding, Ms. Hathaway noted what may be missing is a statutory framework that braids together policy efforts and funding needs. This framework could include components such as modernized high school graduation requirements, quality plans for students' goals, a comprehensive approach to school counseling, sustained and multi-year funding, statewide measures of student success, additional flexibility with what counts as learning time, and investments in infrastructure, capacity building and access.

The LESC then heard from Eric Spencer, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Carlsbad Municipal School District (CMSD) and Roy de la Garza, Principal, Carlsbad High School, CMSD, about CMSD's efforts to redesign its high school system. Mr. Spencer and Mr. de la Garza shared information about a study CMSD completed with the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) to identify what could change in the CMSD school system and the district's efforts to orient its high school around "academies," which all students participate in during high school years. The district noted the major strategic lift this initiative required and made recommendations about policy changes that could support such efforts both in CMSD, but for school districts more broadly.

Tour: Carlsbad High School Career Academies. LESC members and staff took a tour of Carlsbad High School to observe current career academies in operation and to hear directly from CMSD staff and students about their experiences. The tour included an opening presentation from school principals of each of the four academies: its Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics academy, its Business, Information, and Technology academy, its Health and Human Services Academy, and its Arts, Audiovisual Technology, and Communications academy. Members and staff then took tours of various classes including content focused on energy, auto mechanics, and construction that were led by current high school students. Members and staff heard student presentations, observed current student projects, and dialogued with students and staff about their experiences and considerations lawmakers could consider as part of their study of secondary school redesign.

Thursday, October 16

The following voting and advisory members were present. Voting: Chair G. Andrés Romero, Vice Chair William P. Soules, Representatives Joy Garratt, Susan K. Herrera, Raymundo Lara, Tanya Mirabal Moya, and Senator Craig W. Brandt.

Advisory: Representatives John Block, Debra Sariñana, and Senators David M. Gallegos, Shannon Pinto.

Representatives Cathrynn N. Brown, Joanne J. Ferrary, and Senator Crystal Diamond attended as guests.

Special Education: Synthesis of Listening Sessions. Marit Andrews, Senior Policy Analyst II, LESC, began by explaining the presentation served as an update on the continuation of a study on special education in New Mexico as outlined in LESC's research agenda. Ms. Andrews said from June through August, LESC facilitated nine stakeholder listening sessions statewide to provide special education stakeholders with an opportunity to share feedback and suggestions about special education services in New Mexico. The purpose of the listening sessions was to provide the opportunity for stakeholders to express opinions, share ideas, and tell their stories, and then use that context as a starting place for a special education stakeholder working group. The special education stakeholder working group is currently meeting, and will provide feedback on policy proposals that emerged from the listening sessions, to ensure these proposals can reflect both research and community voice. Ms. Andrews concluded by explaining the culmination of this work will be presented to LESC at a later meeting.

LESC Study of the Transportation Distribution. Tim Bedeaux, Senior Policy Analyst II, LESC, presented findings from a year-long study of the public school transportation distribution. Mr. Bedeaux noted that the

transportation distribution is more complicated than the transportation formulas in other states. There is evidence that the amount appropriated to the transportation distribution has not been sufficient to fund schools' transportation expenditures. However, while some school districts receive sufficient funding from the transportation distribution, others receive insufficient funding. The report concludes with recommendations that the Legislature should increase the appropriation to the transportation distribution to approximately \$136 million and establish a statutory transportation distribution that equitably funds all school district and charter school transportation expenditures. Amanda Lupardus, Transportation Director, Public Education Department (PED), and Gregory Frostad, Assistant Secretary for Policy, Research, and Technology, presented on the department's role in overseeing school transportation programs. Members of LESC supported many of the findings of the LESC report, and also expressed interest in funding electric school bus infrastructure and ensuring school buses have air conditioning.

The New Mexico Canvas Learning Management System. Arsenio Romero, Ph.D., Secretary, PED, and Kim King, Learning Management System Director, PED presented on the state's use of Canvas. Eric Spencer, Regional Director K12, Instructure; Matt Carlson, Regional Vice President, Instructure, and Christopher Downs, Executive Director of Government Affairs, Instructure presented on the functionality of Instructure's Canvas Learning Management System and how other states have levered its tools. PED funded use of the online learning management system with federal pandemic relief funds. The online platform hosts courses and tools for teachers, students, and administrators. NMPED requested state funding to support continued use of the learning management system as federal pandemic relief funds are set to expire.

Preliminary FY25 Budget Considerations. Daniel Estupiñan, Senior Fiscal Analyst II, LESC presented an overview of LESC staff's preliminary considerations for inclusion in the committee's FY25 public school support scenario. Members spoke of the need for recurring funding for career technical education programs, asked for additional context on staff's consideration around Mathematics, and referenced a need to strengthen the community schools model.

Education Leaders Panel. Gerry Washburn, Ed.D., Superintendent, CMSD; Lee White, Superintendent, Loving Municipal Schools; Elisa Begueria, Superintendent, Lake Arthur Municipal Schools; and Darian Jaramillo, Superintendent, Artesia Public Schools answered panel questions regarding special education, transportation, school board member training, and funding priorities. Superintendents advocated for capital outlay funds for special education facility needs and increased pay for staff in behavior classrooms. Panelists emphasized large cash balances are due to lengthy reimbursement timelines and advocated for moving

below-the-line funding to above-the-line. The superintendents would spend additional funding on CTE facilities, expert teachers, and infrastructure. Representative G. Andrés Romero, Chair, Legislative Education Study Committee, asked panelists what programs they funded with federal funds that will soon expire. Districts invested in additional student support personnel, teacher recruitment and retention levers, social-emotional learning curricula, and Educator Fellows.

Director's Report. Gwen Perea Warniment, Ph.D., Director, LESC, provided an update to LESC members about three items: the LESC newsletter, the LESC budget, and personnel. Dr. Perea Warniment noted the newsletter contains articles about middle school redesign and the 2023 New Mexico Educator Vacancy Report published by the Southwest Outreach Academic Research Evaluation and Policy Center at New Mexico State University. Dr. Perea Warniment also noted a previous workplan item on supply and demand in the educator workforce and that LESC staff would be looking into this topic. On the LESC budget, Dr. Perea Warniment noted the LESC continues to be underbudget, has delivered its budget request to the Legislative Finance Committee, and anticipates audit findings to be available at the next hearing. On personnel, Dr. Perea Warniment also noted staff will be undergoing performance evaluations beginning in November.

Friday, November 17

The following voting and advisory members were present. Voting: Chair G. Andrés Romero, Vice Chair William P. Soules, Representatives Joy Garratt, Susan K. Herrera, Tanya Mirabal Moya, and Senator Craig W. Brandt.

Advisory: Representatives John Block, Debra Sariñana, and Senator Shannon Pinto.

Representatives Cathrynn N. Brown, Joanne J. Ferrary, and Senator Crystal Diamond attended as guests.

Cottonwood Elementary - Tour. Carlsbad Municipal Schools (CMS) staff, along with the Cal Ripken STEM Labs, led LESC on a tour of Cottonwood Elementary school. The tour began with a brief presentation by the principal of Cottonwood Elementary, along with other CMS staff, followed by a question and answer session. The focus of the tour was the STEM lab, but also included elementary classrooms at various grade levels and a music classroom.

STEM + Education Research Institute - New Mexico State University (NMSU). Luis Cifuentes, Ph.D., Vice President for Research, Creativity, and Economic Development, NMSU; Michele Shuster, Ph.D., Associate Dean, College of Arts & Sciences, NMSU; Patricia Sullivan, Ph.D., Associate

Dean, College of Engineering, NMSU; Wanda Bulger-Tamez, Ph.D., NMSU-STEM Director, NMSU; Mariana Alvidrez, Assistant Professor, NMSU STEM+ Research Education Institute began their presentation by explaining the history and mission of the STEM+ Education Research Institute (SERI). The team explained that SERI serves as a locus for STEM+ educational research excellence and they work to enhance STEM+ success at all levels, for all students. Then the team traded off explaining how SERI transforms research into sustained practice to have long term impacts. The team concluded the presentation by proposing a funding model for translational education research by SERI.

Processes Related to Below the Line Funding. John Sena, Deputy Director, LESC presented an overview of the competitive grant process that is typically associated with below-the-line funding.