

PRIMARY CONCERNS

Section A. Below the Line Funding

Since my return to New Mexico in July 2013, Below the Line Funding seems to be distributed to school districts on an inconsistent and at times arbitrary basis. A specific example of this would be the request for proposals to hire college counselors. The concept was a great idea and I applied on behalf of our district. When we didn't receive the funding, I inquired as to why and as to the rubric used and I was stymied for months by the PED. There was never any rationale given as to why our application was rejected and this particular program lasted only one year.

In my almost 20 years of public education experience in New Mexico, I have not seen the amount of funding allocated to Below the Line like I have seen in the past four years.

Section B. Unfunded Mandates

It is evident that with the implementation of online assessments, no consideration was given to school districts regarding their ability to accommodate the required technology. Our district had to impose a \$1.1 million Tech Levy on its local taxpayers to meet this mandate. The state contributed \$38,000. Contrary to popular belief, the majority of states in this country have not converted to online assessments.

Another unfunded mandate is the teacher mentor program. Research has shown that teacher mentor programs are invaluable for teacher retention and up until about 14 years ago, the state funded this mandate. While we are still required to have a teacher mentor program, the funding is entirely our responsibility.

Principal Observation Training has now been mandated to be completed and certified by District officials instead of the PED without any communication or explanation as to why.

WHERE DO WE NEED ASSISTANCE?

1. Help going from WebEPSS to DASH. We have heard a little about it, but haven't been given a good direction, and WebEPSS seems to not have the force that it used to have.
2. Help in understanding why the literacy and retention/promotion practice data collection form is using only one point of data to make promotion decisions.
3. We need help redesigning our bilingual program for the district. We have taken a year off because our program was not effective.
4. We need help understanding why it was necessary for the ACCESS to have revised cut scores so that very few students can pass now.
5. We need to understand why PED practices such as switching from DIBELS to I Station without notification or input from school districts occurred. This is just one example of PED being arbitrary and capricious.
6. Systems change without any understanding of why – example: from Teachscape to My Learning Platform.

PROGRAMS UNIQUE TO OUR DISTRICT

- 1.) Last year we created the Team Indian Policies and Procedures (TIPP) committee. This is a committee that consists of tribal representatives and district officials to review on a monthly basis, the implementation of Indian Education policies and procedures.

This program has been recognized by the National Indian Education Association and our District will present a workshop on the TIPP at their annual conference in October.

- 2.) See the Change Physics Program

In order to meet the needs of a more rigorous STEM education, our district has partnered with a national program to implement physics in our middle schools. This program provides professional development in building skillsets and coaching. It is a curriculum proven to provide critical thinking, problem solving, and research skills in STEM education. This program provides a focus on content knowledge and engineering practices for a diverse range of students. Our district currently offers the 8th grade level for this program and intends to expand it into our 7th grade in the upcoming year.

- 3.) We are partnering with ICLE (International Center for Leadership in Education) to work on rigor, relevance, relationships and learner engagement in our schools. Each school completed a needs assessment and based on this they tailored their professional development to fit their staff and students. We are in our second year of implementation.

- 4.) Academic Return on Investment

Our Board of Education has developed a strategic plan that provided a direction of the educational, fiscal, and leadership goals for our district. In order to maintain effective outcomes from our budget and financial structure, our district developed an academic return on investment (A-ROI) framework. This framework focused on economic principles relating to resource allocation, cost benefit analysis, and benchmark performance goals; it is formulated to foster academic achievement under fiscal accountability. The main principles of the A-ROI framework are:

1. Build an analytical infrastructure; reading scores, EOCs, screening tools etc.
2. Design an accounting structure to facilitate analysis; identifying fixed costs, variable costs and opportunity costs.
3. Embed observational guidelines to eliminate anecdotal data and unproductive efforts.
4. Providing inclusive opportunities for staff members that provide direct instruction.
5. Provide sufficient clout to results; utilizing critical thinking analysis of the data.

Classification	Description	Examples	Layout
Fixed Costs	Constant expenditures that are required for operations of the school function independent of the educational services provided. These costs essentially don't change with minor changes to the student enrollment. This entails Facility Issues, Equipment Issues, School Schedules, etc. Administrative function provides direction on the culture and policy for behavior, school safety and staff engagement.	Facility costs, maintenance salaries, and administrative costs; open door costs;	Open the Door Costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance & Operation of Plant Cost • Utilities Increase • Administrative Cost • Licensure level changes cost
Variable Cost	This can provide the greatest ROI based on the skills, tools, talent. It is a relative concept that varies based on the level of activity or programs that are being produced. It is eminently tied to the direct instruction. This will entail program issues, staffing issues, Special Ed Issues, Cafeteria Issues, technology Issues, etc. identify teacher demographics on level of experience and training.?	Pupil to teacher ratios, supplies and materials for lesson plans, etc.	Pupil to Teacher Ratios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify enrollment trends and forecasts • Evaluate class sizes according to state measures • Identify the core classes, are, special ed, vocational ed, physical ed, and other programs teachers • Identify on the matrix the staff members involves in Tier I (core curriculum), Tier II (Intervention), and Tier III (Special Ed) Technology Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify current student to computer ratio • Discuss WAP, bandwidth, and other access platforms Support Services Special Ed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the student service levels • Staffing caseloads Athletics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify membership for sports • Correlation to student performance
Opportunity Cost	Value place on an alternative choice that is of equal or better opportunity. This will allow for building instructional capacity. Are strategies aligned to providing content and context for student learning?	Change in curriculum, PD for change in pedagogy,	Curriculum & Methodology Embed observational guidelines to eliminate anecdotal data and unproductive efforts