

Re-Opening New Mexico's Schools

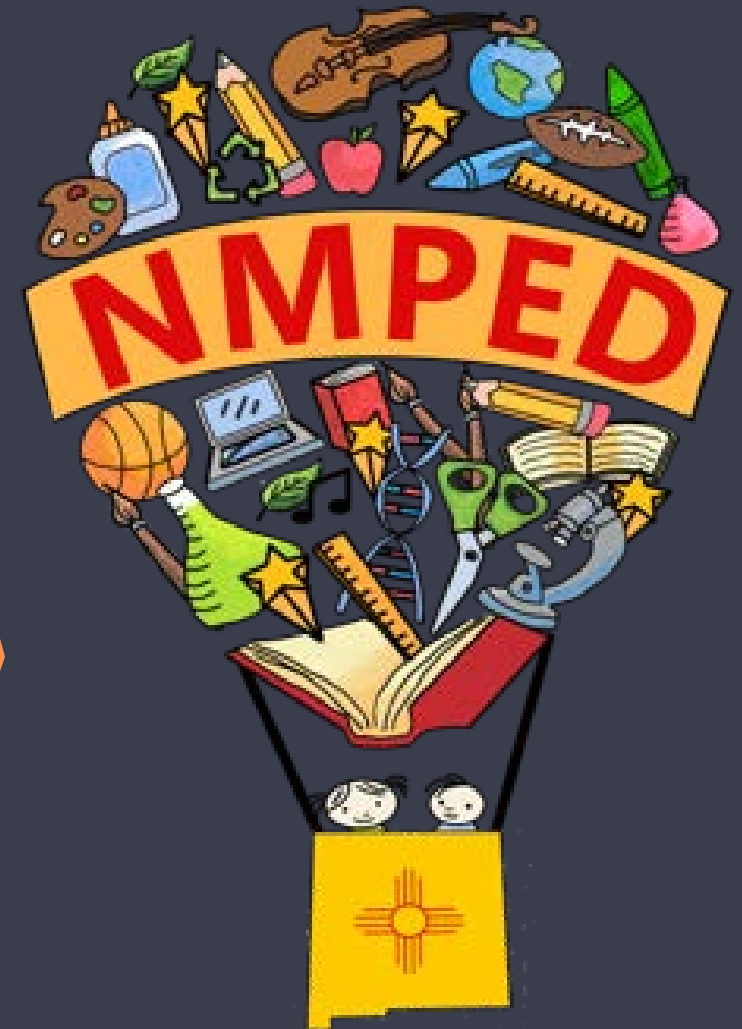
Legislative Finance Committee

Secretary of Education Ryan Stewart

Deputy Secretary Gwen Perea Warniment

October 28, 2020

Investing for tomorrow, delivering today.



Re-Opening Planning and Support

School District and Charter School Assurances

School districts and charter schools were asked to provide plans outlining services during remote learning. The NMPED evaluated and approved plans according to a rubric with the following categories:

- Instruction
- Social and Emotional
- Family and Community

Guidance Documents

Additionally, NMPED provided more than 40 guidance documents as resources for administrators, teachers, and families.

- Academic
- Family and Community Support
- Labor

Professional Development

NMPED has provided multiple professional development opportunities to strengthen remote instruction.

- More than 1,500 teachers completed training provided by Central New Mexico Community College.

Re-Opening Planning and Support

Operational Supports

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

NMPED, in collaboration with New Mexico Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management, has distributed more than 1 million masks and various other forms of PPE.

Connectivity and Technology

In partnership with the Department of Information Technology, NMPED worked to identify students in need of internet access and provide districts with funding to provide broadband access.

- Gov. Lujan Grisham allocated \$5.75 million in GEER funding to assist schools in providing Internet connectivity
- NMPED has also used \$2.1 million in Indian Education funds to provide 700 residential hotspots, 101 Cradle point fixed and mobile hotspots, and 6,282 Chromebooks
- NMPED allocated approximately \$850,000 to improve connectivity on tribal lands
- School districts and charter schools budgeted more than \$40 million in CARES Act funding for connectivity and technology needs

Meals

- NMPED obtained waivers allowing school districts and charter schools to provide more than 17.8 million free meals at school sites since March.
- NMPED and HSD facilitated the distribution of \$150 million to approximately 600,000 students in two rounds of Pandemic EBT support



Re-Opening Planning and Support

Childcare support

- Collaboration between NMPED, ECECD, and RECs to coordinate childcare
- ECECD reached out directly to over 700 families who indicated they needed additional information about meals and childcare options.
- Launched one-stop website that provides resources to parents, districts, and providers.
- Supported districts by sharing PED Family Survey with superintendents/leaders

Covid-19 Safe Practices Toolkit

- Surveillance testing
- School-level closure protocols
- Air filtration requirements
- Guidance for quarantine and isolation

Rapid Response and Data Tracking Systems

- NMPED staff respond to all school-related cases of Covid-19
- Rapid Response staff also provide follow-up calls and technical assistance to ensure proper contact tracing
- NMPED tracks and reports all cases to NMDOH to assist with data analysis

Current Status

Instructional Models

Hybrid Instruction

- 41 Districts (Includes five micro-districts serving all students in person in 5:1 ratios)
- 13 Charter schools

Small-group instruction

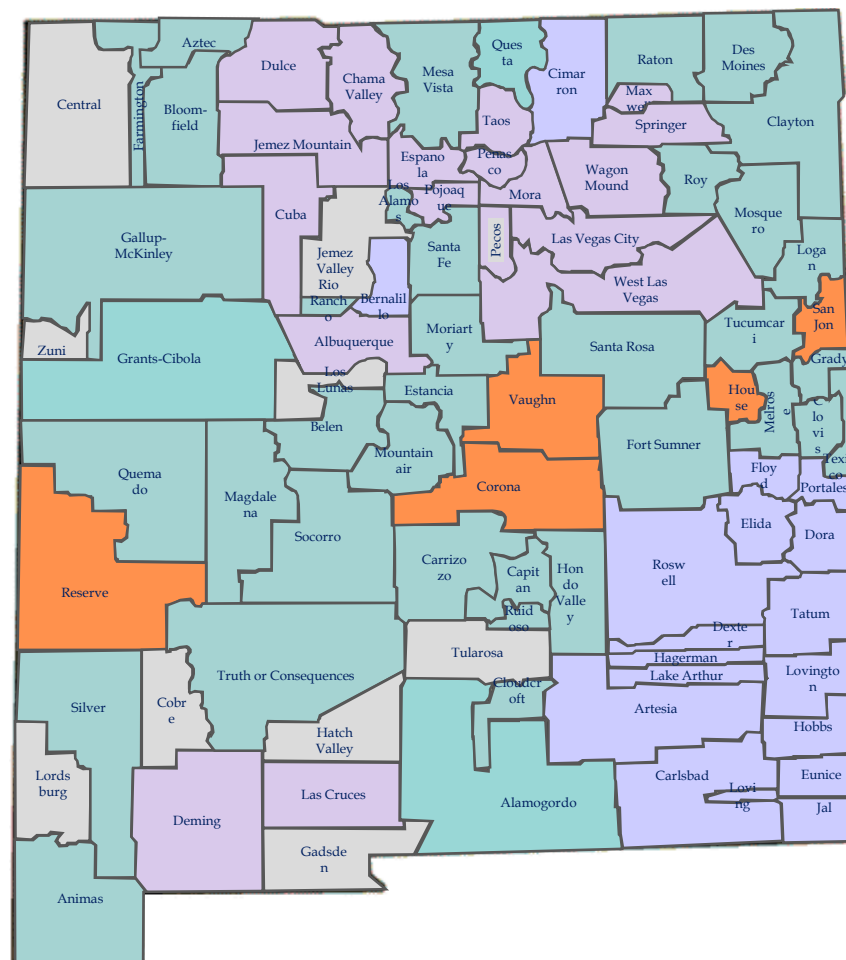
- 39 School Districts
- 56 Charter Schools

Remote Instruction

- 9 School Districts
- 27 Charter Schools

Remote
Small Groups
Micro/Full
Hybrid

New Mexico School Districts



Current Status

- Each district/charter has a plan to deliver Special Education services

Delivering Services:



Point #1

COVID-19 has **NOT** changed students' rights for special education services



Point #2

Service delivery models are adjusted to meet the needs of each student and the available model of instruction.



Point #3

COVID has changed how the general education systems operates

- Changes require school systems to determine **HOW** they will maintain LRE for each student in the context of how they are operating



Ongoing Support

Engage NM

- 118 LEAs have opted in
- 69 LEAs have submitted referrals
- 13,761 individual referrals to date
- 80% of families have requested academic support
- 2,794 families participating in coaching

Virtual site visits

- NMPED plans to conduct 139 virtual site visits in the next two weeks

Fire marshal visits

- State Fire Marshall officials have visited 49 school districts to ensure use of Covid-19 Safe Practices

Internet Connectivity

- NMPED provided \$5.75 million in GEER funding to districts to increase Internet access and technology support
- NMPED allocated approximately \$850,000 to improve connectivity on tribal lands

Assessment Support

- Free Interim Assessments
- Istation and MSSA Webinars

Social Emotional Learning Support

- NMPED is part of a coordinated state effort with various agencies to provide additional resources and support
- NMPED is providing professional development for teachers

Ongoing Communication

Superintendent/Leadership Calls

- NMPED conducts weekly calls with all superintendents and charter leaders
- Meeting with small groups of superintendents
- Each district and charter school has a single point of contact at NMPED for questions and concerns

Tribal Education Director Calls

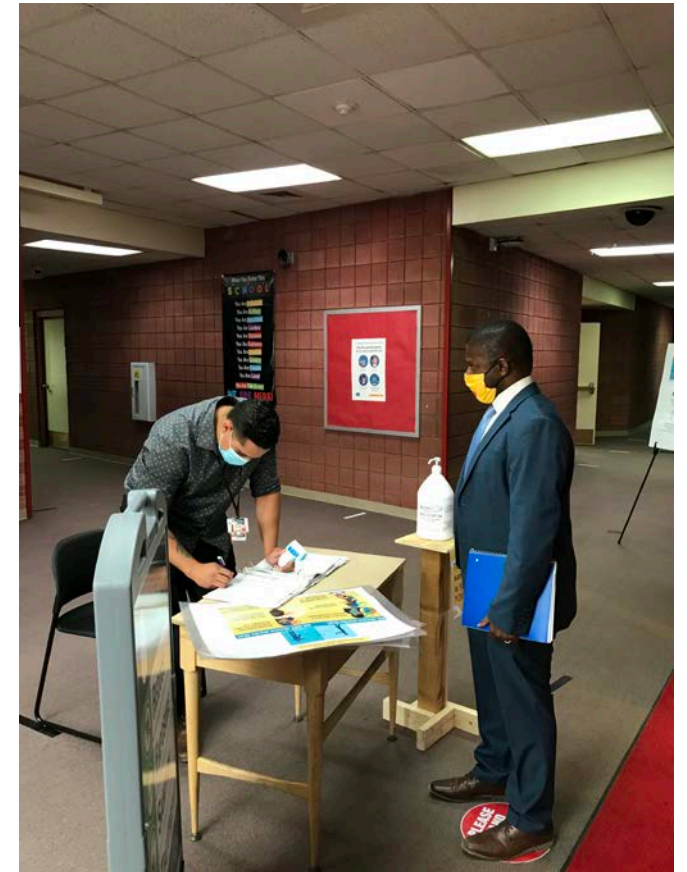
- NMPED conducts biweekly calls with all tribal education directors

Teacher/Parent Focus Groups

- NMPED has hosted weekly teacher and parent focus groups to answer questions and gather feedback

Social Emotional Learning Survey

- NMPED distributed to all New Mexico students





What We've Heard

Family Focus Groups

To date, we have engaged more than a dozen parents or caregivers from across 6 districts.

Highlights

- Increased engagement and communications
- Daily video messages from school leaders

Challenges

- Not enough communication
- Access to online learning platforms
 - *“Little to no support on how to access various apps...expectations for submitting assignments, etc.”*
- Social isolation



What We've Heard

Teacher Focus Groups

To date, we have heard from over 50 educators in over 20 districts.

Highlights

- Audio-visual tech tools for student engagement, feedback, & support
“We are meeting our objective of preparing students for tomorrow—technical skill development with online learning”
- School-home virtual visits fostering connection

Challenges

- Teacher wellness, boundaries during remote, access to self-care
- Attendance & failure rates for secondary students
“Pre-COVID attendance policies do not agree with what’s going on with families and communities.”
- Miscommunication
“Districts need support in communicating...information seems scattered and – at times – out of date.”



What We're Doing About it

Closing the Communication Gaps & Providing Support/Resources

- Updating Principal/Director lists to engage in direct outreach and communication with that cohort;
- Website re-design to include updates to the “Teacher Portal” and more!
- Promoting engagement, wellness, counseling, and other resources through social media and additional outreach channels;
- Offering ongoing professional development and parent workshops;
- Direct educator outreach and communications.

In addition, we will continue to explore:

- Available counseling supports through partnerships;
- Community partnerships with NMPTA and other school-centered non-profits;
- Feedback from advisory councils to inform outreach and engagement efforts;
- Opportunities to leverage platforms like Mr. Owl for increased educator connection, community, and networking.



Immediate Next Steps

Secondary Toolkit

- Parameters for re-entry for secondary schools
- Recommended best practices

Graduation Support

- Credit Recovery
- Tutoring
- Small Group Instruction/Learning Hubs (If Covid-19 allows)

Accelerated Learning Strategies

- Targeted Instruction
- Small groups

Early Warning Systems

- Attendance for Success Act

Considerations for Moving Forward

Legislative Support

- Educator Recruitment
- Support for Martinez/Yazzie student groups
- Regional support and technical assistance
- Professional Development
- Community schools
- Additional instructional time
- Statewide Student Information System
- Data reporting tools



Beyond Covid-19

What have we learned and how will it change schools

- Future of Assessment
- Leveraging instructional and technological improvements
- Instructional hours and graduation requirements
- Learning management system
- Family and community partnerships
- Exploring alternative instructional models and related regulatory structures
- Connectivity
- Social Emotional Learning

Thank You

