




## B i t e s i z e

 Only 10 charter school governing board members attended the seven-hour mandatory training session offered by the Public Education Department in September. New rules require board members to attend two hours of training on ethics and responsibilities, two hours on fiscal requirements, and one hour each on academic data, open government, and legal and organizational performance requirements. New Mexico has almost 100 charter schools.

 New Mexico is scheduled to receive about \$22.5 million over five years through the federal Expanding Opportunities through Quality Charter Schools Program that funds grants to create and expand public charter schools. First year funding is \$6.4 million; future funding is dependent on congressional appropriations.

 More New Mexico high school students took the ACT during the 2016-2017 school year but the average score dropped 0.2 points. ACT research indicates a 0.1 point increase translates into 29 more students enrolling in college, 32 fewer students needing remedial English, 56 fewer students needing remedial math, and 42 more students earning a higher education degree within six years.



# i n f o r m E D

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Senator Mimi Stewart, Chair / Representative Stephanie Garcia Richard, Vice Chair / Rachel S. Gudgel, Director / November 2017

### From the Chairwoman

#### Now

Recent analysis of New Mexico performance shows the results aren't all bad news. But they're not good news, either.

LESC staff analysis of the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress finds New Mexico, behind the national average for at least 20 years, is closing the gap on math, even though it's losing ground on reading.

However, the analysis notes that scores in high-performing states are growing faster than the national average, leaving New Mexico further and further behind.

The Legislative Finance Committee in *Longitudinal Student Performance Analysis - Impact of School, Teacher and Program Interventions*, a program evaluation, reports testing indicates New Mexico schools are delivering a year's worth of education every year, but the students start behind and stay behind national averages. Similarly, scores for low-income students grow at about the same rate as their peers but never catch up.

Bad news: New Mexico is still behind. Good news: In some small ways, it's getting better.

Unfortunately, the good news is not good enough. New Mexico's very slow, limited progress means generations of children are not getting what they need to succeed. The evidence of what works is out there – even within New Mexico, some schools and districts are far more successful than others – but we need leadership, not partisanship.

Given the political will, New Mexico could move quickly to expand early childhood supports to ensure students come to school ready to learn, revamp teacher education and professionalize the teacher force, and make applied science and math available through career and technical education.

Even those who care little about the public schools can recognize how important education is to New Mexico's quality of life and economic future. Too many policymakers beat their chests, lamenting the sad state of New Mexico education, without offering solutions or collaborating on reform. We've run out of time for hand-wringing. We need change now.

Senator Mimi Stewart

## Employers Need Career, Technical Graduates

While about a third of future jobs will require a four-year college degree, almost as many will require an associates degree or certificate, and states need more effective career and technical education programs to meet the demand, education specialists say.

Robert Schwartz, professor emeritus at Harvard Graduate School of Education, and Amy Loyd, a vice president of Jobs for the Future, are scheduled to present their findings on career and technical education – CTE – to the committee at 9:15 a.m. on November 15.

Schwartz and Loyd, both associated with the CTE policy group Pathways to Prosperity, echo many of the findings of the international study of highly successful school systems by the National Conference of State Legislatures called *No Time To Lose*.

That study concludes a common element of world-class education programs is academically rigorous career and technical education programs with hands-on learning for students who prefer applied education.

CTE programs must be aligned with workforce needs, include

pathways to universities, and partner with employers, it says.

Importantly, career and technical education must shed its reputation as the route for students with low academic skills and be recognized as a route to attractive careers with strong pay, critical to both the economy and the majority of young adults without four-year degrees, the study says.

Schwartz, in his book *Learning for Careers: The Pathways to Prosperity Network*, says the United States has a "skills gap" between what young adults know and employers need, and employers must play a strong role in CTE.

Young adults need better paths from high school to higher education and from higher education to careers, he writes.

The Association for Career and Technical Education in New Mexico reports graduation rates for high school students in CTE programs are higher than the state average – 89 percent compared with almost 69 percent in the 2014-2015 school year – and almost all CTE students in high school and college met performance levels

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# Early Supports Work But Expensive

Ensuring all students succeed in school starts at birth, with early childhood supports focused on families living in poverty or facing other risks, international and state researchers told the committee in October.

In presentations on early brain development, high-performing education systems, and national and local early education programs, presenters from national policy organizations, international universities, and the state Legislature agreed early supports for families and their children can help at-risk children get the care and cultural enrichment they need to overcome the impact of poverty and other “adverse childhood experiences.”

Those testifying included representatives from the National Conference of State Legislatures, National Center on Education and the Economy, University of Washington, and Oxford University.

Ensuring children are ready to learn by kindergarten and get additional help in early grades can help many at-risk children – those living in poverty or unable to speak English fluently – close the achievement gap with their peers by third grade, experts say.

However, LESC analysis notes these early supports cost money.

A National Center on Education and the Economy study of six countries’ academic and economic achievement

found all have subsidized care for low-income families with children from birth through age 2, publicly funded parent supports with a focus on low-income and immigrant families, and free social and health services for all families.

In addition, they all have prekindergarten programs, with many free and universal, most have programs to transition children from prekindergarten to elementary school, and most subsidize training and education for early childhood teachers and caregivers.

While the New Mexico Legislature has made early childhood funding a priority – with many programs expanding even when other services were being cut – LFC staff report the programs do not serve all those who would qualify.

New Mexico would need \$22.8 million more a year to expand the home-visiting program, which provides paraprofessional support to new families, \$34.8 million more to expand prekindergarten, and \$69 million more to expand the extended school-year program K-3 Plus.

## CTE Important Element of Ed Systems

continued from front for technical skills.

At the secondary level, CTE programs are available at comprehensive high schools, charter schools, early college high schools, and workforce programs.

According to materials prepared for the LESC by Loyd and Schwartz, nationally minority students in early college high schools, which allow students to complete two years of college while they earn a high school diploma, are 10 times more likely than other minority students to earn a college degree. Low-income students in early college high schools are 8.5 times more likely to earn a degree than other low-income students.

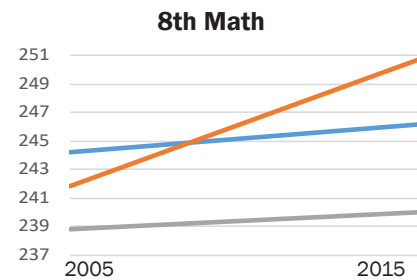
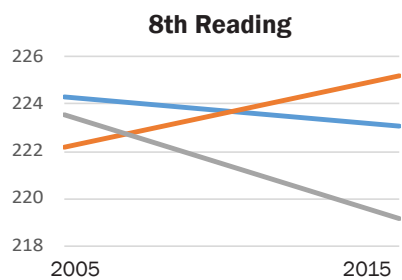
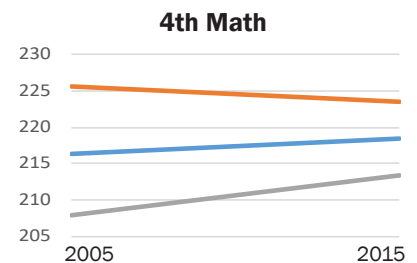
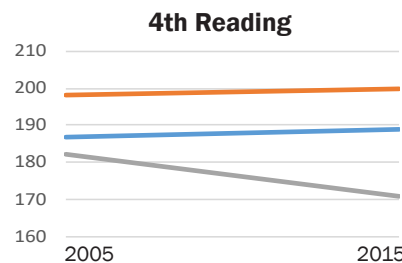
Earlier this month, Arrowhead Park Early College High School, part of Las Cruces Public Schools, was awarded a Blue Ribbon Award by the U.S. Depart-

ment of Education as an “Exemplary High Performing School.”

On the campus of New Mexico State University, Arrowhead Park has a 95 percent graduation rate and 52 percent of the students become the first in their families to attend college.

## NM Closing Math Gap, Opening Reading Gap

The 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress scores show New Mexico made small gains on math performance from 2005 but lost ground on reading and is falling further behind high-performing states like Massachusetts. While the average New Mexico fourth-grade math score rose by 5 points, and its eighth-grade math score by 1 point, the state average score dropped 11 points on fourth-grade reading and 5 points on eighth-grade reading. Meanwhile, the national and Massachusetts scores rose on all but fourth-grade math.



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### informed

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