Committee Endorsed Legislation Proposals

2027 Legislative Session

Analysts: LESC Staff

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Addressing Student Screen Time in Schools. This bill would define screen time for instruction in public schools and require the Public Education Department (PED) to set developmentally appropriate guidelines for daily screen use in kindergarten through 12th-grade (K-12) classrooms. The guidelines could include grade-level frameworks for elementary, middle, and high school. PED could develop guidelines from research and in partnership with school districts and charter schools, so that classroom technology is purposeful, evidence-based, and supportive of healthy child development.

- ***Related staff work:*** *Legislative task force report, Screen Use in Elementary Classrooms (September 2026).*

Allowable Responses to Student Behavior. This bill would amend existing law to clearly define restraint and seclusion practices in public schools, specifying which actions are permitted and which are prohibited. It would introduce and define terms such as elopement and physical escort, and prohibit chemical restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint, and seclusion without continuous line-of-sight supervision. The bill would also clarify the use of timeouts and add specificity to training and reporting requirements within school safety plans.

Bilingual Education Stipends. This bill would create statewide stipend levels for certified teachers who hold a bilingual endorsement and teach in a bilingual multicultural education program. These stipends could be paid from BMEP funding that school districts and charter schools already generate through the public school funding formula or through additional funding allocated for this purpose. The amount could vary by program model, so models with heavier planning and teaching demands, such as dual language, get a higher stipend.

- ***Related staff work:*** Report, *Bilingual and Multicultural Education in New Mexico: 2026 Working Group Update (October 2026).*

Career and Technical Education Funding. This bill would move career and technical education (CTE) funding from a non-recurring appropriation to a permanent, earmarked categorical funding mechanism and codify a framework for CTE programmatic expectations to tie funding to program quality. The formula would combine base funding by school size and a three-tier quality rating with incentive funding tied to concentrator and certificate outcomes.

- ***Related staff work:*** *Policy brief, Career and Technical Education in New Mexico: A Proposed Categorical Framework (July 2026).*

Career Ladder Development. This bill would create and codify an instructional leadership professional advancement pathway by directing PED to create an instructional leadership endorsement for experienced, highly effective teachers. Endorsed teacher leaders would coach other teachers and lead job-embedded professional development, offering teachers a way to advance without leaving the classroom. The bill would also set up a state framework for teacher leader roles, release time, and minimum added pay, which could be funded through a new add-on unit in the public school funding formula.

- ***Related staff work:*** *Policy brief, Educator Career Continuum (September 2026).*

Distance Learning. This bill would amend the Distance Learning Act (Section 22, Article 30 NMSA 1978), in response to Laws 2026, Chapter 8 (House Bill 253), to establish a programmatic, governance, and fiscal framework for high-quality distance learning programs for both school districts and charter schools. The bill would ensure distance learning programs operating in New Mexico comply with statutory requirements, receive appropriate oversight at the local and state levels, and generate adequate funding reflective of their unique instructional model.

- ***Related staff work:*** *Policy brief, Distance Learning (May 2026); Additional final report anticipated in November 2026.*

Modernizing Electronic and Education Technology Standards. This bill would update New Mexico's electronic and education technology definitions to include artificial intelligence (AI), expand the Safe Schools for All cyberbullying definition to cover AI-generated content, and update the statutory definition of instructional material to include artificial intelligence. The bill would also establish procurement and privacy standards for AI-based education tools.

- ***Related staff work:*** *Policy brief, AI in K-12 Education: State Policy Trends and Implications for New Mexico (May 2026).*

Revising the Public School Capital Outlay Formula. This bill would revise the public school capital outlay formula by requiring annual increases in the formula's cost-per-square foot assumption and reducing the maximum local match of 94 percent.

- ***Related staff work:*** *Final joint LESC and Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) report anticipated in November 2026.*

Paid Parental Leave for School Employees. This bill would codify 12 weeks of paid parental leave for all qualifying public school employees. It would include an appropriation for school districts and charter schools to offer such leave by funding substitute teachers or other coverage mechanisms for employees who are eligible for paid parental leave. Eligibility parameters could include employees being full-time and being employed for at least one contractual school year immediately preceding the leave.

- ***Related committee presentation:*** *National Council on Teacher Quality Paid Parental Leave Presentation (July 2026).*

Requiring Long-Term Financial Planning. This bill would require all school districts and charter schools to practice long-term programmatic and financial planning, with the intent of promoting greater local intentionality in how communities use their programming, staffing, and facilities to achieve meaningful improvements in student outcomes over several fiscal years. To do so, the bill would introduce a statewide framework for long-term planning, establish expectations for how PED should assist communities in designing and implementing those plans, and create collaborative approaches to assisting communities in long-term planning.

- ***Related staff work:*** *Report, Long-Term Programmatic and Financial Planning (October 2026).*

School Personnel Salary Minimums. This bill would increase compensation for public school employees by increasing the minimum salaries and hourly wages set in state law. It would amend the School Personnel Act to raise minimum annual salaries for teachers and address salary compaction for teachers and principals.

Statewide Education Governance. This bill would respond to the education governance study requested by House Memorial 30 (HM30) from the 2026 legislative session and would offer options to make changes to the state's existing statewide education governance structures or to create new statewide education governance structures.

- ***Related staff work:*** *Final legislative task force report anticipated in November 2026.*