

Date: October 5, 2021

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Teacher Preparation: Strategies and Funding Proposals

Why focus on Teacher Preparation?

- The *Martinez-Yazzie* consolidated lawsuit identified well-trained staff as essential to ensuring all students have access to a high-quality education.
- Since the ruling, the Legislature has prioritized supporting teachers through policy and funding initiatives aimed to increase the quantity and improve the quality of educators entering the workforce.
- Research shows teacher quality is the number one school-based factor impacting student success, and the judge in the consolidated *Martinez-Yazzie* lawsuit noted certain groups of students in New Mexico do not have access to high-quality teachers.
- The impacts of the Covid-19 public health emergency on the quality of teacher preparation and the educator workforce is unknown at this time. Recent reports do show that public teacher job postings increased from 571 in fall of 2020 and 1,048 in fall of 2021.

What has been done?

- Beginning in 2017, the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) has used the National Conference of State Legislature's research report, *No Time to Lose* as a guide post.
- According to the report, states need an abundant supply of highly qualified teachers, key to building a world-class education system.
- Since 2018, the LESC has studied and worked with stakeholders on ways to improve the preparation of teachers and increase the number of educators entering the workforce. In response to these discussions, the Legislature has made some policy changes and funded initiatives in this area.
- At the beginning of the 2021 legislative interim, Chairman Soules identified teacher preparation as a priority of the committee over the next two years.

- Attachment 1, Elements of Teacher Preparation Programs provides a staff review of policy and funding choices pursued from the Legislature, research on the strategies identified, implementation progress, and feedback heard from stakeholders in particular areas.
- The 12 strategies investigated include:
 - 1) Student teaching,
 - 2) Teacher residencies,
 - 3) Strong school district partnerships,
 - 4) Mentorship,
 - 5) Alternative Licensure,
 - 6) Licensure Tests,
 - 7) Program capacity and additional support,
 - 8) Financial assistance for teacher-candidates,
 - 9) “Grow Your Own” strategies,
 - 10) National Board Certification,
 - 11) Professional development, and
 - 12) Data availability.

Considerations

- LESC teacher preparation subcommittee members have the opportunity to identify which of the 12 strategies should be prioritized for funding support in the upcoming 2022 legislative session.
- LESC teacher preparation subcommittee members have the opportunity to identify policy priorities to be studied in teacher preparation for the 2022 legislative interim and the 2023 legislative session.

