

Minutes  
Clovis, NM  
September 20-22, 2023

Wednesday, September 20

The following voting and advisory members were present. Voting: Chair G. Andrés Romero, Vice Chair William P. Soules, Representatives Brian G. Baca, Joy Garratt, and Raymundo Lara.

Advisory: Representatives Debra Sariñana and Yanira Gurrola.

**Call to Order, Introductions, and Approval of September Agenda and July Minutes.** Representative G. Andrés Romero, Chair, Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC), called the meeting to order. Chair Romero facilitated introductions of the members of LESC, as well as LESC staff.

Later in the hearings, in a motion by Representative Baca, and a second by Representative Garratt, the agenda for the September LESC meeting was approved. The meeting minutes for the July LESC hearing were also approved with a motion by Representative Garratt and a second by Representative Baca.

**Community Welcome.** Renee Russ, Superintendent, Clovis Municipal Schools (CMS); Joe Strickland, Deputy Superintendent of Employee Services, CMS; Carrie Nigreville, Deputy Superintendent of Academic Services and Leadership, CMS; and Mandy Carpenter, Executive Director of Talent Management and Development, CMS, welcomed LESC members to Clovis and provided an overview of CMS strategic plans and initiatives beginning with their theme, 'To Make it Count'. Ms. Russ shared the district's demographics regarding students, staff, and the communities they serve. Ms. Nigreville discussed the districts initiatives focusing on student engagement, performing arts, a variety of learning environments, alternative replacement programs that address behavioral management, and their continued efforts to partner with their community.

Superintendent Russ noted that last year's graduating class of Clovis High School was named by US News and World Report as being in the top 40 percent of public high schools in the nation. Additionally, Executive Director Carpenter noted that CMS is proud to be the recipient of the largest portion of the New Mexico Public Education Department's Educator Fellowship Grant, with 43 Educator Fellows participating.

**LEA Reporting Requirements.** Daniel Estupiñan, Senior Fiscal Analyst II, LESC; Denise Terrazas, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs, Public Education Department (PED); and Gregory Frostad, Assistant Secretary of Policy, Research, and Technology, PED, presented on current statutory reporting requirements and the Department's ongoing initiatives to reduce reporting requirements. Members asked about LESC staff having

access to the Department's data information systems and how the Department's efforts have measurably reduced administrative burden for educators.

**Performing Arts in New Mexico.** Marit Andrews, Senior Policy Analyst II, LESC, began by providing context for the presentation, explaining the arts are a fundamental piece of student engagement. Brandon Boerio, the Director of Educator Quality for Clovis Municipal Schools, gave some background on the arts in New Mexico schools, then used his own district as an example to illustrate how Fine Arts Education Act (FAEA) funding can be used, and provided a few recommendations to the committee, including extending FAEA funding to cover secondary fine arts programs. Charles Gamble, Director of School Programs, Santa Fe Opera, explained how the Santa Fe Opera supports performing arts in New Mexico through their NMArt professional development series and the New Mexico Alliance for Responsive Teaching. Terry S. Davis, Co-Executive Director, New Mexico High School Theatre Awards, explained how his organization provides the Enchantment Awards show for high school students annually, but provides an education program every day. Mr. Davis provided a few recommendations to the committee, including mandating that for all teachers in all school districts, paid stipends be given similar differentials with none being lower than 60 percent of the highest stipend paid.

**LFC Revenue Projections.** Daniel Estupiñan, Senior Fiscal Analyst II, LESC; and Ismael Torres, Chief Economist, Legislative Finance Committee presented on revenue estimates for FY25. Members asked about reserve requirements, whether the situation in North Dakota's oil and gas industry yields any lessons for New Mexico, and asked for specifics on natural gas exports from New Mexico.

**Conversations on Middle School Redesign and Tour of Clovis Sixth Grade Academy.** LESC members attended a tour of the Clovis Sixth Grade Academy, a new program and initiative in Clovis Municipal Schools that establishes a separate campus and unique school design for sixth grade students. LESC members heard a presentation from several administrators and educators with Clovis Municipal Schools and then toured the academy.

Clovis Municipal Schools shared that the Sixth Grade Academy, newly created for the current 2023-2024 school year, emerged as a solution to difficult transitions and concerning outcomes for their sixth grade students. In 2014, the district moved all sixth grade students to the middle school rather than elementary schools; in an effort to address emerging issues, Clovis Municipal Schools established its Sixth Grade Academy at a separate campus, designed only for sixth grade students. The district noted it provides a school environment with different class scheduling, uses teamed teaching, and includes exploratory elective

courses to allow students to transition to sixth grade in a more supportive environment.

Thursday, September 21

The following voting and advisory members were present. Voting: Chair G. Andrés Romero, Vice Chair William P. Soules, Representatives Brian G. Baca, Joy Garratt, and Raymundo Lara.

Advisory: Representatives Debra Sariñana and Yanira Gurrola.

Representative Andrea Reeb and Senator Pat Woods attended as guests.

**Bella Vista Arts Academy Tour.** LESC members and staff toured the Bella Vista Arts Academy, a prekindergarten through fifth grade school with a focus on the arts, to learn more about the school's operation and how it incorporates arts into instruction. Members were welcomed to the school by students and educators who provided a presentation about the school, a presentation about the school's implementation of structured literacy, and student demonstrations of how song and dance are used in mathematics, reading, and other instruction. Members and LESC staff then took a tour of the school site, observing literacy lessons at various grade levels.

**Biliteracy and the science of reading.** Gwen Perea Warniment, Ph.D., Director, Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) presented a policy report on biliteracy including the history of biliteracy in New Mexico, data and information about New Mexico's general literacy proficiency, and the breakdown of the science of reading and its relation to emergent bilinguals and English learners. Following Dr. Perea Warniment's presentation, Dr. Arsenio Romero, Secretary of Education, PED; Jacqueline Costales, Division Director of Curriculum and Instruction, PED; Severo Martinez, Literacy and Humanities Director, PED, and Linda Cavazos, Consultant on Biliteracy, PED, presented on biliteracy and the science of reading for emergent bilinguals in New Mexico. PED included a discussion on Senate Bill 398 from 2019, regarding structured literacy, professional development, screening students, and district literacy plans. PED noted teachers should have language proficiency and fluency in both languages in order to promote and do well by the students. PED invited their partners from Gadsden Independent School District to talk about their work in structured literacy. Following PED's presentation, Ester de Jong, Ed.D., Professor at the University of Colorado; Natalie Olague, Project Coordinator, Dual Language New Mexico (DLeNM); and Ruth Kritekman, Lead Editor, DLeNM, shared their expertise on what biliteracy and the science of reading looks like in the context of dual language programs.

**PED Rules Review.** John Sena, Deputy Director, LESC, presented an update on rules recently proposed and adopted by PED. The rules include a rule

on demonstrations of competency for high school graduation, procedures for state-chartered charter schools, regulations for gifted and talented student identification, rules for students with disabilities, rules for the NM Dash accountability tool, standards for providing transportation for eligible students, Covid-19 school requirements, and licensure in athletic coaching.

**Accountability: School Governance.** Mr. Sena presented an LESC brief on the role of school governance in improving student achievement. Mr. Sena highlighted legislative tools designed to improve school governance, including the educational plan and the Open Books financial transparency dashboard. The brief recommends that the Legislature consider revising existing reporting structures to better focus on student outcomes, including annual "performance targets" included in the annual budget. The Legislature can also use statute to clarify school board training requirements and specify the components of high-quality school leadership programs and educator preparation programs. Arsenio Romero, Ph.D., Secretary, PED, presented on the department's role in evaluating school DASH plans, supporting school boards and superintendents, and allocating funds to schools identified for targeted support and improvement (TSI), comprehensive support and improvement (CSI), and more rigorous interventions (MRI). Dr. Romero highlighted specific policy needs the legislature can address in statute, including greater specificity for the removal of individual school board members, prohibitions for banned school board members, allowances to add additional school board members, and funding training for school board members and superintendents.

Friday, September 22

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Advisory: Representatives Debra Sariñana and Yanira Gurrola.

Senator Pat Woods attended as a guest.

**Director's Report.** Gwen Perea Warniment, Director, LESC, provided an update to LESC members about five items: the LESC newsletter, personnel updates including the hiring of a new analyst, the next LESC hearing to be held in Carlsbad, the LESC budget, and facilities updates on the LESC office renovations. Dr. Perea Warniment noted the inclusion of articles in the newsletter about the educator workforce, air quality in schools, and transportation funding. Dr. Perea Warniment also shared with the committee that the agency continues to be underbudget and may have some vacancy savings. Annie Armatage, a new Senior Policy Analyst II for the LESC, joined Dr. Perea Warniment to provide an introduction.

**Fostering Mathematics Success in Elementary Grades.** Marit Andrews, Senior Policy Analyst II, LESC, framed the presentation for the committee, explaining elementary mathematics instruction is critical in a statewide vision for mathematics success. Jacqueline Costales, Division Director of Curriculum and Instruction, PED, and Shafiq Chaudhary, Director of the Math and Science Bureau, PED, talked about the current state of elementary math, PED's future goals and their resource or policy needs. Tamara Gaudet, Math and Science Advisory Council (MSAC) Member, explained what MSAC is, and explained some of the work MSAC does, highlighting their work on the New Mexico Math Framework, the Math and Science Annual Report. To conclude the presentation, Ms. Andrews asked Julie Frazee, Math Coach, Portales Municipal Schools (PMS), Amanda Crawford, Math Coach, PMS, and Jennifer Longley, Executive Director of Strategic Planning and School Support for Elementary, CMS a few questions on how their school districts use math resources from the PED to improve math instruction.

**Eastern New Mexico University Teacher Preparation Program.** Lee Hurren, Ph.D., Dean of Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU), presented on the university's teacher residency program and was joined by Rebecca Davis, Ed.D., Assistant Dean of the College of Education, ENMU, and Carrie Linkey, Director of Teacher Education, ENMU. Dr. Hurren reported the cohort of 11 residents demonstrated increased engagement and job satisfaction compared to peers engaged in traditional student teaching. The residents were roughly split between seeking an early childhood teaching license and a special education teaching license. The presenters noted ENMU is seeing increased educator growth and preparation as a result of the residency program and intends to encourage all students in its teacher preparation program to participate in the residency program in the future.