

SB201: Public Ed. Reform Fund Uses

Bill Summary

- Laws 2025, Chapter 72 (Senate Bill 201) modifies the public education reform fund (PERF) to make the fund a targeted multiyear investment fund for education initiatives.
- SB201 requires that initiatives funded through the PERF be evaluated for impacts on student outcomes, with an emphasis on causal evaluation when possible.
- For FY26 through FY28, PERF-funded programs include attendance initiatives, math instruction, supports for students who are unhoused, innovative staffing strategies, and secondary educator literacy. A detailed discussion of these appropriations can be found beginning on page 27.

Implementation Considerations

- By May 1 of each year, DFA, LFC, and LESC will issue instructions to PED on accountability and evaluation plans for PERF-funded programs.
- Evaluation plans will include the goals and expected outcomes of the program, the specific actors and activities associated with the program, and a description of how the program will be evaluated.
- By September 1 of the final year of the appropriation, PED, DFA, LESC, and LFC will consider the evaluation results and provide a recommendation regarding recurring funding for the program.
- PED, DFA, LESC, and LFC will likely need to review the current status of each evaluation on an annual basis throughout the course of PERF-funded programs.

Implications for PED

- PED will be required to develop initial evaluation plans by July 1 of the first year of PERF-funded programs, then consider feedback from DFA, LESC, and LFC to develop a final evaluation plan by September 1 of the same year.
- PED will also be required to submit its annual Public School Support Request on September 1 of each year, approximately 3 months sooner than the current deadline of November 30.

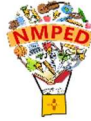
Implications for Schools and Districts

- LEAs participating in PERF-funded programs can expect recurring funding for the programs for at least 3 years, which should help LEAs build capacity to implement programs.
- Participating LEAs are expected to comply with the data collection required to facilitate effective program evaluation.

Public Education Reform Fund

LINE ITEM	EXPLANATION	SELECT BUDGET LANGUAGE
<p>Support for Attendance for Success \$18.6 million High-Level Line Number: 135 GAA Page Numbers: 259, 266, 270</p>	<p>The Legislature appropriated \$18.6 million to PED for FY26 through FY28, or \$6.2 million per year, for attendance initiatives to reduce student chronic absenteeism.</p> <p>PED will be required to design a program and an accompanying evaluation plan.</p> <p>LESC analysis has demonstrated that student absenteeism is a complex issue related to any number of student-specific root causes. While schools have control over some factors that may contribute to absenteeism, the issue is also related to deep, systemic issues such as student mental health and the perceived value of education.</p>	<p><i>“For attendance initiatives to reduce excessive student absenteeism, contingent on enactment of Senate Bill 201 or similar legislation of the first session of the fifty-seventh legislature requiring evidence-based program evaluation for projects receiving appropriations from the public education reform fund.”</i></p> <p><i>“Up to two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) may be used by the public education department to conduct a randomized-controlled trial to evaluate and monitor outcomes. The other state funds appropriation is from the public education reform fund.”</i></p>
<p>Secondary Educator Literacy \$15.6 million High-Level Line Number: 136 GAA Page Number: 260, 267, 271</p>	<p>The Legislature appropriated \$15.6 million to PED for FY26 through FY28, or \$5.2 million per year, for implementation and evaluation of a secondary educator literacy program.</p> <p>PED will use this funding to begin training all sixth grade through 12th grade English language arts, English language development, and special education teachers using the <i>AIM Pathways to Proficient Reading: Secondary Training</i>.</p> <p>According to PED, the training will follow a phased approach similar to the phase-in of LETRS for elementary teachers. In FY26, sixth grade teachers will begin the training. In FY27, seventh and eighth grade teachers will begin the training. In FY28, ninth and 10th grade teachers will begin the training.</p> <p>PED will be required to design an evaluation plan to demonstrate the programs’ outcomes.</p>	<p><i>“For training secondary educators in evidence-based reading instruction, contingent on enactment of Senate Bill 201 or similar legislation of the first session of the fifty-seventh legislature requiring evidence-based program evaluation for projects receiving appropriations from the public education reform fund.”</i></p> <p><i>“Up to two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) may be used by the public education department to conduct a randomized-controlled trial to evaluate and monitor outcomes. The other state funds appropriation is from the public education reform fund.”</i></p>
<p>Math Achievement \$13.5 million High-Level Line Number: 137 GAA Page Number: 259, 266, 270</p>	<p>The Legislature appropriated \$13.5 million to PED for FY26 through FY28, or \$4.5 million per year, for implementation and evaluation of evidence-based math instruction.</p> <p>PED will be required to design a program and an accompanying evaluation plan.</p>	<p><i>“For training educators in evidence-based math instruction, contingent on enactment of Senate Bill 201 or similar legislation of the first session of the fifty-seventh legislature requiring evidence-based program evaluation for projects receiving appropriations from the public education reform fund.”</i></p> <p><i>“Up to two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) may be used by the public education department to conduct a randomized-controlled trial to evaluate and monitor outcomes. The other state funds appropriation is from the public education reform fund.”</i></p>

LINE ITEM	EXPLANATION	SELECT BUDGET LANGUAGE
<p>Innovative Staffing Strategies \$7.8 million High-Level Line Number: 138 GAA Page Number: 259, 266, 271</p>	<p>The Legislature appropriated \$7.8 million to PED for FY26 through FY28, or \$2.6 million per year, to pilot innovative or strategic school staffing models.</p> <p>PED will be required to design a program and an accompanying evaluation plan.</p> <p>The funds are intended to identify and test staffing models that better support teachers and expand the influence of highly effective teachers.</p>	<p><i>“For innovative or strategic school staffing models, contingent on enactment of Senate Bill 201 or similar legislation of the first session of the fifty-seventh legislature requiring evidence-based program evaluation for projects receiving appropriations from the public education reform fund.”</i></p> <p><i>“Up to one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) may be used by the public education department to conduct a randomized controlled trial to evaluate and monitor outcomes. The public education department may waive requirements for class load, teaching load, minimum salary levels and staffing patterns for schools in the treatment group.”</i></p>
<p>Supports for Students who are Unhoused \$6.3 million High-Level Line Number: 139 GAA Page Numbers: 259, 266, 270</p>	<p>The Legislature appropriated \$6.3 million to PED for FY26 through FY28, or \$2.6 million per year, to pilot a program to support students who are unhoused.</p> <p>PED will be required to design a program and an accompanying evaluation plan.</p> <p>During the 2024 legislative interim, Albuquerque nonprofit New Mexico Appleseed presented a promising program to LESC. The program provided financial and educational assistance through conditional \$500 payments to homeless juniors and seniors in Cuba and West Las Vegas to support students who are inadequately housed. The findings showed improved academic outcomes, particularly in terms of student engagement and retention.</p>	<p><i>“For a pilot program to support students who are unhoused, contingent on enactment of Senate Bill 201 or similar legislation of the first session of the fifty-seventh legislature requiring evidence-based program evaluation for projects receiving appropriations from the public education reform fund.”</i></p> <p><i>“Up to one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) may be used by the public education department to conduct a quasi-experimental study to evaluate and monitor outcomes.”</i></p>



Public Education Reform Fund Instructions for Program Evaluation

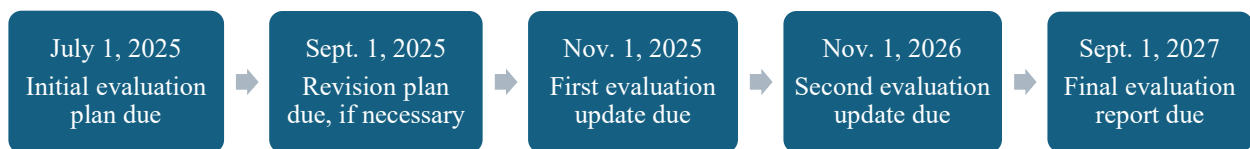
Laws 2025, Chapter 72 (Senate Bill 201), amended the purpose of the public education reform fund (PERF) to support education initiatives through a structured, evidence-based approach to funding and evaluation. As stipulated in the newly signed law, the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA), in consultation with the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) and Legislative Finance Committee (LFC), is responsible for jointly developing and approving instructions for accountability and evaluation plans. These instructions, formalized in this document, will be submitted annually to the Public Education Department (PED) by May 1, and are designed to guide the effective implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of PERF-funded programs.

The statutory requirements in Chapter 72 are intended to support multi-year budgeting and continuous improvement of educational programs. PED is required to submit an initial accountability and evaluation plan to DFA, LESC, and LFC for each funded program by July 1 of the fiscal year in which the appropriation is made. If revisions are requested by DFA, LESC, and LFC staff, a revised plan must be submitted no later than September 1 of the same year. Each plan must include:

1. Clearly defined program goals, objectives, and expected outcomes outlined in a logic model;
2. A description of program activities and roles of participating entities;
3. A determination of the program’s evidence base (as defined on page 2 of this document);
4. Performance metrics and a monitoring plan; and
5. A comprehensive evaluation design, including methods of analysis and timeline for reporting results.

Evaluation updates, due by November 1 each year, should include how much funding has been spent to date, current program implementation status, and any notable findings, achievements, or challenges. A final evaluation report is due by September 1 of the final fiscal year of the appropriation to inform future funding recommendations. This final report will include program outcomes and limitations.

The collaborative approach to program design and evaluation aims to enhance rigor, utility, and trust of program evaluations by improving data quality and promoting shared accountability. It is particularly important that PED’s evaluation plans meet expectations outlined by DFA, LFC, and LESC, which include providing sufficient detail to assess both program effectiveness and implementation fidelity. The goal is to ensure public education reforms are evidence-based and cost-effective, and to understand the circumstances under which programs can drive meaningful improvements in student outcomes statewide.



Program:	<p>Indicate which legislative appropriation this plan addresses.</p> <p><i><Math achievement, secondary educator literacy, attendance, innovative staffing models, or supports for students who are unhoused.></i></p>
Problem Statement:	<p>Use this space to write a succinct problem statement the program is attempting to address. <i><Example of problem statement guidance here.></i></p>
Overarching Goals:	<p>Use this space to list three to five overarching goals for the program.</p>
<p>Underlying Assumptions and Research Base:</p> <p><i>Why do you think this program will work?</i></p>	<p>Use this space to include a brief summary regarding whether the program has been shown to work and whether the program is classified as evidence-based, research-based, promising, or does not yet have rigorous research. For definitions of these terms, see below and Section 6-3A-3 NMSA 1978.</p> <p><i><Clearinghouses can be a useful tool in determining what research has been conducted. Relevant clearinghouses include the Evidence to Impact Clearinghouse Database and the What Works Clearinghouse. Please also provide links to the study or clearinghouse that helped form this rationale.</i></p> <p><i>If the program or initiative PED plans to implement is not listed in a clearinghouse and has no published research, it is considered to have no rigorous evidence. If there is one or two published articles that do not use randomized controlled trials or other highly reliable research designs, the program is considered promising. If there are several studies, but none use rigorous designs—or if there are only one or two rigorous studies—it is research-based. If multiple studies use highly reliable research designs, or if a systematic literature review exists, the program is considered evidence-based.></i></p>

Logic Model

Building a logic model helps clearly articulate what a program aims to accomplish. It shows the relationships between program resources, activities, outputs, and expected outcomes, and serves as a framework for planning, implementation, and evaluation. In the logic model below, fill in the boxes to identify who is responsible for implementation, the activities each actor will carry out, how you will measure whether activities are implemented as intended, and the expected short- and long-term outcomes. See the [Institute for Education Sciences](#) for more information about logic models.

Actors	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
List the entities will be responsible for implementing the program (one row per actor). <i>Examples: PED, school districts and charter schools, schools, educators, evaluators.</i>	List the specific activities each actor will be responsible for carrying out during implementation. <i>Examples: Awarding funding, providing technical support, collecting and cleaning data, training staff.</i>	List the measures used to determine whether activities are being implemented as intended. <i>Examples: Number of participants, attrition rate, number of times an activity was carried out, engagement metrics.</i>	List the short-term and long-term measures that may be used to provide evidence that the program is making a difference. Short-Term: Benefits for participants. Long-Term: Benefits for entire program. <i>Examples: Knowledge, skills, proficiency rates, graduation rates, chronic absence rates, additional outcomes for participants.</i>
	•	•	Short-Term Outcomes
	•	•	•
	•	•	Long-Term Outcomes
	•	•	•

Program Evaluation Plan and Description of Methods

A program evaluation plan provides a roadmap for determining whether a program is achieving its expected outcomes. It should include information about the target population, data collection methods, and planned data analysis. If needed, refer to the [World Bank pre-analysis plan checklist](#) for additional guidance.

Target Population and Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the target population of the program? (For example, is the program run at a classroom level, a school level, or a districtwide level? Is the program predominantly for a specific demographic or at-risk group?) What are the eligibility criteria for applying and participating in the program? How will you select participants? (For example, random selection, stratified sampling, propensity score matching)?
Evaluation Approach and Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how your evaluation will be conducted. Specify what methods and statistical tests PED plans to use. See UNM's research hierarchy for information on reliable research methods. If you are planning to assess the program's causal impact on student achievement, explain exactly how this will be done (for example, randomized control trials, matched comparisons). If you cannot assess causal impact: Provide a clear rationale for your proposed evaluation design.
Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What data collection methods will be used? Who will be responsible for collecting the data?
Implementation Timeline	Outline a proposed timeline for activities across the appropriation period:
Implementation Timeline	Year One (2025-2026):
Implementation Timeline	Year Two (2026-2027):
Implementation Timeline	Year Three (2027-2028):
Contacts for Annual Progress Updates	Please use this space to provide primary points of contact at PED for progress updates, expected by November 1 of each year.