

## Public School Funding Formula Public Engagement Plan

### Purpose and Overview

While the Legislature has significantly increased appropriations to public schools in recent years, it is unclear whether those investments have meaningfully improved student achievement and success. This potential disconnection between investments and outcomes may indicate the public school funding formula is inadequately responsive to the needs of public schools. Specifically, whether it adequately identifies student need, reflects the true costs of adequately operating public schools, and directs adequate funds to support the diverse and evolving needs of all students.

Pursuant to the requests of House Memorial 51 (HM51), the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) will convene public education stakeholders to participate in a series of conversations regarding the methodology underlying each component of the public school funding formula. In soliciting feedback regarding the public school funding formula, the LESG will convene a working group that is tasked with:

- Identifying existing challenges, strengths, and opportunities related to the public school funding formula;
- Identifying what constitutes adequacy in the context of the public school funding formula; and
- Building consensus on whether the public school funding formula is responsive to the current and evolving needs of all students.

The working group will complete its review by the end of October 2023 and LESG staff will present its findings at the committee's November or December interim meeting in Santa Fe. Upon consultation with LESG leadership, staff may proceed to phase two of the project – collaborating with stakeholders in creating a proposal for redesigning the public school funding formula.

### Format

#### Public School Funding Formula Working Group

Beginning in July 2023, LESG staff will convene a working group that is inclusive of voices from throughout the public education system. The membership of the working group may include, but is not limited to:

- Educators;
- School Administrators;

- District leadership, including superintendents, program directors, school business officials, and school board members;
- Public Education Department staff;
- Legislative members;
- Legislative Finance Committee staff; and
- Legislative Education Study Committee staff.

As requested in HM51, LESC staff will lead the work of the working group by selecting its participants, preparing agendas for each session, and drafting and presenting the working group's findings to the LESC.

Meetings of the working group, whether they are in-person or virtual, may be open to the public. LESC staff will be intentional in hosting in-person meetings at accessible locations throughout the state and will make recordings of virtual sessions available upon request.

Each session will have a theme that is determined by LESC staff. These themes will revolve around components of the public school funding formula, including:

- Student Supports
  - Early childhood and basic funding units;
  - Special education;
  - At-risk index.
- Personnel
  - Staffing cost multiplier;
  - National board certification units.
- Curricular Supports
  - Bilingual and multicultural education;
  - Fine arts education;
  - Physical education.
- Learning Time
  - K-12 Plus.
- Enrollment Growth and Size Adjustments
  - School and district size;
  - Enrollment growth and save harmless.
- Add-Ons and Missing Components
  - Charter school student activities;
  - Home school student activities;
  - Home school student programs;
  - Additional components potentially needed in the formula.
- Adequacy and Sustainability of Revenue Sources
  - General fund revenue;
  - Land grant permanent fund.

Upon the conclusion of each session, LESC staff will complete a qualitative analysis of expert testimony and member comments to identify important themes or general trends. This analysis will complement the quantitative analysis that will be led by LESC staff, with both sources of data informing LESC staff's framing of findings to the committee.

## Outreach

LESC staff will conduct outreach to public education stakeholders utilizing existing LESL listservs, with specific outreach to the New Mexico School Boards Association, Public Charter Schools of New Mexico, the New Mexico Coalition of Educational Leaders, and the New Mexico Association of School Business Officials.

There will be an intentional effort on the part of LESL staff to maximize the inclusiveness of the working group while also amplifying the voices of those who may have been historically underrepresented in conversations related to the public school funding formula.

In doing so, LESL staff will issue a press release to advertise public school funding formula working group sessions more broadly and to share these opportunities with stakeholders that may not be reached using existing listservs.

LESL staff will also advertise public school funding formula working group sessions on their website.

## Conclusion of the Public School Funding Formula Review

By the end of December 2023, LESL staff will deliver an overview of the working group's findings to the LESL. Upon consultation with LESL leadership, staff may proceed to phase two of the project – collaborating with stakeholders in creating a proposal for redesigning the public school funding formula. This proposal will be collaboratively drafted with external stakeholders throughout the 2024 interim session, with the goal of presenting legislation to the LESL for potential committee endorsement before the 2025 legislative session.