

Public Education: Student Performance and Extended Learning

Background Information

Math and reading proficiency rates have long been key measures of student academic success. In the *Martinez-Yazzie* education lawsuit, the court used these metrics as benchmarks for educational sufficiency. National data suggests overall student achievement has worsened over the pandemic, increasing the urgency to help students re-engage in school and recover academically. However, school participation in interventions to make up lost instructional time—K-5 Plus and Extended Learning Time (ELT) programs—remains low. Additionally, a change in assessments for FY21 limits the state’s ability to compare current performance to pre-pandemic performance.

LegisSTAT Recap. On October 28, 2021, LFC staff reported the Public Education Department (PED) lacked data on student academic performance during the pandemic, hindering the state’s ability to ensure schools were serving at-risk students with appropriate interventions. Staff also reported statewide participation in K-5 Plus and ELT programs declined while student chronic absenteeism soared. In response, PED proposed requiring statewide assessments at the end of FY22. PED’s FY23 budget request also kept K-5 Plus and ELT fully funded with the intent to increase enrollment.

Progress Report

Student Performance Data. On November 12, 2021, PED accelerated efforts to assess students, issuing a statewide directive to collect interim test data from all schools at the beginning, middle, and end of FY22. The department set a target deadline for submitting all assessment results by June 30, 2022.

On December 3, 2021, PED reported preliminary data on FY21 short-cycle assessments. Although not representative of the state, the results indicated student math and reading proficiency rates had fallen below pre-pandemic levels.

On May 13, 2022, PED reported beginning-of-year (BOY) and middle-of-year (MOY) interim assessment data for FY21 and FY22, showing a dip in student performance at the start of FY22. Mid-year results suggest students have improved performance slightly.

Extended Learning. On March 3, 2022, PED released details for ELT, K-5 Plus, K-12 Plus, and planning grant programs for extended learning opportunities. PED conducted regional meetings across the state, urging school leaders to add learning time for students.

On March 9, 2022, the state enacted the 2022 GAA, providing sufficient funding to offer 73 thousand students K-5 Plus (55 percent of K-5 students) and 158 thousand students in ELT (85 percent of all students).

On April 29, 2022, PED reported 6,751 students in K-5 Plus and 136 thousand students in ELT programs budgeted for FY23, down from 8,334 students in K-5 Plus and 139 thousand students in ELT programs funded during FY22.

Chart 1.1: New Mexico 4th Grade Proficiency Rates

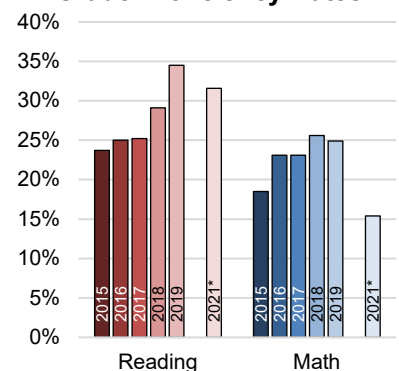
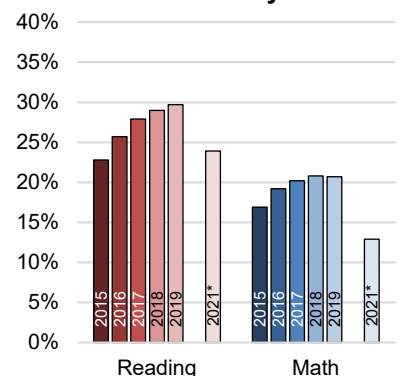


Chart 1.2: New Mexico 8th Grade Proficiency Rates

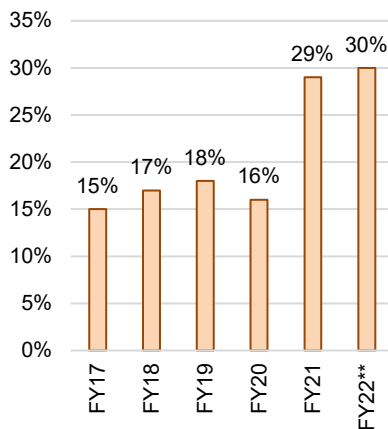


*Not a representative sample; only 10.3 percent of fourth graders and 9.5 percent of eighth graders tested in 2021

Near-Term Leading Indicators

Chart 2.1: Student Chronic Absenteeism Rates

(missing ≥10% of the school year)



*Estimated as of April 2022
**Estimated as of October 2021

Chart 2.2: Extended Learning Time Program Participation

(all students)

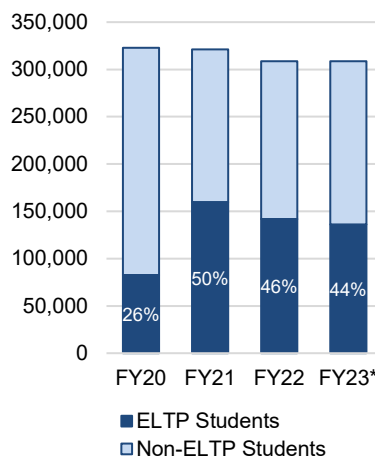


Chart 2.3: K-5 Plus Participation

(K-5 students)

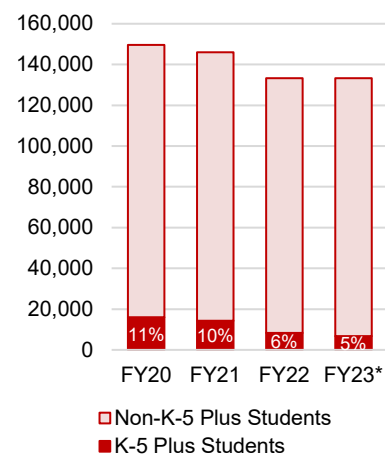


Chart 2.4: iMSSA Students Meeting Targets

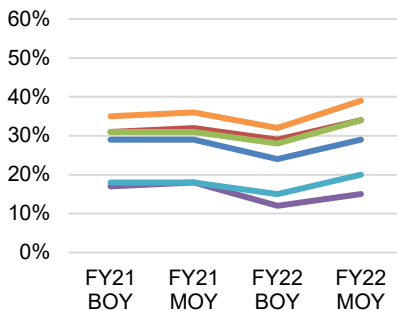
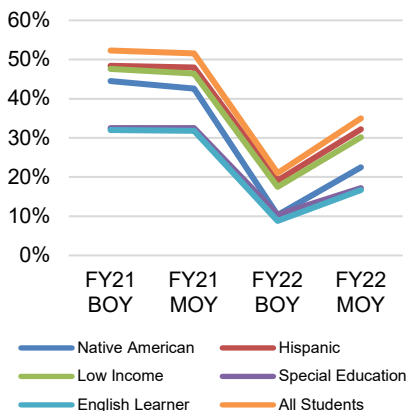


Chart 2.5: iStation Students Meeting Targets



Performance Trends:

- **Student Performance Data.** Student interim performance shows some improvement, but large achievement gaps remain for at-risk students.
- Educators have access to short-cycle student performance data but many are not trained to use data to inform and change instructional practices.
- At-risk students are more likely to be absent from school and historically perform worse on all academic metrics.
- **Extended Learning.** Participation in K-5 Plus continues to fall, with only 5 percent of elementary school students projected to enroll in FY23.
- Despite Las Cruces, the second largest district, opting into ELT for FY23, PED is allowing schools previously in ELT to opt out, resulting in a net loss of enrollment in the program.
- Chronic absenteeism rates are increasing, minimizing the impact of extended learning interventions.

Suggested Questions:

- How is PED using interim tests to turnaround low performing schools?
- What does interim assessment data tell the state about student outcomes?
- How is PED increasing participation in K-5 Plus or ELT programs?
- What is PED's response to school districts that opt out of K-5 Plus or ELT?
- What is PED doing to address chronic absenteeism rates?
- What is PED doing to improve attendance, achievement, and attainment?
- How is PED closing gaps in student outcomes?

Agency Action Steps

From Prior LegisSTAT:

Require student testing by end of FY22 **COMPLETE**

Provide flexibility for ELT and then review efficacy **IN PROGRESS**

Proposed Next Steps:

Report FY22 EOY student math and reading scores **October 2022**

Report FY22 state attendance and absenteeism rates **October 2022**

Set targets for low-performing schools **June 2022**

Require ELT for low-performing schools **August 2022**

Performance Targets:

Measure	FY23 Target	Status Rating
K-5 Plus Participation	6%	R
ELT Program Participation	52%	R
Reading Proficiency	37%	R
Math Proficiency	22%	R
Achievement Gaps	<10%	R
4-Year Graduation Rate	78%	R
4-Year Graduation Gap	<5%	R
Chronic Absenteeism	28%	R
College Remediation	23%	R

*FY21 data is not a representative sample. Math proficiency rates are less than 20%.

Long-Term Outcomes

Chart 3.1: Average Number of Days Students are Absent

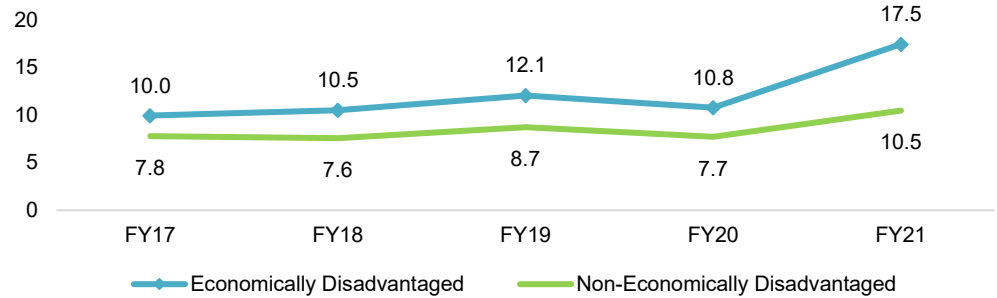


Chart 3.2: Reading Proficiency Rates for At-Risk Students

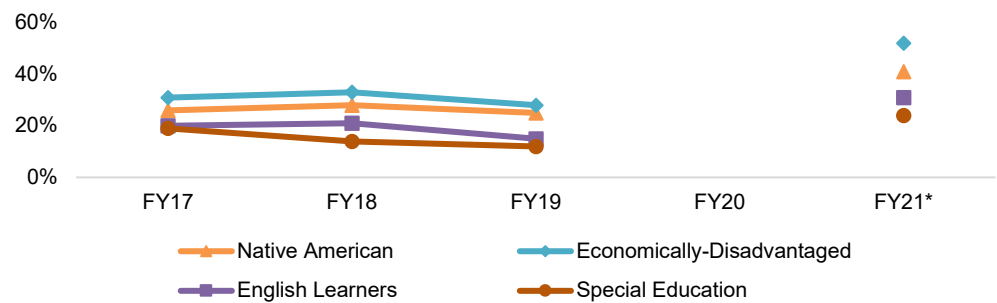


Chart 3.3: Math Proficiency Rates for At-Risk Students

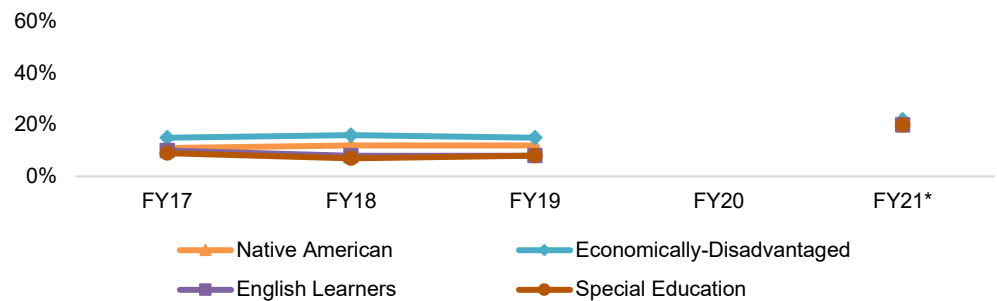
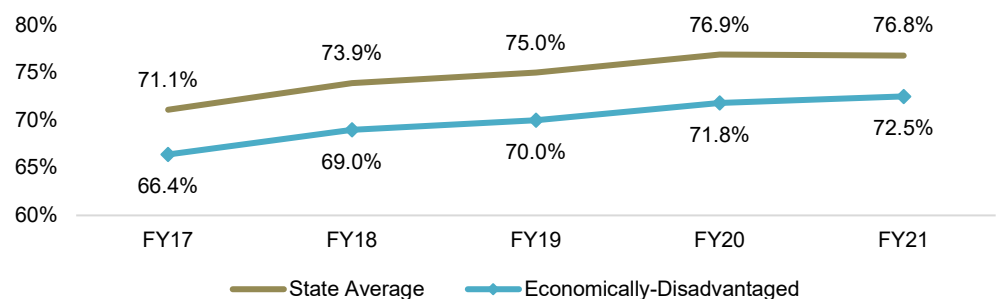


Chart 3.4: 4-Year High School Graduation Rates



What is LegisSTAT?

- LegisSTAT is an **initiative of the LFC** designed to help us become a more effective partner with New Mexico state agencies in continually improving agency programs and policies.
- It is based on a leadership strategy known as **PerformanceStat** that uses ongoing, data-driven conversations between leadership—typically a mayor, governor, or agency head—and senior agency managers to identify and address important organizational challenges. A well-known example is CitiStat in Baltimore.
- LegisSTAT **adapts the PerformanceStat approach to a legislative context**. It involves ongoing meetings with agencies throughout the year, either woven into budget hearings by carving out time for LegisSTAT sessions or through separate LegisSTAT meetings.
- The goal is to ensure **focused conversations** between the LFC (as a committee or subcommittee) and agency leaders about addressing high-priority agency performance challenges and opportunities. Questions by members often include:
 - ✓ What do we know about this challenge or trend (understanding the facts)
 - ✓ Why is that trend occurring? (understanding the dynamics and root causes)
 - ✓ What is the agency doing to proactively tackle this challenge? (understanding planned actions)
 - ✓ What could we expect by the next meeting? (understanding the timeline)

What are the principles of LegisSTAT?

1. **Focused:** LegisSTAT meetings focus on the most important challenges facing agencies, identified ahead of time by the committee and its staff.
2. **Committee-driven:** LegisSTAT meetings are driven by the committee (or sub-committee) chair and by LFC members' questions, with only short agency presentations.
3. **Emphasizing deeper dives:** LegisSTAT meetings use follow-up questions by members to ask agencies to be more specific and get to the root causes of problems. This is sometimes referred to as the “five whys,” since it often takes multiple “why” questions to get to root causes. LegisSTAT meeting agendas are structured to focus on one issue at a time for that reason.
4. **Action-oriented:** LegisSTAT meetings are designed to encourage agencies to commit to specific actions by the next meeting, since even long-term challenges require near-term actions to generate progress.
5. **Strong on accountability:** LegisSTAT meetings start with agency updates on action items from the previous meeting. After a LegisSTAT meeting, a summary of action items committed to by the agency is distributed. That is important because most of the value of LegisSTAT occurs *between* meetings, when agencies work to achieve action items.
6. **Collaborative:** LegisSTAT meetings require ongoing collaboration between legislators and agency leaders, so meetings have a spirit of respect and collegiality, even as agencies are pushed to achieve better outcomes.
7. **Aiming for impact:** LegisSTAT meetings are the most visible part of any LegisSTAT initiative, yet an important part of the initiative's impact occurs between meetings, when agencies work to achieve action items committed to during the meetings. It is why identifying specific action items is so important.