
2026 Committee Endorsed Legislative Proposals

Suspension or Removal of Individual School Board Members. This bill would allow the secretary of the Public Education Department (PED) to suspend or remove individual local school board members. Current statute (Section 22-2-2 NMSA 1978 and Section 22-2-14 NMSA 1978) allows for the suspension or removal of an entire school board, local superintendent, or school principal for cause. This legislation would provide the secretary authority to suspend or remove individual school board members, providing a more targeted and proportional tool to address misconduct, legal violations, or disruptive behavior without destabilizing entire boards.

Increasing the Employer Share of Health Insurance Premiums. This bill would amend Section 12-7-4 NMSA 1978 to require all school districts and charter schools to pay at least 80 percent of group insurance premiums for all public school employees, beginning in fiscal year 2027. School districts and charter schools would have the option to pay more than this minimum contribution if they chose to do so.

Attendance Provisions for Students with Severe Medical Conditions. This bill would amend the state's Attendance for Success Act (Section 22, Article 12A NMSA 1978) to allow for greater consideration in excusing absences and directing attendance interventions by school districts and charter schools for students who are regularly absent from school due to a significant medical condition.

Strengthening Teacher Preparation and Residencies. This bill would establish a task force to review, revise, and strengthen both traditional and alternative teacher preparation program requirements, including clinical practice. The goal is to ensure all teacher candidates receive high-quality, substantive preparation to meet the needs of all students, including English learners and students with disabilities. The task force would include various stakeholders, including educator preparation programs, school district leadership, PED, the Higher Education Department, LESC, and the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC). The bill would also index state-funded stipends for teacher residents and apprentices based on education and experience, tying stipends to Level 1 minimum teacher salaries.

Comprehensive Approach to Math Instruction. This bill would create a comprehensive state approach to math instruction by creating a system for more robust teacher training in math education, increased requirements in educator preparation programs related to math content and methods, and creating processes to increase instructional supports for math in schools.

Allowable Responses to Student Behavior. This bill would amend existing law to clearly define restraint and seclusion practices in public schools, specifying which actions are permitted and which are prohibited. It would introduce and define terms such as elopement and physical escort, and prohibit chemical restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint, and seclusion without continuous line-of-sight supervision. The bill would also clarify the use of timeouts and add specificity to training and reporting requirements within school safety plans.

Literacy. This bill would expand evidence-based reading supports to build upon New Mexico's structured literacy framework. It would introduce additional requirements for school responses following early literacy screenings, establish staffing structures such as literacy coaches statewide, increase parental notification and involvement for students struggling with reading, and consider conditional promotion with support for struggling students.

Office of Special Education. This bill would codify the Office of Special Education within PED in state law and create a Special Education Act. The proposed act would assign the office responsibilities such as developing individualized education plans (IEPs), providing professional development and behavioral supports, guiding transition planning and outcomes, promoting family and student engagement, and conducting data monitoring. It would also amend requirements for local education agencies to ensure alignment and continuity of services for students with disabilities.