

Education is Calling

NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Strategic Plan for Success



Education is Calling

As the Secretary Designate of the Public Education Department (PED), I am honored to present our **Strategic Plan for Success**. This plan represents our collective commitment to providing a high-quality, equitable education for every student in New Mexico. It is a testament to our belief in the potential of our children and the unwavering dedication of our educators, families, and communities.

This plan is grounded in the deeply held belief that **New Mexico's students deserve a world-class education** and **ALL students are capable of achieving** anything they set their minds to. It is our responsibility to provide them with the tools and opportunities to thrive.

Our vision is clear: **To create a culturally and linguistically responsive education system that meets the social, emotional, and academic needs of all students**. This vision is brought to life through the **Big 5 Goals** which serve as the foundation of our strategic plan:



Mariana D. Padilla

- 1. Accelerate Literacy Achievement:** Improve reading proficiency across all grade levels, ensuring that every student is proficient in reading at grade level and that every student graduates with the literacy foundation essential for lifelong learning and success in college and career.
- 2. Accelerate Mathematics Achievement:** Improve mathematics proficiency across all grade levels by fostering critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and mathematical reasoning. This goal ensures that all students graduate with a strong mathematical foundation essential for success in higher education or the modern workforce in New Mexico.
- 3. Improve Student Attendance:** Improve student attendance across all grade levels by fostering a culture of engagement and accountability, ensuring that every student in New Mexico has the opportunity to fully participate in their education and achieve their academic potential.
- 4. Increase Graduation Rates:** Increase graduation rates by providing comprehensive support and resources to ensure that every student is equipped to complete their educational journey and graduate ready for success in higher education, careers, and civic life in New Mexico.
- 5. Foster Shared Accountability:** All stakeholders—students, educators, families, school administrators, communities and the PED—share responsibility for educational outcomes, working collaboratively to support each other's growth and success, ultimately strengthening the educational system across New Mexico.

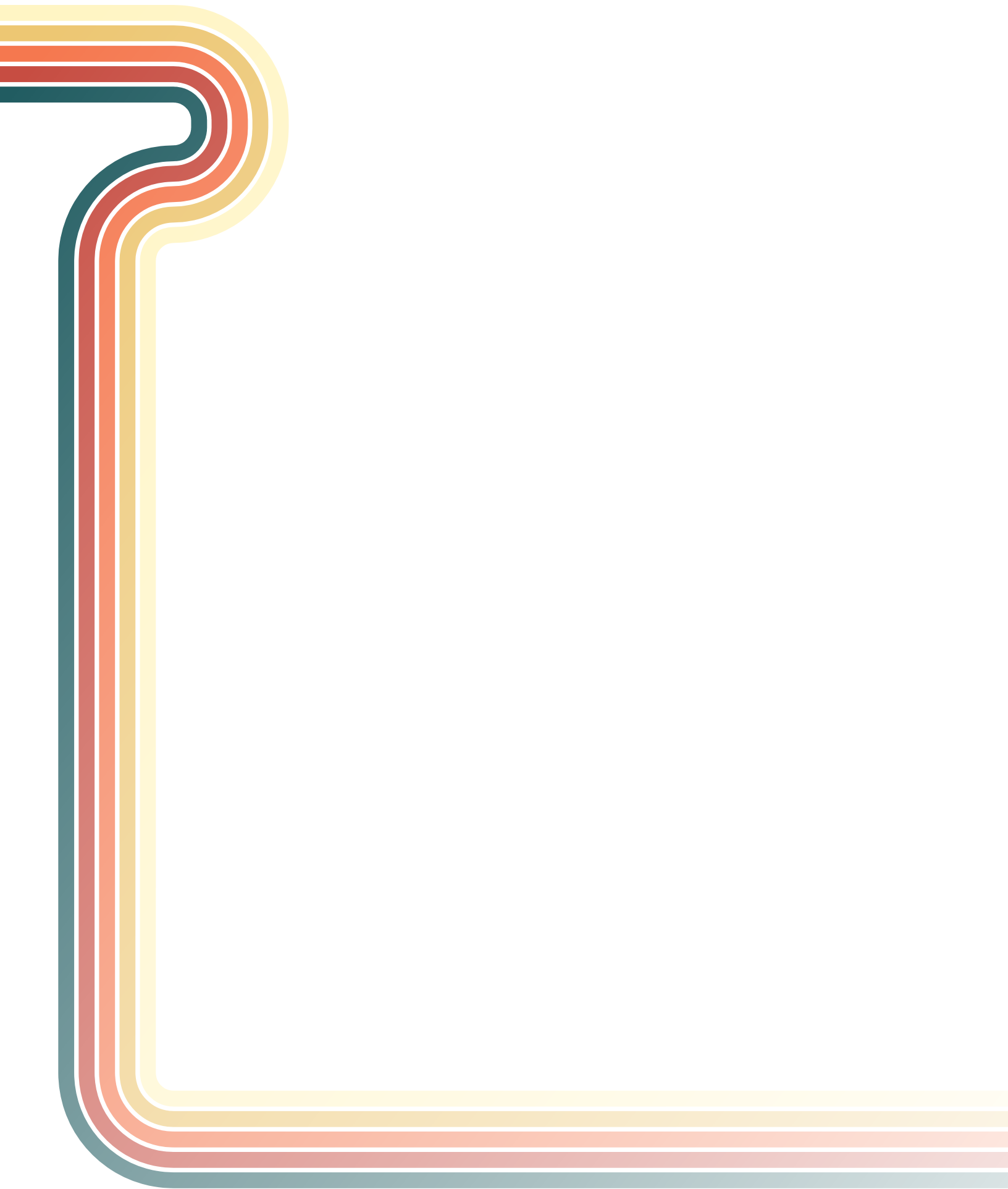
I am confident that together we can achieve these goals. This plan is a living document, a testament to our commitment to continuous improvement and adaptability. It will evolve as we learn and grow, guided by data, evidence, and the voices of our communities. I invite you to **join us on this journey to transform education in New Mexico and empower every student to reach their full potential**.

Thank you,

Mariana D. Padilla
Secretary of Public Education

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Driving Student-Centered Equity by Fully Implementing the New Mexico Education Acts & Initiatives

What is equity?

Equity in education means giving every child the support they need to succeed, no matter who they are or where they come from. It recognizes that some students face additional challenges, whether it's because of their language, disability, or family income. Equity ensures that each student gets the right resources and opportunities to thrive in school and life.

Why does equity matter?

When we place equity at the center of our efforts, we are not just helping students graduate from school—we're helping build stronger communities. Equity in education leads to better opportunities for our kids, ensuring they can pursue higher education, get good jobs, and contribute to a healthy economy. More importantly, equity is about fairness. It's about making sure every student—no matter their family's income, their language, or their abilities—has the same opportunity to achieve success.

PED's commitment to educational equity

The New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) is committed to supporting the appropriate conditions where every student receives the best possible education. We recognize that equity is not just an ideal—it's a responsibility. Our efforts focus on addressing the specific needs of historically underserved student groups, such as Native American students, Hispanic students, English language learners, students with disabilities, and students from low-income families.

Equity in action for our students and schools

For students, equity in action means their diversity is their strength and it is celebrated and supported. It means that their culture and language are honored and encouraged as part of their learning experience, as evidenced by the Indian Education Act, Hispanic Education Act, Bilingual Multicultural Education Act, and Black Education Act. It means that their exceptionality is seen as an opportunity to receive personalized support for their learning ability and that their basic needs are met. Whether it's extra



help in the classroom, programs celebrating their culture and language, or ensuring no child is left hungry, equity touches all areas of a student's school experience. For families, equity in action means they can trust that schools are actively working to support their child's unique needs and that schools receive the necessary resources to support students facing economic disadvantages, so they can overcome barriers to learning.

In all these efforts, the PED values students' identities and ensures they receive the comprehensive support they need to thrive academically and personally. The journey toward equity in New Mexico's schools is ongoing, and the PED is committed to ensuring every child has a fair chance of success. With strong initiatives and support systems in place, we are moving closer to a future where every student can thrive.

Key Legislation and Initiatives

- **Indian Education Act**
- **Hispanic Education Act**
- **Black Education Act**
- **Bilingual Multicultural Education Act**
- **Office of Special Education**
- **At-Risk Intervention Response**
- **English Language Development**

The Four Strategic Pillars

The PED's Four Strategic Pillars serve as a foundational element of the strategic plan focused on vastly improving educational outcomes for all students in New Mexico by 2027. These pillars align with the Martinez/Yazzie findings and are intended to guide the work of the PED, as well as inform its budgetary and programmatic decision-making.

			
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<p>Educator Ecosystem</p> <p>Ensure every student has well prepared, well supported, highly effective educators who use culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy to guide their learning and development.</p> <p>KEY COMPONENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and retention of educators • High-quality teacher preparation • Professional development • Principal and superintendent leadership development 	<p>Whole Student & Culturally Responsive Education</p> <p>Support schools and classrooms in providing students with deeper, enriched academic learning that is integrated with social-emotional learning and is culturally and linguistically responsive.</p> <p>KEY COMPONENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally responsive instruction • Social-emotional learning • Positive school climates 	<p>College & Career Readiness</p> <p>Increase students' successful completion of high school with research-based, relevant, applied, and experiential learning opportunities that support all students to become college- and career-ready and to contribute as productive members of their communities.</p> <p>KEY COMPONENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career-connected learning • Community-centered opportunities • College acceleration programs • Post-secondary readiness 	<p>Student Supports & Opportunities</p> <p>Provide equitable access to asset-based support services and learning opportunities that enable all students to thrive in their educational setting regardless of their demographics, family income level, or disability status.</p> <p>KEY COMPONENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health services • Attendance supports • Extended learning opportunities

Goal I:

Accelerate Literacy Achievement



Improve reading proficiency across all grade levels, ensuring that every student is proficient in reading at grade level and graduates with the literacy foundation essential for lifelong learning and success in college and career.

	Strategies	Outcomes
1	Provide high-impact tutoring for literacy	By 2027, increase the percentage, of students scoring proficient or advanced in Early Literacy and Reading from 38% (2022) to 42% in kindergarten, 32% (2022) to 36% in first grade, and 37% (2022) to 42% in second grade.
2	Train all elementary and middle school teachers in the Science of Reading and structured literacy	All kindergarten through eighth grade teachers will be trained in the Science of Reading and structured literacy by the end of the 2027 school year.
3	Provide coaching to all K-6 teachers in the implementation of high-quality instructional materials	At least 90% of all LEAs will utilize high-quality instructional materials with professional learning for teachers by 2027.
4	Ensure all educator preparation programs (EPPs) are fully aligned with the principles and best practices of the Science of Reading	Conduct a Science of Reading review of all NM approved EPPs to ensure syllabi and primary text alignment with evidence-based reading instruction by 2027. Set high-quality standards so that all new educators are adequately prepared with the necessary evidence-based literacy competencies. Increase first time pass rates of the Praxis 5205: Elementary Teaching of Reading exam from 60% in 2022 to 80% by 2027.

Literacy Highlights

New Mexico's Summer Reading Program

The 2024 inaugural New Mexico Summer Reading Program provided structured literacy instruction aligned with the Science of Reading to students in kindergarten to 8th grade. In partnership with higher education institutions, tribal entities, schools, and early childhood providers, the PED established 117 reading program sites and enrolled more than 9,500 students. Over 1,000 instructors were trained in structured literacy and provided high impact literacy instruction to students in small group settings. Families from across the state were eager for their children participate in a free literacy program that demonstrated meaningful outcomes for students.



Literacy Supports for All Students

During the 2024–2025 school year, the PED is providing structured literacy training for secondary educators so they are prepared to teach the foundational literacy skills for students who are not reading at grade level. This professional learning focuses on disciplinary or content area literacy strategies that build community by guiding participants through inquiry, collaboration, and reflection with their colleagues around reading that will support readers as their content area reading becomes increasingly important to their academic success.

As we focus on literacy skills for all grades, the PED partners with districts, schools, and charter schools to directly support our vision that all students will be guaranteed the access to literacy education, empowering them to access their full potential and future choices. This starts with our dyslexia screening in first grade and continues with our work with structured literacy supports and coaching. Model schools can offer a path to other schools for holistic literacy implementation via coaching and structured literacy training. We support schools with our Literacy Support Model, where schools have access to regional coaches and administrator communities of practice. Our belief is that by making transformational systemic change, the work around structured literacy is sustainable and improves literacy for all students.

Goal II:

Accelerate Mathematics Achievement



Improve mathematics proficiency across all grade levels by fostering critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and mathematical reasoning. This goal ensures that all students graduate with a strong mathematical foundation essential for success in higher education or the modern workforce in New Mexico.

	Strategies	Outcomes
1	Improve mathematics proficiency for ALL students	By 2027, increase the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in mathematics from 24% (2022) to 31%.
2	Provide elementary teachers professional development to support mathematics instruction	Provide yearly professional development to 2,500 math educators, focusing on up-to-date research and evidence to enhance mathematics teaching and learning with the best curriculum materials for all students.
3	Reduce mathematics content area teacher vacancies	By 2027, reduce mathematics content area teacher vacancies by 50%.
4	Boost adoption of high-quality instructional materials for mathematics	By 2027, increase the percentage of local educational agencies adopting high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) for mathematics from the state-adopted list from 43% (2022) to 60%, ensuring that students in grades K-12 engage in standards-aligned instruction.
5	Ensure all educator preparation programs are fully aligned with the principles and best practices of teaching mathematics	Incorporate rigorous teacher preparation competencies for the teaching of mathematics that are aligned to standards and based on up-to-date research, and ensure a robust mathematics methods course is added to coursework for all teacher candidates by 2027.

Mathematics Highlights

Math Coaching

During the 2023–24 school year, the PED contracted with the Teaching Lab to provide teachers from Cuba and Pecos elementary schools professional development and coaching in mathematical practices, standards, and instruction. Coaches provided weekly instructional coaching with feedback cycles for every teacher in grades K–6. The results were overwhelmingly positive. The PED will be extending this strategy to 50 additional schools over the next three years. The below data demonstrates the impact the mathematics coaching had on student academic performance.

	Strategies		Outcomes	
	BOY Beginning of year	EOY End of year	BOY Beginning of year	EOY End of year
Core Action 1 Standards-aligned content and rigor	69%	100%	67%	94%
Core Action 2 Effective instructional strategies	30%	87%	26%	65%
Core Action 3 Students engaging in math practices and lessons	20%	83%	23%	63%
Overall	41%	89%	37%	72%

Focus on Algebra

During the 2023–2024 school year, the PED implemented the Focus on Algebra initiative for 6th through 9th grade educators. The two-year project focuses on building teachers’ algebraic content knowledge and integration of social-emotional and culturally and linguistically responsive instruction. A total of 150 educators from 18 school districts engaged in this learning series. We aim to engage 54 additional schools in the next three years. You can hear more from school leaders and teachers on the impact of this work in their everyday instructional practice through the video code to the right.



Goal III:

Improve Student Attendance



Improve student attendance across all grade levels by fostering a culture of engagement and accountability, ensuring that every student in New Mexico has the opportunity to fully participate in their education and achieve their academic potential.

	Strategies	Outcomes
1	Reduce the statewide student chronic absenteeism rate	By 2027, reduce the chronic absenteeism rate from 39.22% (2022) to 22%.
2	Increase family and community engagement opportunities	Support family engagement by increasing access and opportunities to help parents support their child's success in school, from less than 100 participants per year in 2022 to at least 3,000 participants from across the state in 2027.
3	Improve the sense of belonging for all students	By 2027, increase the percentage of students with a strong sense of belonging at their school from 36% (2022) to 50%.



Attendance Highlights

Stunning Attendance Improvement in Santa Fe Public Schools

Santa Fe Public Schools reduced their chronic absenteeism rate by 20 percentage points in 2023–2024 by prioritizing attendance and leveraging attendance coaches to collaborate with families of students with a 10% or more absence rate to create student success plans. Additionally, Santa Fe Public Schools provides a social services specialist to support high-needs schools and facilitate smooth transitions for students returning to class. Best practices showing results:

- Ensure consistent implementation of attendance interventions and support.
- Stipends for attendance teams with additional duties to tackle attendance challenges.
- Attendance coaches to build relationships with individual students and their families.

Manzano High School Leading with Student Success Systems

Manzano High School in Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) integrated attendance and academic supports into the school's attendance teams. School staff get trained and certified in brain development, trauma-informed instruction, and restorative practices to support the complex needs of students. APS has recently expanded Student Success Systems training districtwide.

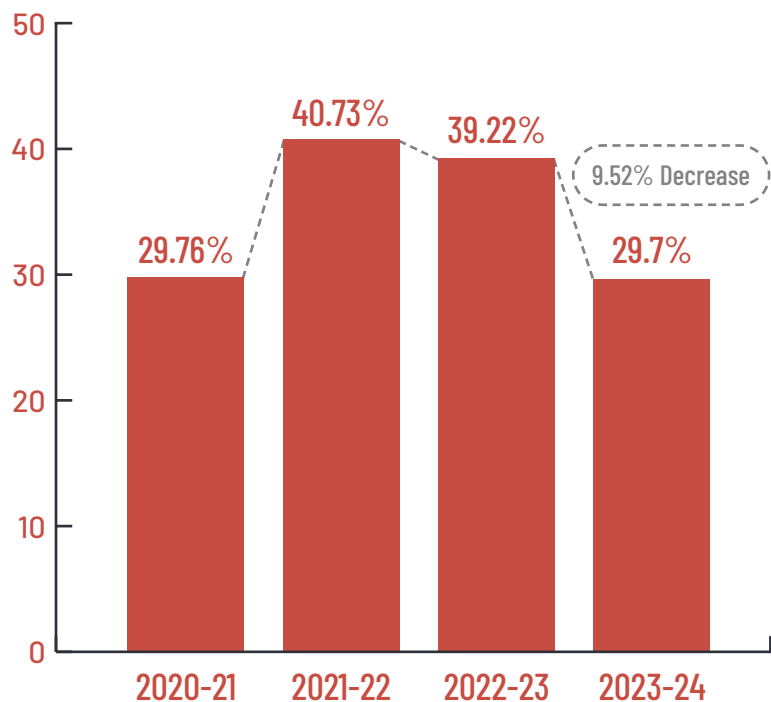
From a Parent's Voice:

- *Thank You! Manzano High School has really helped my family. I didn't want to ask for help, but when I did, you were there. I never expected to get this much help.* – Parent at Manzano HS
- *Thank you for helping my son get back on track and believing in himself. He really is smart and can do this!* – Parent at Manzano HS

Statewide Improvements in Chronic Absenteeism

The PED has taken a multifaceted approach to decreasing statewide chronic absenteeism rates. This approach includes providing additional support and resources for educators and families, targeted interventions for at-risk students, and awarding \$2.5 million to school districts to implement comprehensive support systems. The PED also invested \$1 million in professional learning and coaching for schools seeking to improve attendance and graduation rates during the 2023–2024 school year. These targeted investments have demonstrated measurable outcomes, decreasing the statewide chronic absenteeism rate by 6.4 percentage points since the 2021–2022 school year.

Percent of Chronically Absent Students by Year



Goal IV:

Increase Graduation Rates



Increase graduation rates by providing comprehensive support and resources to ensure that every student is equipped to complete their educational journey and graduate ready for success in higher education, careers, and civic life in New Mexico.

	Strategies	Outcomes
1	Increase the four, five, and six year graduation rate	By 2027, increase 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year graduation rates for all students from 76.2% (2022) to 80.0%.
2	Improve participation in CTE programs	By 2027, increase participation in career and technical education (CTE) programs from 66.8% (2022) to 70.1% (2027).
3	Increase preparation for and enrollment in postsecondary education	By 2027, increase the percentage of students who enroll in postsecondary education after graduation from 51% (2022) to 53.6% (2027).
4	Increase student enrollment in early college coursework	By 2027, increase the percentage of students who complete their high school degree with credit from at least one college course to 75%.

Graduation Highlights

Spotlight: Gadsden Independent School District's Approach to Career and Technical Education

Gadsden Independent Schools (GISD) has participated in career and technical education (CTE) programming for two decades. GISD has nearly 4,200 students enrolled in the four high schools offering CTE programming. Minority student enrollment is 97% districtwide. GISD boasts an 83% graduation rate across all high schools, placing them in the top 20% of NM.

GISD offers 17 CTE pathways across all 16 career clusters. Programming includes Agriculture, Creative Media, Architecture, Computer Science, Automotive Technology, Engineering, Culinary Arts, Law Enforcement, Construction Trades, Welding, Marketing, and more. Within the 17 CTE pathways, 85% of all high school students participate and 98.8% of CTE concentrators in the district graduate in four years. In one year, students participating in CTE programs earned 195 industry-recognized certifications.

GISD hosts eight career and technical student organizations (CTSOs), including Business Professionals of America (BPA), DECA Inc., SkillsUSA, Technology Student Association (TSA), EdRising, FCCLA, FFA, and HOSA. Providing access to the CTSOs that align with the career pathways creates opportunities for students to gain hands-on and real-world work experiences that supplement what they learn in the classroom.

Stay in School Project in Deming

The Stay in School Project was an Office of Special Education homegrown project based on evidence-based education practices and supports to students with disabilities, which included:

- Attendance supports
- Interventions for failing grades
- Behavioral interventions
- Work study opportunities
- Job exploration opportunities

Deming Public Schools—one of the program's participating districts—hired a transition coordinator who served as a graduation interventionist for students with disabilities. This individual monitored students' grades, attendance, and behavior. Participating students note that project staff enriched their sense of belonging and helped them through their academic and personal struggles.

Four Year Cohort Graduation Rates for Deming:

Graduation rates before the project: **42.6%**
Graduation rates after the project: **74.0%**

School Spotlight: Charlie Y. Brown High School in Bloomfield

Between 2018–2022, Charlie Y. Brown High School in Bloomfield increased graduation rates from 37.8% to 74%. This alternative school's focus on providing a positive and supportive learning environment contributes to overall student success by offering resources such as small class sizes, dual-credit and college courses, and a friendly, supportive staff. By offering a variety of support services, the school can help students overcome challenges that typically get in the way of graduation and academic success.

Charlie Y. Brown High School demonstrates how a school can improve graduation rates by utilizing a solid school improvement plan and data, while working alongside students and families.



Goal V:

Shared Accountability



All stakeholders—students, educators, families, and communities—share responsibility for educational outcomes, working collaboratively to support each other’s growth and success, ultimately strengthening the educational system across New Mexico.

	Strategies	Outcomes
1	School improvement	Increase the number of schools with a spotlight or traditional designation to 300 and reduce the number of schools in need of improvement (CSI and MRI) by 100 by 2027.
2	Office of Special Education	The Office of Special Education will implement a statewide monitoring system to accomplish the below outcomes within two years: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce the number of schools requiring corrective action plans by 30%. 2. Decrease parental and state complaints related to students with disabilities by 25%. 3. Facilitate regular training sessions for educators and establish collaborative feedback loops with all stakeholders.
3	Indian Education Act	By the end of school year 2027, the New Mexico Public Education Department will assist districts and charter schools achieve the following outcomes for Native American students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The four-year graduation rate for Native American students shall meet or surpass the state average four-year graduation rate. • Each school year, at least 100 Native American students shall earn a state bilingual seal upon graduating from high school. • Reading, math, and science proficiency rates for Native American students shall meet or surpass the state average. • The number of 520-certified Native American language and culture teachers shall increase to 200.
4	Cradle to Career	Create systems working alongside of preschool programming to evaluate at least 95% of all kindergarten students for school readiness. The programming will contain developmental domains of preschool children entering kindergarten: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, communication skills, and general knowledge.
5	Educator mentorship and retention	Increase the percentage of teachers receiving mentorship during their first year to 100% with a viable measurement tool by 2027.

Shared Accountability Highlights

Office of Special Education’s Unified IEP Template

In 2024, the Office of Special Education met with a diverse coalition of stakeholders, including school leaders, special education experts, and community representatives, to address the challenges associated with the Individual Education Program (IEP) template—a document which outlines the necessary services and supports for students in special education. The need for a standardized approach became clear due to the existing variations in multiple versions of IEPs, with lengths exceeding 50 pages, resulting in confusion, inconsistency, and students not receiving the necessary services to be successful. With the goal of streamlining the IEP process, we gathered extensive feedback to develop a more cohesive and effective framework.

The proposed unified IEP template is designed to:

- Streamline the IEP process: Simplify the process so that the IEP is easier to implement.
- Promote ease of use and interpretation: Standardize the format to improve communication and collaboration among educators, parents, and students.
- Facilitate clear measurable goal setting: Establish goals that are measurable and tailored to student needs, improving the ability to track a student’s progress.
- Provide a unified approach across districts: Adopt a consistent IEP template to ensure equal access to quality education, expedite services for transferring students, and prevent any loss of services during transitions.

The implementation of this unified IEP template is scheduled for implementation during the 2024–2025 school year, marking a significant milestone in the PED’s ongoing commitment to enhancing educational outcomes for students with disabilities across New Mexico.

This initiative exemplifies the power of shared accountability and collaboration, bringing together diverse perspectives to create a solution that addresses the needs of our students and families. Together, we are fostering a more inclusive and more supportive educational environment where every student can thrive.



Shared Accountability Highlights

Supporting School Improvement and Leadership Development

Priority Schools Bureau leadership development program has fostered remarkable improvements in schools across New Mexico. One striking example is Blanco Elementary School, where Principal Lynda Spencer sought to address learning loss in math stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Partnering with the Math Teacher Leader Network through Los Alamos National Lab, Principal Spencer secured funding for dedicated math instructional planning time and professional development opportunities, including coaching and modeling. This focused initiative yielded substantial gains, with Blanco Elementary students increasing their math proficiency by an impressive 25–30% in just one year. This success underscores the profound impact that dedicated resources and targeted professional development can have on student outcomes.



Beyond academic achievements, this leadership development program cultivates a culture of ambition and excellence. At East Picacho Elementary, Principal Michael Chaires, along with his staff and students, embraced a shared vision encapsulated in their inspiring motto: “We are educated, empowered, and persistent.” This collective commitment translated into tangible results, with the school boosting its 2023–24 School Accountability Score (www.NMVISTAS.org) by 10 points in a single school year. Their dedication was further acknowledged by the broader community, as East Picacho was honored as the “Best Elementary School” by the Las Cruces Bulletin. Principal Chaires also received well-deserved recognition as the NM Elementary School Principal of the Year for 2024. These accomplishments illustrate the transformative power of a shared vision and dedicated leadership in driving both academic progress and community recognition.

Cradle to Career

In the spring of 2024, the PED, in partnership with the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) and districts and state charters, established the first statewide measure of kindergarten readiness with the creation of the [Early Development Instrument \(EDI\)](#). The EDI measures kindergarten readiness using five domains: 1) physical health and well-being, 2) social competence, 3) emotional maturity, 4) language and cognitive development, 5) communication skills and general knowledge. EDI results reflect 98% of all kindergarteners in New Mexico. The EDI results provide the percent of children who are developmentally vulnerable and developmentally on track in each neighborhood and for each of the five EDI domains. EDI results are shared with the local communities to describe how well the early childhood system has been supporting children in the lead up to kindergarten. The PED’s work in school readiness demonstrates our commitment to delivering a world class education to all New Mexico students.

Shared Accountability Highlights

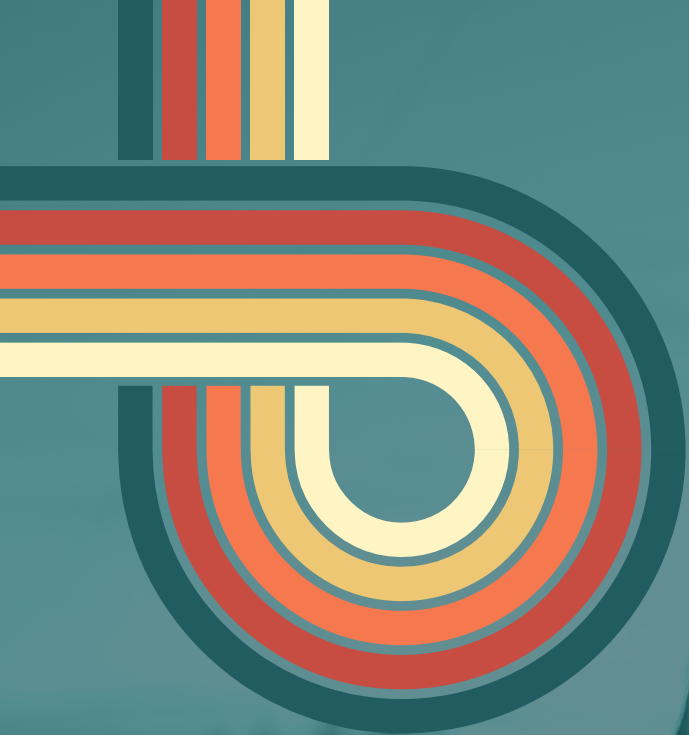
Indian Education Act

School districts across New Mexico are implementing diverse strategies to improve education outcomes for Native American students, as evidenced by end-of-year reports submitted by school districts, charter schools, Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations that received funding through IED grants. Several districts are emphasizing culturally relevant learning experiences to foster student engagement and a stronger sense of cultural identity. For example, Gallup McKinley County Schools offers a Heritage Language & Culture program in which fifth grade students research and deliver presentations in their heritage language (Navajo, Zuni, and Spanish). Dzit Dit Lool School of Empowerment Action and Perseverance (DEAP) has also set a goal that 90% or more of its students will complete a Diné studies course that incorporates core cultural competencies. These programs aim to connect learning to students' cultural backgrounds, promoting a sense of belonging and pride.

Beyond cultural programs, districts are focusing on improving academic performance in core subject areas. Hozho Academy has implemented a targeted SEL curriculum for its 6th grade class based on data from interim assessments, office referrals, and parent/teacher surveys. This initiative has led to a significant decrease in disciplinary issues and improved student behavior. Dream Dine is addressing learning loss stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic by providing reading intervention and math supports, aiming to help all students progress on schedule. Central Consolidated School District is working to implement culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and learning district-wide through collaboration with principals and PED's Curriculum and Instruction Bureau.

Furthermore, several districts are expanding access to college and career readiness programs, which have shown promising impacts on graduation rates and post-secondary enrollment. Jemez Valley Public Schools offers numerous opportunities for college visits, career fairs, and summer programs, with high participation among Native American students. Middle College High School reports that 11% of its Native American students participate in college campus-based summer programs, and 76% of its Native American graduates enroll in two- or four-year college programs. These initiatives not only prepare Native American students with the skills and resources needed for higher education and future careers but also contribute to improved graduation rates and increased enrollment in post-secondary education after high school.

Twenty-two Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations actively engage in implementing afterschool programs, including tutoring services, early career development, and language classes, which provide valuable educational opportunities that enhance academic outcomes and foster greater student engagement in school. Students who participate in these targeted programs gain more personalized support and culturally relevant learning experiences, which can deepen their connection to their studies and improve overall achievement. Additionally, some Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations are working to increase the number of certified language teachers who can teach Indigenous languages and cultural practices within the community or within a local education agency (LEA). For example, the Pueblo of San Felipe has certified 15 community members with a 520 Native American Language and Culture certification. Language teachers play a vital role in preserving and revitalizing Indigenous languages, fostering cultural pride, and strengthening community bonds—benefits that extend to students' self-identity and confidence, which are closely linked to their academic success and engagement.



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