

B i t e s i z e

 The Public Education Department has approved Cooperative Education Services as a provider of an alternative licensure program. The CES program targets existing school district employees who don't have a teacher's license. CES indicated it will partner with school districts with high vacancy rates to help them quickly fill those slots. The year-long program costs about \$1,500.

 The Public School Capital Outlay Council has approved a plan to use a \$10 million appropriation for teacher housing in school districts that receive federal impact aid to pay off existing teacherage debt. The council authorized the Public School Facilities Authority to use the funding from the public school capital outlay fund to cover debts of \$743 thousand for Central Consolidated Schools, \$6.5 million for Gallup-McKinley County Schools, and \$2.7 million for Zuni Public Schools.

 More than 80 percent of educational assistants surveyed by the Higher Education Department said they would be willing to complete the requirements for a teaching license if they had scholarship funds. In the survey conducted in connection to the new Grow Your Own Teachers Act, 60 percent of the nearly 1,000 respondents said they are or have been in a teacher preparation program but have not completed the requirements because of finances, time, or difficulties passing the required assessments.



i n f o r m E D

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Representative Christine Trujillo, Chair / Senator Mimi Stewart, Vice Chair / Rachel S. Gudgel, Director / June 2019

From the Chairwoman

Benefits

It's intuitive. Connecting with minority children through multicultural and bilingual education helps those children succeed. Less intuitive? It helps their non-minority peers succeed as well.

Numerous studies conclude minority children benefit from an education that recognizes their differences. Whether the study looks at indigenous students in Guatemala or Latino immigrants in Tucson, it finds children are more likely to succeed when their language and customs are part of the curriculum.

Education experts say multicultural education fosters self-respect and self-confidence, with students at risk of disengaging from learning when the curriculum fails to reflect what they know and value.

However, the benefits of a multicultural classroom don't stop with the minority students it's designed to help. Studies also show a multicultural education teaches all students to embrace and respect difference, opening the door to environments in which all can contribute and learn from each other.

An in depth study of the impact of immigrants in the classroom found academic performance improves for both immigrants and native students as the percentage of immigrant students increase, even when other factors are controlled for. One experiment found "complex thinking" improved with racial diversity, another found racially diverse groups performed better on an idea-generation task, and still another found non-minorities assigned to racially diverse groups exhibited better reading comprehension than those working with a homogenous group.

As part of education reform during the last legislative session, lawmakers considered and approved several measures promoting multicultural education and inclusion, particularly of Native American students. The goal was to improve the performance of students at risk of failing – English proficiency is a key indicator of risk, as is being a Native American. But New Mexico educators will likely find that a multicultural classroom, designed to make minority students feel included and valued, will engage and enliven all students, helping all of New Mexico's children succeed.

Representative Christine Trujillo

Braided Pre-K Funds Promote Diversity

The use of multiple federal and state funding sources for public prekindergarten programs in New Mexico can lead to children being segregated by income, but "braiding" the programs could allow for socioeconomically diverse classrooms that benefit all students and help the state stretch its education dollar, an LESL report says.

A staff brief prepared for a hearing scheduled for 10:30 a.m. on June 27 notes national and state studies show high-quality prekindergarten helps children – particularly low-income children – succeed throughout school, and research indicates diverse classrooms are good for all students. However, publicly funded prekindergarten in New Mexico is offered through programs that serve different types of students and follow different rules for teacher qualification and other standards.

New Mexico splits state prekindergarten funding between the Public Education Department (PED), which funds prekindergarten offered by school districts, and the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), which contracts with private providers. The Head Start program is operated

by local organizations with grants from and under the supervision of the federal government and typically only accepts children from families living below the poverty level.

In addition, the availability of state-funded prekindergarten has prompted a migration from Head Start to state programs in some communities, and the local Head Start organizations have had to return federal funding, even though state funding is not sufficient to serve all eligible children.

Because the three programs have different funding streams and different standards, programs typically are run separately, although some programs, including those at Las Cruces Public Schools (LCPS) and Presbyterian Medical Services (PMS), are experimenting with blending funding sources to serve children funded through different programs in the same classroom.

Representatives of the Presbyterian and Las Cruces programs are expected to testify before the committee during the hearing.

Las Cruces Public Schools has begun braiding Head Start and PED prekindergarten funding so

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Community Schools Show Promise but Need Work

Community schools, which integrate social and health services with high-quality extended learning, could be a tool to better serve New Mexico's poor students, but most New Mexico community schools appear to fail to adhere to the community school practices known to improve student success, an LESC report says.

Community schools, whose approaches were promoted in the district court ruling that found New Mexico schools are constitutionally insufficient and which are accepted in federal law as an evidence-based intervention for low-performing schools, help close the opportunity gap for students from low-income families,

students of color, English learners, and students with disabilities, according to the report scheduled to be presented to the committee at 9 a.m. on June 27.

However, New Mexico community schools fall short – the achievement gap between the statewide proficiency rate and students in schools that have operated as community schools for five or more years stayed relatively stagnant between 2015 and 2018, with no change in math proficiency.

The Learning Policy Institute, a non-profit education policy and research group, found in a review of 143 studies of community schools that the most successful programs integrate student

supports, expand learning time and opportunities, engage families and the community, and collaborate on leadership and practices – what community school experts call the “four key pillars.”

Amendments to the 2013 state law authorizing community schools, adopted earlier this year, require community schools to align their policies with best practices and require the Public Education Department to appoint a statewide “coalition for community schools” with community school and multicultural education experts. The Legislature also appropriated \$2 million to support the development of community schools, the first appropriation for that purpose.

The LESC report recommends PED consider requiring grantees to align their practices with the four pillars.

Three of the state's five largest school districts – Albuquerque, Las Cruces and Santa Fe – have increased the number of community schools in the state from one in the 2006-2007 school year to 39 in the 2018-2019 school year, but do not appear to have implemented all four pillars with fidelity.

The report focuses on 29 community schools in the three school districts.

Multi-Source PreK Funding Hinders Impact

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that students can attend the prekindergarten program closest to their home.

To address the different program standards – for example, PED lead teachers must have a bachelor's degree and a teacher's license in early childhood education, and Head Start teachers only need an associate's degree in early childhood education – Las Cruces school officials are adopting the highest standard for each program component.

PMS, prompted by Torrance County needs, is blending Head Start and CYFD prekindergarten funding so students can be served in the same classroom. However, among other misalignments, PMS cannot use the same student assessment for students in different programs. While students must be double-tested, PMS is providing the same services to all students whenever possible.

The hearing brief points out all state prekindergarten funding, starting in

FY21, must be used for mixed delivery programs. PED is required to access funds appropriated to the new Early Childhood Education and Care Department, which will take over the CYFD prekindergarten program in FY21, for prekindergarten programs in the public schools. Further, while independent providers will still be funded by the state, PED and ECECD will process funding and set the standards.

Infrastructure Investment Pays Off

Since 2005, the average weighted New Mexico Condition Index has improved significantly.

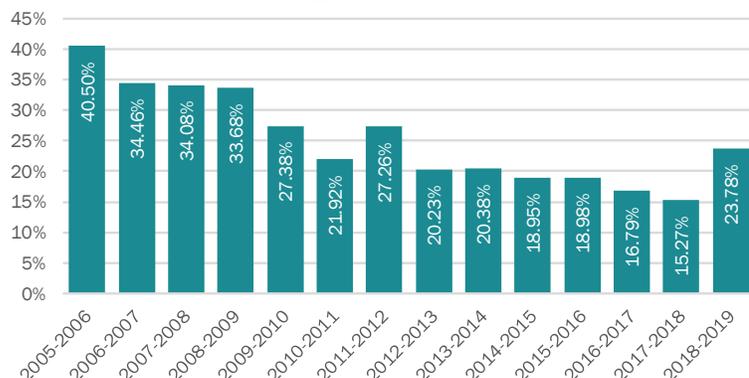
In 2005, the average wNMCI score, which compares the cost of building and system repairs and space needs versus the cost of replacement, was over 40 percent. Sixty percent is a rough indicator the school should be replaced.

In 2005, 37 schools had scores higher than

100 percent, a reflection of severe overcrowding.

The state has invested more than \$2.6 billion in school building replacement and renovation since 2005, when the state awarded the first standards-based project after revamping the system for allocating public school construction money in response to the *Zuni* lawsuit challenging the process.

Statewide Average Facility Condition Score



Source: Public School Facilities Authority

informED

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