



July 2, 2026

Secretary Mariana Padilla, New Mexico Public Education Department
Secretary Stephanie Rodriguez, New Mexico Higher Education Department
Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky, New Mexico Early Childhood Education & Care Department
Director John Sena, Legislative Education Study Committee

Dear Secretary Padilla, Secretary Rodriguez, Secretary Groginsky, and Director Sena,

On behalf of the New Mexico Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (NMACTE), we write to reaffirm our commitment to serving as collaborative partners in strengthening New Mexico's educator workforce and advancing educational equity for the state's children and families. As leaders of educator preparation programs (EPPs) across New Mexico, we remain united in our mission to prepare educators who can meet the academic, cultural, and linguistic needs of all students—and to do so in collaboration with your agencies and the LESC.

The past year has seen significant progress in educator preparation, most notably with the development of the New Mexico Teacher Preparation Standards. Identified by NMACTE as a statewide priority, we convened a task force of educators, institutional leaders, and national experts to develop a coherent framework for teacher preparation in the state. Built upon InTASC, aligned with the findings of Yazzie-Martinez, and grounded in culturally and linguistically responsive practice, these standards now provide a shared foundation for enhancing program quality and consistency across institutions. They establish a foundation for the next phase of work as we strengthen and professionalize teacher preparation. To help guide that broader conversation, we are excited to soon share a concept paper outlining a broad vision for teacher development and professionalization in New Mexico.

As we move into implementation this year, we will focus on translating the Standards into practice across institutions. Central to this effort will be statewide communities of practice, bringing together practitioners to engage in shared learning and continuous improvement. We will also work to articulate educator preparation pathways, including efforts to align associate degree programs to promote seamless transfer across institutions. Alongside these efforts, we will advance shared assessments and performance tasks, support national accreditation efforts, and focus on literacy, mathematics, and clinical practice as key areas for program improvement. We know standards only matter when they influence practice, and our goal is to ensure they become a living framework that elevates educator preparation across New Mexico.

Successful implementation of these efforts will require sustained investment in the educator preparation infrastructure that supports them. Among our highest priorities is addressing educator preparation faculty compensation. As teacher salaries rise and the state's early childhood wage and career lattice expands, the pay gap between P-12 educators and higher education faculty continues to widen. This gap makes it increasingly difficult for EPPs to recruit and retain highly qualified faculty, particularly Level III teachers and faculty from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We are struggling to attract the best in the field and know that without strong faculty,

we cannot sustain a high-quality educator pipeline. If we want the best teachers for our children, we must have and retain the best educators for those teachers.

We also recognize the state's growing emphasis on data quality, transparency, and accountability. EPPs share this commitment. However, institutions face increasing reporting requirements without dedicated assessment personnel. As reporting expectations continue to expand, assessment responsibilities often fall to faculty whose primary roles are teaching, supervision, and research. We value the steps that have been taken by the PED to hire a senior data analyst for educator preparation and contract a new data reporting system. To ensure clean, robust, and timely data for the state, we believe each EPP should have access to a dedicated assessment coordinator supported through recurring funding.

Finally, we highlight the growing financial strain associated with expanded field-based supervision. High-quality clinical preparation models, including teacher residencies, require substantially more supervision than traditional student teaching, costs that institutions have largely absorbed without dedicated funding. Addressing these costs is essential to sustaining high-quality clinical preparation statewide. Teacher residencies are an especially important example of this work, serving as a proven strategy for improving teacher preparation through extended clinical practice. Residencies in New Mexico have produced more qualified teachers, improved retention, deepened partnerships with LEAs, increased workforce diversity, and allowed candidates to focus on their learning through financial support. To ensure long-term sustainability, we encourage the state to explore recurring funding mechanisms, including revisions to the Residency Act or a potential endowment model.

As partners in this work, NMACTE remains committed to strengthening educator preparation and supporting statewide efforts to improve outcomes for New Mexico's children and families. We look forward to continued collaboration as we work together to advance the educator ecosystem.

Respectfully,

The New Mexico Association of Colleges for Teacher Education - Deans and Directors

NMACTE Legislative Priorities – 2027 Session

- **Adoption of the New Mexico Teacher Preparation Standards**
 - Codify standards in statute as the statewide framework for educator preparation.
- **Support for Educator Preparation Faculty Compensation**
 - Address compensation disparities that hinder recruitment and retention of highly qualified, diverse teacher educators.
- **Recurring Funding for Assessment Coordinators at EPPs**
 - Provide dedicated assessment personnel to support reporting, accreditation, and data-informed program improvement.
- **Sustainable Funding for Teacher Residencies**
 - Establish recurring funding for residency stipends, supervision, and LEA partnerships.
- **Recurring Funding for Field-Based Supervision**
 - Support the supervision demands of residency and high-quality clinical models.