



NEW MEXICO
LEGISLATIVE
FINANCE
COMMITTEE

Evaluation: Instructional Time and Extended Learning Opportunities

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Presentation to the LESC

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Extended learning time can help to close achievement gaps

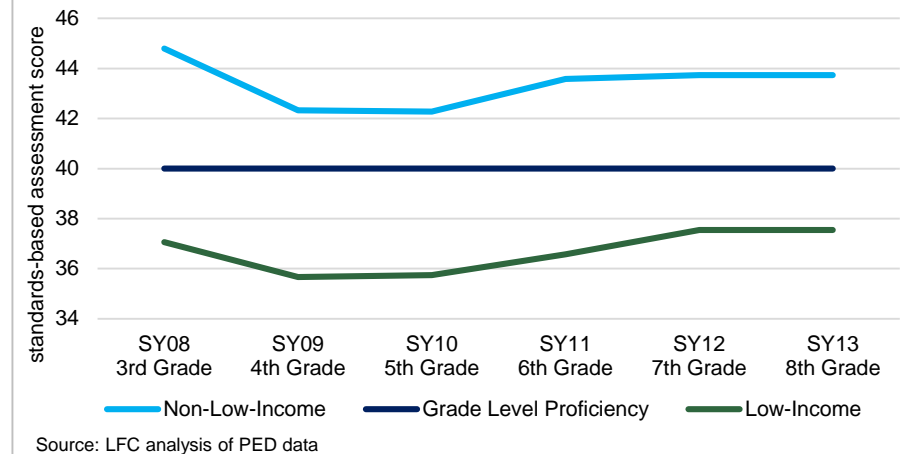
What is the problem?

- New Mexico students face large achievement gaps
- Many students enter kindergarten behind
- Low-income students perform below grade level on average
- 70% of students are considered “at-risk” in the funding formula

What do we want to know?

- How much instructional time is available for New Mexico students?
- How can instructional time be used and expanded to help close achievement gaps?
- How can the state ensure that more students can benefit from expanded learning time?

Chart 1. Average Reading Scores from Third through Eighth Grade, SY08-SY13



Many students could benefit from high-quality extended learning time

Some positive aspects of extended learning time

- **Research has found positive effects**, especially for students in minority groups, those who have performed poorly on standardized tests, and those eligible for free or reduced lunch
- **Creates more time for three important activities** – academics, enrichment, and teacher collaboration and professional development
- **Important equalizer for some students** – idea of a “resource” faucet

...and some caveats

- **Simply adding time is not enough** – must be high-quality, taught by effective teachers who are able to leverage time well
- **Research is ongoing** – can be difficult to separate out effects of additional instructional time from other interventions

Benefits of Additional Learning Time

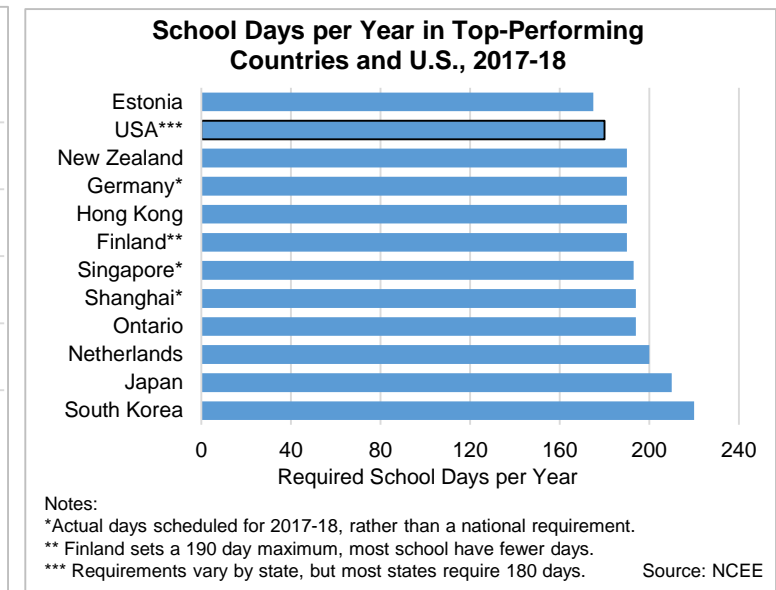
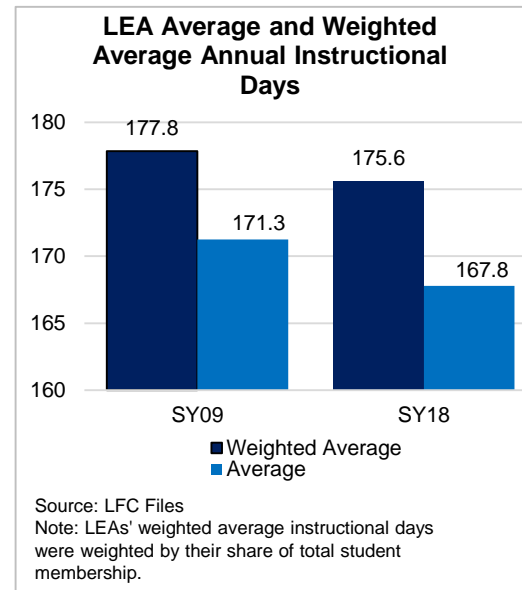
- More time engaged in **academic classes**, allowing broader and deeper coverage of curricula and more individualized learning support.
- More time devoted to **enrichment classes and activities** that expand students’ educational experiences and boost engagement in school.
- More dedicated time for **teacher collaboration and embedded professional development** that enables educators to strengthen instruction and develop a shared commitment to upholding high expectations and respond to student data.

Source: NCTL



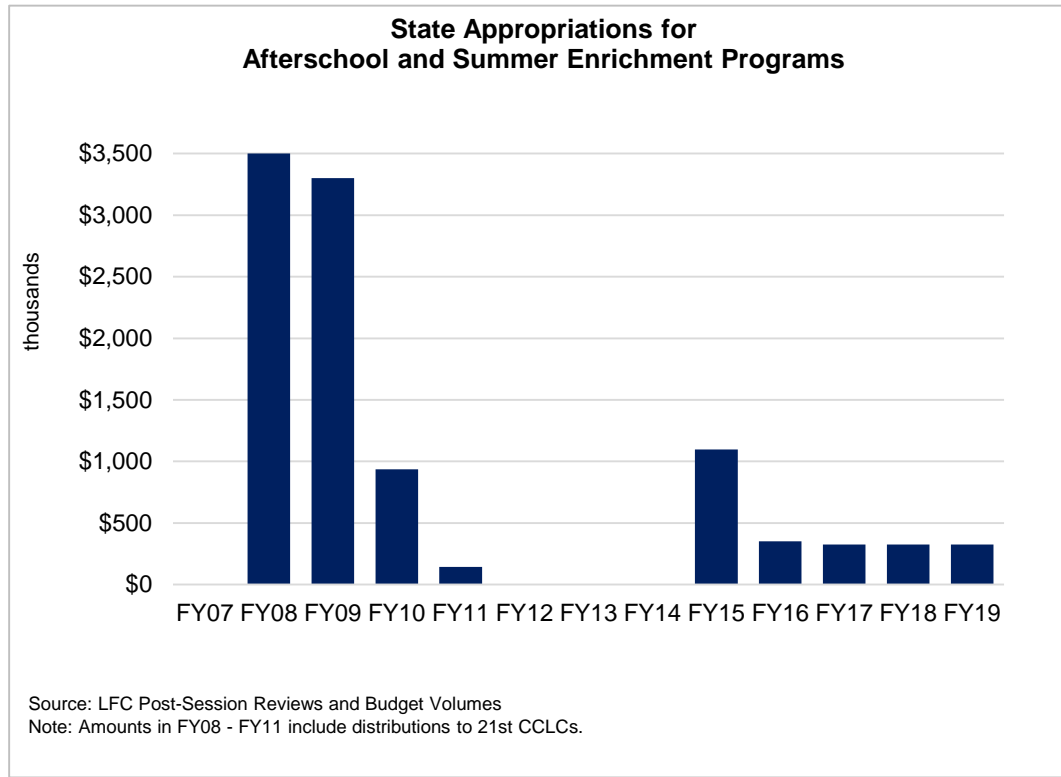
Instructional time has decreased over the past decade

- New Mexico students on average received fewer instructional days in FY18 than in FY09, despite additional funds to increase the number of days
- Only 20% of LEAs had at least 180 instructional days – the most common requirement nationally – in SY18
- U.S. students have fewer school days than students in high-performing academic systems
- A number of districts – including three of the state’s largest – have weekly early release days, reducing stated instructional time

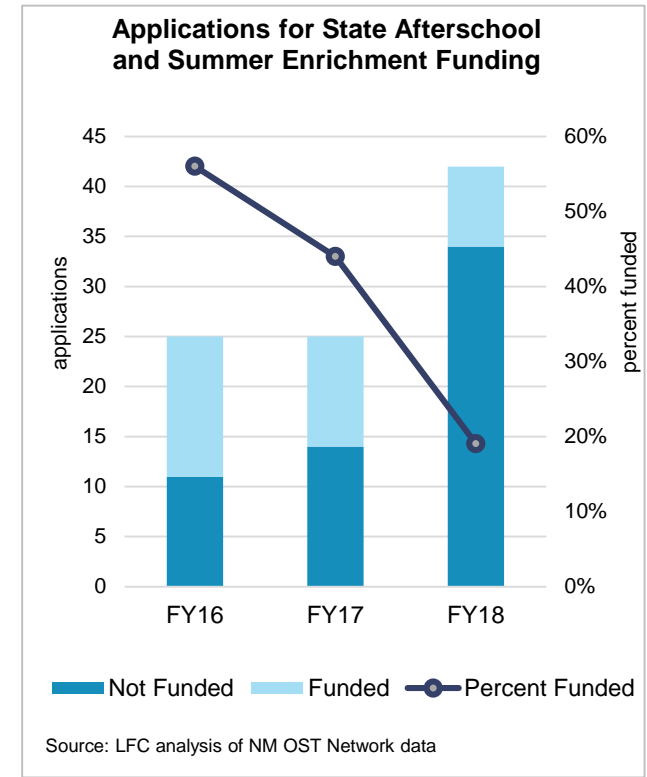
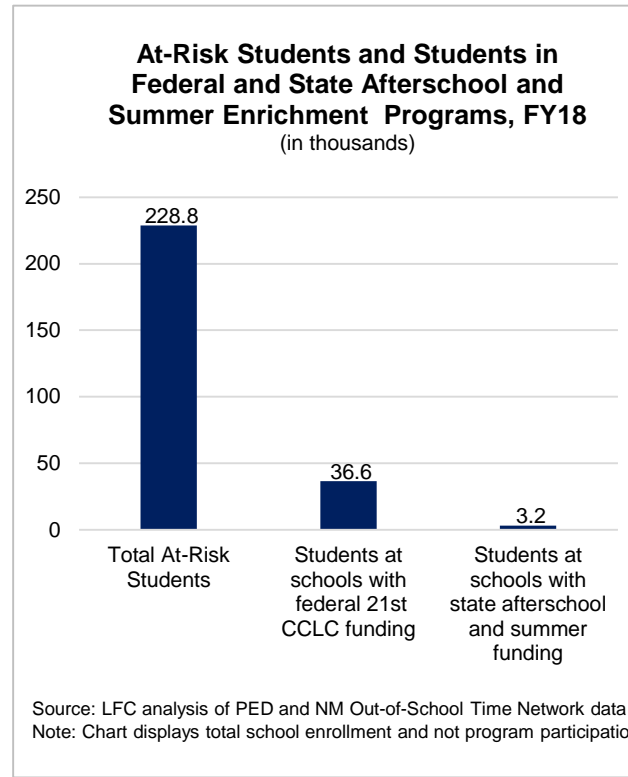


Funding for summer and afterschool programs varies significantly by year

Both state and federal funding fluctuates significantly...



...and demand for afterschool and summer enrichment programs exceeds the supply of state- and federally-funded spaces



Implementation of teacher professional development varies widely

- New Mexico does not set any statewide requirements regarding non-instructional contract days for teachers
 - Average number of non-instructional days for districts: 7
 - Average number of non-instructional days for charters: 13.6
- Many LEAs augment non-instructional days with early release days, which are not clearly tracked, and may come at the expense of student learning time
- PED provides limited guidance on the amount, structure, or content of professional development
 - Statutorily-required framework on professional development has not been updated since 2004



Expanding K-5 Plus programs could reach 65 percent of K-5 students

- Expanding K-3 Plus to reach all students in grades K-5 at eligible schools would increase coverage from 10% to 65% of K-5 students
- Expansion costs would be \$91.1 million (incremental costs)
- Programs must be implemented correctly to be effective

K-3/K-5 Plus Expansion Costs

Category	Based on Summer 2018
Funded K-3/K-5 Plus Enrollment	22,798
Minimum Statutory Per-Student Funding	\$1,225
Awards for Funded Enrollment	\$28,759,207
Total K-5 Enrollment at all Eligible Schools	97,852
Total Cost for K-5 at all Eligible Schools	\$119,895,903
Incremental Cost to Expand to all Eligible Schools	\$91,136,696

Source: LFC analysis of PED data

To be effective, K-3/K-5 Plus programs should:

- Be no less than 25 days long, regardless of the length of the instructional day;
- End no earlier than two weeks prior to the first day of the regular school year; and
- Keep students with the same teachers that they have for the regular school year.



An Extended Learning Time Program could incentivize schools to add learning time

The Legislature could add components to the funding formula to allocate additional funding to schools that implement instructional time interventions:

- Providing an additional 10 instructional days, in addition to 180 instructional days that are already funded;
- Providing high-quality afterschool programming to extend daily learning time;
- Providing at least 10 days of high-quality, evidence-based professional development, collaboration, and other teacher learning content; and
- Implementing a set of best practices to ensure that learning time is effective.

The program would cost approximately \$144 million, phased in over five years

Table 5. Five Year Phase-In of Funding for Proposed Extended Learning Time Program (ELTP) Formula Component

Proposed Component	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	5-Year Total
Funding for LEAs providing 190 instructional days and afterschool programming to at-risk students	\$28.8	\$28.8	\$28.8	\$28.8	\$28.8	\$144.0
Cumulative total	\$28.8	\$57.6	\$86.4	\$115.2	\$144.0	\$144.0

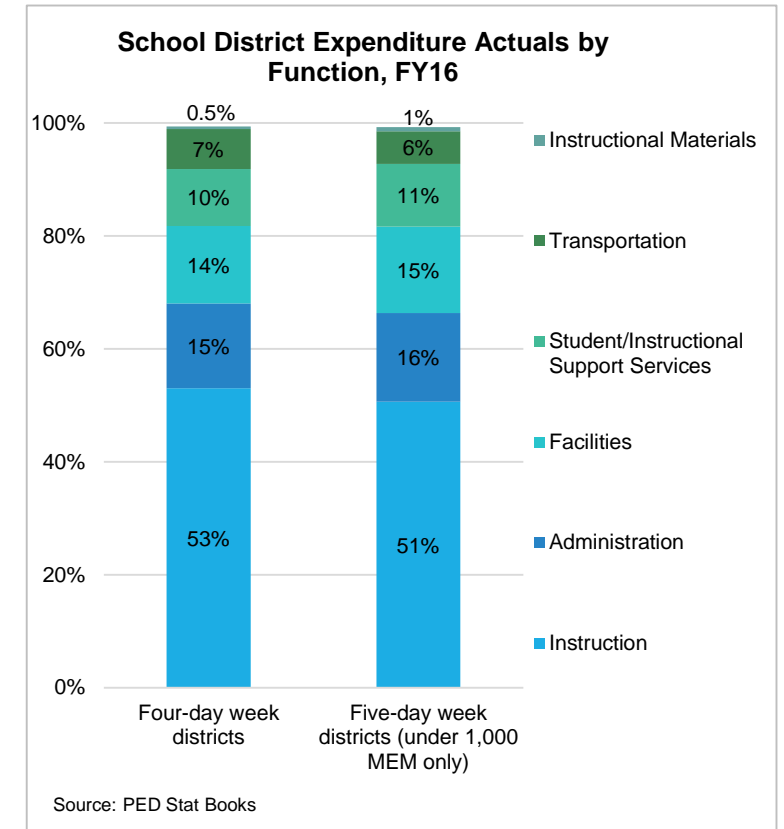
Source: LFC analysis of PED data

Note: This funding, once added to the formula, would be allocated to LEAs as ELTP was implemented over time. If no LEAs implemented ELTP, then this additional funding would be allocated by other formula components.



Four-day school weeks do not reduce costs significantly

- The number of New Mexico LEAs with a four-day week schedule has increased by over a third since SY11
- 4 percent of district and 20 percent of charter school students are on this schedule
- Four-day weeks may do not appear to be an effective way for districts to reduce costs
 - Education Commission of the States study – districts saved between 0.4 and 2.5%
 - Study of 3 New Mexico districts that switched to four-day weeks showed differing cost savings
- Four-day weeks can impose financial burdens on families – estimated costs of childcare are around \$2,000 annually for a two-child family



Key recommendations

The Legislature should consider:

- Amending state law (Section 22-8-45 NMSA 1978) to require professional development programs to be evidence-based (based on the federal Every Student Succeeds Act's four tiers of evidence).
- Investing in phased-in K-3/K-5 Plus expansion to cover more students at eligible schools.
- Adding an Extended Learning Time Program (ELTP) component to the public education funding formula that allocates funding for schools implementing extended learning time reforms.
- Appropriating additional funds for a new ELTP component of the public education funding formula.
- Amending the state Variable School Calendar Act to prohibit adoption of four-day week schedules for any district or charter school not meeting academic standards, and require any district or charter school using a four-day week schedule that does not meet academic standards for three consecutive years to revert to a five-day week.

PED should:

- Require LEAs to report use of early release days (including number of days and hours) in a standardized manner through the budget approval process, as well as account for early release time.
- Amend its rules (6.29.1.9 NMAC) to specify a uniform way of tracking and counting early release hours as in-service time when calculating minimum instructional hours.
- Maintain and enhance its oversight of K-3/K-5 Plus programs, including collecting and monitoring information on enrollment, program lengths, start and end dates, and number of students that remain with their teacher during the regular school year, and report this information to LFC.
- Require all LEAs that have adopted a four-day week schedule to submit updates every three years to PED, as part of their calendar submissions, that explain how the four-day week has achieved intended goals and educational and fiscal benefits.

