



## New Mexico Business Roundtable

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### Education Priorities and Recommendations to the 2016 Regular Session of the New Mexico Legislature

#### NMBR Supports:

1. **Continued support for Early Childhood Care and Education, Pre-K and K-3 Plus and continued incremental funding increase.**
2. **Implementation of Reading Intervention and Retention if necessary.**  
Early interventions as required to ensure 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Achievement with retention in 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade as an action of last resort.
3. **Effective and understandable teacher evaluation and compensation.**  
Within budget constraints, provide opportunities to increase teacher pay to stay competitive within the Southwest; establish an evaluation system that is understandable and validated. Leverage current ESEA and when implemented- ECSA guidance to provide flexibility.
4. **Drop-out and Recovery Programs including Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG).**  
Achieve ever-increasing rates of high-school graduation.
5. **Continued implementation of Common Core State Standards and PARCC Testing.**  
"Stay the course" to ensure college and career readiness.
6. **Continued support for Charter Schools.**
7. **Sustainment of Current Governance Structure**
8. **Accountability, data system improvements and measuring results.**
9. **Math and science focus and related Adjunct Teacher certification.**

#### NMBR Does Not Support:

1. **Use of Land Grant Permanent Funds for other uses than originally intended.**

### ATTACHMENT A – Position Details

Early Childhood Care and Education, Pre-K, and K-3 Plus-

- Continued infrastructure development aligned with the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Initiative and program expansion for early childhood care and education programs through the prioritization with other programs and/or new state revenue funding. Providing age-appropriate opportunities for our children is necessary to ensure that they are both ready and able to succeed in school. This is particularly true in New Mexico where we must deal with so many rural, economically disadvantaged, and other social factors that impact the opportunities for children at an early age to come prepared for school. It is imperative that we invest in high quality early childhood programs in a world where education and skill levels determine future earnings. Furthermore, increasingly find that the availability of good early childhood care and education programs is critical to the recruitment and retention of parent employees.
- To ensure that limited state funding is being correctly and efficiently applied it is necessary to have a fully comprehensive accountability system which must be inclusive of a system of teacher/educator/provider accountability and the effective evaluation of children who are participants in the program. Enhancement of quality rating system and providing data and public reports for all faith based, private, and public providers where state and federal funding is utilized is critical to not only ensure that funds are spent appropriately, but also to obtain continued support.
- Pre-K funding provides for: Access to all districts and charter schools that have requested funding for Pre-K programs (since 2011, both funding for Pre-K and the number of four year olds served has more than doubled). Professional development for Pre-K educators
- Pre-K serves: 391 schools (since 2011). 16,603 children (since 2011),
- K-3 Plus funding provides for:  
Extending the school year by 25 days for k-3 students with emphasis on literacy and math common core standards instruction K-3 Plus administrators, teachers, and coaches, Instructional materials and supplies, Transportation for students, professional development for educators (over 430 educators trained since 2013)
- K-3 Plus serves:  
39,573 students (2011-2014)
- Reauthorization of the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) in 2016/17. Becoming Statute in 2011 SB 120 made provisions for ELAC. Provisions in the law created a sunset for ELAC after 5 years. Reauthorization can be implemented in the 2016 or 2017 Legislative Sessions.

## **Reading Retention/Intervention-**

- Our 4th graders continue to struggle because we have failed to ensure that our students are prepared for their futures. Ending social promotion is the key to providing our children with the advantage of truly being ready for success.

While New Mexico is making significant educational gains (first in the nation for growth in graduation rates), we are still losing three out of every 10 students who are dropping out rather than earning their high school diploma.

Too many statistics tell us that New Mexico is in dire need of real reform to honor our commitment to students—to receive an education which ensures they are truly “ready for success.”

The foundation for all future learning is established in a student’s early grades, and it begins with reading.

- A student’s ability to read proficiently by the end of 3rd grade is the top indicator as to whether they will successfully graduate from high school. Students who are unable to read proficiently by the end of 3rd grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school. In fact, 88% of 19-year-old high school dropouts were not proficient readers in 3rd grade. (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010 and 2011)

- The consequences of dropping out of high school are dire. High school dropouts are 4 times more likely to be unemployed and 47 times more likely to be incarcerated. (Sum, Andrew, et al., 2009)

New Mexico’s 4th grade readers dropped from 49th to 51st in the nation (The Nation’s Report Card, NAEP 2013); many of these 4th grade students were socially promoted despite the fact that little more than half of them were reading on grade level the previous year. (NMSBA, 2012)

We need to provide parents, teachers, and districts with the tools necessary to ensure all students are able to read proficiently and are ready for future academic success. We aim to accomplish this through:

- Early screening assessments. These assessments will assist teachers in identifying students struggling to read, early, when intervention can be most effective.
- Additional instructional support for teachers. Direct professional development and support from reading coaches will empower teachers to effectively intervene with strategies proven to help struggling students successfully learn to read.
- Parent involvement. Parents have a critical impact on their child’s ability to learn to read, and this reading initiative acknowledges and supports their role. Once a student is identified as struggling, parents are informed and given strategies to use at home to help their child become a better reader. In every instance in which a child needing help is identified, a strategy that involves parents is provided.

Decisions regarding retention/promotion are reserved for students scoring “beginning steps” (the lowest possible score) on their 3rd grade standards-based assessment.

Third grade students with special circumstances can alternatively demonstrate proficient reading skills and may be promoted by meeting any one of the following criteria:

- English Language Learners who score proficiently on a valid and reliable reading assessment in a language other than English;
- Students with Disabilities who have an individualized education program that includes specifics as to how a student with a disability shall be assessed, promoted or retained;
- Students scoring proficiently on an alternate approved standardized assessment; or
- Students who have already been retained in kindergarten, first or second grade.

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

Q: Why 3rd Grade?

A: From kindergarten through third grade, students are learning to read. From fourth grade on, students are reading to learn. Early elementary reading skills are particularly critical when you consider the strong connection between 3rd grade reading proficiency and successfully graduating from high school. Students unable to read proficiently by the end of 3rd grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school, which has devastating life consequences.

Q: What about parents' roles?

A: Parents are expected to play a critical role. As soon as a student is identified as a struggling reader at school:

Parents are notified;

The teacher provides information regarding in-school intervention strategies;

Tools are provided to parents for continued work (interventions) at home.

Q: How do we know retention will work? Won't it damage the self-esteem of a student?

A: Promoting students who don't have the skills to succeed leaves students at risk of failure and unlikely to "catch up" on a foundational skill necessary for all future academic success. Continued failure by the student leads to significantly higher rates of drop-out; research has shown that students who dropped out of school first considered doing so as early as second grade.

The New York City Department of Education, the largest school district in the country with over 1.1 million students, surveyed students who had been retained for the purpose of providing additional academic interventions. Three years after being retained, students' responses to surveys indicated that retention did not have negative effects on their sense of school belonging or confidence in mathematics and reading (Rand, 2009).

In addition, New Mexico's legislation in past years has proposed that retention is coupled with interventions and instructional practices that work. Retention on its own without this type of intensive intervention does not accomplish the ultimate goal of putting students on a path to success through their ability to read.

Q: What effect does the practice of social promotion have on New Mexico's workforce and business growth and students' future success?

A: It is highly unlikely that socially promoting students results in their "catching up" in later grades. Not addressing academic failure early on and correcting it is costly. Today,

over 50% of students in New Mexico colleges and universities require remedial courses at a cost of approximately \$22 million every year – this in addition to the significantly higher likelihood of dropping out of school and being unemployed as an adult. Promoting students through the system when they do not meet specific academic expectations sets the precedent, at a very early age, that a person does not have to meet expectations in order to advance. A strong work ethic and promotion based on merit are key to students' success and ability to contribute to their places of work. Businesses need to support schools and educators to ensure that there are high expectations for students, and that these expectations are required and met.

### **New Mexico Effective Teaching/Evaluation/Compensation-**

- Our teachers should be given the opportunity to advance and be paid according to their effectiveness. The average teacher pay in New Mexico is 76.3% of what other college graduates with a bachelor's degree earn (Economic Policy Institute, 2011), and without the opportunity to distinguish oneself through performance, there is little incentive for our best and brightest to enter, or remain in, the teaching profession. A faster advancement track based on effectiveness would allow our best teachers to earn higher salaries faster, recognize and acknowledge top performance, and ensure higher retention of our best teachers.
- The three-tier licensure system was created to provide a career ladder for teachers in New Mexico, with our best and most effective teachers earning higher licensure levels and more pay. Despite this vision, student outcomes are not significantly different for level III teachers compared to level I teachers, despite \$20,000 in additional pay (LFC, 2012).
- Part of the issue is that the three-tier licensure system, and its associated minimum salaries, pays teachers primarily based on years of experience: level I teacher's average 1.6 years of experience compared to 12.3 years for level III teachers. (LFC, 2012) A teacher's demonstrated performance and successful track record of helping their students achieve academically does not factor in to the current pathway to advancement.
- An effective teacher in the classroom is the single most important factor in improving student achievement ("The Widget Effect", TNTP, 2009), and as such, teacher success should be systematically recognized and rewarded. This bill would:
- Create a more professional pathway for teachers that more accurately reflect the three-tier system as a true career ladder for teachers. Levels I, II and III become Associate, Professional and Master teachers' licenses.
- Associate teachers would have mandatory mentoring as part of retaining their licensure.
- Master teachers would take on additional responsibilities, acting as mentors and team leaders at their school sites.

- Allow teachers who receive “highly effective” or “exemplary” ratings in the NMTEACH evaluation system to progress faster through the three-tier system, based on effectiveness. New Mexico’s best teachers could earn a minimum of \$50,000 in four years of teaching rather than the average six or more years

### **Jobs for America’s Graduates and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Programs-**

- The continued and increased funding for programs uniquely designed to address High School drop-out and student recovery for the purpose of increasing student graduation rate, work based learning and experience opportunities, and student follow-up into career and/or post-secondary education.

### **Continued Implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Partnership Assessment of Readiness For College/Career (PARCC)-**

- The continued implementation of CCSS to ensure all students are ready for success after high school, however NMBR is concerned that adequate planning and cost estimates have not been provided to ensure that successful implementation in the state’s schools. This includes not only the implementation of the Standards themselves, in classrooms, to include additional teacher professional development and adequate classroom resources and equipment, but also the necessary professional development and technology to effectively administer the PARCC test.

### **Charter Schools-**

- Changes in the Charter School law that increase student access to effective schooling options, expanding effective Charters to serve more students and providing effective governance and oversight of Charters in the state, conducted by the Public Education Department. NMBR also supports additional flexibilities for high performing Charters and more rapid closure for failing schools within three years as opposed to five.
- A standardized fiscal accountability system for Charters commensurate with Traditional Schools.

### **Education Governance-**

- The current governance structure of Public Education and Higher Education with a cabinet level Secretary of Education.

### **Accountability, Data Systems, and Measuring Results-**

- Efforts to ensure fiscal and program accountability at all levels within the Early Childhood Care and Education to Higher Education Systems. This will require the continued and supplemental funding for the development, implementation, and maintenance of data systems and accountability measures to determine longitudinal results to be shared with all stakeholders.

### **Math and Science Education and Adjunct Teaching-**

- The continued support for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) funding and expansion. Such programs as LANL Foundation Inquiry Science and programs supported by MESA are excellent integrated and specific programs. Additional funding and delivery of such programs can and should be delivered through adjunct teaching.
- Our state is rich in content-expertise (whether from the national laboratories or other businesses throughout New Mexico).
- Teachers that majored in math and science [and have more content expertise] achieve higher test score growth than those that major in education (National Bureau of Economic Research, 2008);  
University of Michigan researchers found teachers' mathematical knowledge was significantly related to student achievement gains. (American Educational Research Journal, 2005)
- This would benefit students and districts by allowing:  
Content experts to teach in New Mexico public schools on a part-time basis;  
Districts flexibility to meet their staffing needs; and  
Students to have increased access to content experts, introducing them to a greater variety of knowledge and options in choosing their college or career pathway.  
In order to obtain an adjunct teaching license, professionals must meet the following eligibility requirements:  
A Bachelor's degree; Three years of documented work experience in the subject field; A passing score on the appropriate teacher license assessment; and Successful completion of a pedagogy class.
- Additionally:  
Adjunct teachers under this license will be evaluated through the NMTEACH evaluation system; and
- Adjunct teachers are independent contractors that enter into contractual agreements with school districts and schools to fulfill the needs of districts and schools. The duration of the contract and terms of the contract are determined by the district and the adjunct teachers.
- The students of teachers with more content knowledge have higher academic achievement:

**NMBR Does not Support any increase in distribution from the LGPF**

**Land Grant Permanent Fund (LGPF)-**

- No additional distribution from the NM Land Grant Permanent Fund and supports the scheduled return of the distribution to 5%. The LGPF is not a “Rainy Day Fund or State Savings Account” but rather a Trust Fund designated for current and future LGPF Specified Beneficiaries. It is important that NM citizens understand the legality and purpose of the LGPF:
- Per Section 8 of the 1910 “Enabling Act for New Mexico”  
*Land grant schools under control of state; aid to sectarian schools prohibited. The schools, colleges and universities provided for in this act shall forever remain under the exclusive control of the said state, and no part of the proceeds arising from the sale or disposal of any lands granted herein for educational purposes shall be used for the support of any sectarian or denominational school, college or university.*  
There is no provision for distributions from the LGPF for faith based or private sector providers and funds are for the express use of Land Grant Schools. It would require an act of Congress and Presidential Signature to make any provisional change.
- Early Child Care and Education is not an “Entity” or “Specified Beneficiary” there is no provision within the “Enabling Act” for Early Childhood Care and Education. An amendment to add or delete a Specified Beneficiary would require an Act of the NM Legislature and Governor Signature to make that provisional change along with the purchase of lands and subsequent proceeds from the sale, or disposal of specified section (s) of land which would be revenue generating, or the exchange or removal of a current Specified Beneficiary and transfer of designated land and revenues from that land to a new Specified Beneficiary.
- Protecting the solvency and grow the fund which in turn provides additional revenue at the 5% distribution rate
- There is no guarantee that additional distributions from the LGPF will result in increased funds for early childhood care and education programs. Historical appropriations have demonstrated that increases in LGPF distributions have resulted in a supplanting of general fund
- Any additional distributions from the LGPF should only be used for non-recurring cost, funding cliffs and potential budget cuts or revenue enhancements.
- The Early Learning Care and Education System infrastructure is not sufficient or capable of implementing programs or administration of those programs beyond annual incremental additional funding
- Probable litigation by current Specified Beneficiaries and other entities and probable disruption of current funding.