

**State of New Mexico**  
**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**

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Frances R. Maestas, Director

**MINUTES**  
**LESC MEETING**  
**October 8-10, 2008**

Chairman Rick Miera called the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) meeting to order on Wednesday, October 8, 2008, at 9:10 a.m., Emmett Shockley Building (Board Room), Deming, New Mexico.

The following LESG members were present:

Representatives Rick Miera, Chair, Jimmie C. Hall, and Mimi Stewart; and Senators Cynthia Nava, Vice Chair, Vernon D. Asbill, Mary Jane M. Garcia, and Gay G. Kernan.

The following LESG advisory members were present:

Representatives Andrew J. Barreras, Nathan P. Cote, Nora Espinoza, Mary Helen Garcia, Dianne Miller Hamilton, and Jim R. Trujillo; and Senators Lynda M. Lovejoy, Howie C. Morales, and John Pinto.

Also in attendance were Representative John Peña, Representative Dona G. Irwin, and Senator John Arthur Smith.

◇ **Approval of Agenda**

On a motion by Representative Hall, seconded by Senator Asbill, the committee unanimously approved the agenda as presented.

◇ **Welcome and Introductions**

Chairman Miera recognized the following individuals who welcomed the committee to Deming: Ms. Harvielee Moore, Superintendent; and Mr. David McSherry, Board President, Deming Public Schools. Ms. Moore, in turn, introduced her staff: Ms. Mary Lou Cameron, Associate Superintendent of Support Services/Community Resources; Ms. Nancy Patterson, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources; and Mr. Ted Burr, Associate Superintendent of Finance.

## PROPOSED PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA CALCULATIONS

### *a. Review of Group 3 Calculations*

Mr. Peter van Moorsel, LESC staff, explained that, for the 2008 interim, all 89 public school districts have been invited to work with the LESC to examine the potential impact on school district programs and student achievement of the new public school funding formula that was proposed during the 2008 legislative session. He stated that, in order to facilitate this effort, the districts have been grouped according to student membership and scheduled to attend one of six LESC interim meetings.

Noting that three groups of districts would be discussing the proposed funding formula with the committee during the current meeting in Deming, Mr. van Moorsel directed the committee's attention to documents behind tab 1 in their notebooks. He indicated the materials included a graphic representation comparing the current public school funding formula with the proposed funding formula; a mock-up of the 2008 legislation provided by the Legislative Council Service (LCS); a table indicating where all of the data used in the district and charter school calculators had been derived; and a table listing the percentages of gifted students and students identified as in need of special education for all districts statewide. In addition, he said, there were three sets of documents, one for each group presenting. Each set included a summary spreadsheet comparing the potential fiscal impact of the proposed funding formula on all of the districts in a particular group; copies of the individual calculators for the districts in that group; and a copy of the letter sent to the districts prior to the meeting, both inviting them to participate and posing questions to which they had been asked to respond as a means of facilitating the discussions.

The groups were:

Group 3		Group 2		Group 1	
District	Enrollment	District	Enrollment	District	Enrollment
Animas	261.0	Cobre	1,433.5	Alamogordo	6,449.5
Lordsburg	709.0	Hatch Valley	1,411.5	Carlsbad	5,914.0
Reserve	181.0	Las Vegas City	2,043.0	Deming	5,392.0
Tularosa	1,009.5	Silver	3,127.0	Gadsden	13,876.5
		Truth or Consequences	1,439.5	Las Cruces	23,370.0

Prior to each presentation by the school districts, Mr. van Moorsel reviewed each group's summary spreadsheet, which was based on the individual calculators for each district in that group.

Noting that Group 3 included districts with budgeted enrollments for school year 2007-2008 ranging from a high of 1,009.5 in Tularosa to a low of 181.0 in Reserve, Mr. van Moorsel explained that the overall adjustment factors range from a high of 2.902 for Reserve to a low of 1.858 for Tularosa, in part because the proposed funding formula reflects the fact that the per-student cost in a small school district is higher than in a district with an enrollment closer to the statewide average of approximately 3,532. However, he said, other factors in the formula also contribute to the overall adjustment factor, which is a composite adjustment based on student need as well as district size. To illustrate the point, Mr. van Moorsel noted that the poverty rates among the four districts ranged from 51.8 percent in Tularosa to 75.2 percent in Reserve, which also had the highest overall adjustment factor (2.902) among the districts in Group 3.

***b. Committee and Group 3 Discussion***

Speaking in support of the proposed public school funding formula, the school districts in Group 3 cited the following additions to current programs and services that they would like to implement, given sufficient funding:

- hiring additional mathematics and reading coaches and bilingual teachers;
- expanding course offerings in mathematics, science, and arts;
- improving vocational programs;
- hiring additional ancillary personnel;
- improving identification of and services for special needs students;
- extending the school year; and
- reducing class size.

***c. Review of Group 2 Calculations***

Mr. van Moorsel reported that Group 2 included the medium-sized districts in the southwest corner of the state, with 2007-2008 budgeted enrollments ranging from a high of 3,127.0 for Silver Consolidated Schools to a low of 1,411.5 for Hatch Valley Public Schools. He noted that, compared to the previous group, the larger enrollments in these districts were reflected in somewhat lower overall adjustment factors, which ranged from a high of 2.002 in Hatch to a low of 1.574 in Silver. Mr. van Moorsel also stressed the impact on Hatch Valley of the high percentages of students participating in the federal Free and Reduced Fee Lunch Program (95.4 percent) and students identified as English language learners (ELL) (51.2 percent). These percentages contributed to this district's having a high student needs adjustment (1.784) and subsequently a high overall adjustment factor (2.002).

***d. Committee and Group 2 Discussion***

Speaking in favor of the proposed funding formula, the superintendents of districts in Group 2 discussed how any additional funds would be used to meet students' needs, including:

- hiring additional mathematics and reading coaches;
- addressing substance abuse problems;
- hiring additional counselors;
- providing additional programs to address truancy;
- extending the school year;
- improving services for gifted students; and
- improving bilingual education programs.

***e. Review of Group 1 Calculations***

Mr. van Moorsel stated that Group 1 included the largest districts presenting at the Deming meeting, with 2007-2008 budgeted enrollments ranging from a high of 23,370.0 for Las Cruces to a low of 5,392.0 for Deming. He explained that, although the overall adjustment factors for these districts reflected their larger size, they also reflected differences in need, particularly with regard to poverty, the percentage of ELL students, and the proportion of students in high school. He noted the effect that the high percentages of students participating in the federal Free and

Reduced Fee Lunch Program and students identified as ELLs have on the relatively high student needs adjustments in both Gadsden (1.767) and Deming (1.712). In addition, he said, the Index of Staff Qualification (ISQ) adjustment for Carlsbad (1.095) raised the final sufficient per-pupil cost for that district by approximately \$700 per student.

*f. Committee and Group 1 Discussion*

Speaking in favor of the proposed funding formula, the districts in Group 1 emphasized how they would use any additional funds to meet student needs, including:

- enhancing Response to Intervention programs in order to address student problems at an early stage, thereby reducing the need to place students in special education programs;
- hiring additional mathematics and reading coaches;
- improving bilingual education programs;
- hiring certified librarians in elementary schools;
- improving identification of and services for special needs students; and
- expanding elementary art and music programs.

The committee asked all three groups if the data used in the calculators appeared accurate. Several superintendents reported that the data were inaccurate, but all of the superintendents agreed that if the proposed funding formula is implemented, there will be an even greater need to ensure that the data are accurate.

In response to a committee member's question regarding whether it was possible for districts to "chase" the proposed formula, several superintendents indicated that they did not think it would be possible, and citing the fixed percentage for special education funding as the biggest deterrent to "formula chasing."

The committee asked the groups whether they thought the fixed 16 percent identification rate for funding special education would be sufficient. The groups reported that the fixed rate would either provide more funding than an actual identification rate if a district's rate was lower than 16 percent, or, in cases where a district's rate is higher than 16 percent, it would force districts more effectively to identify students in need of special education. Overall, the superintendents supported using the fixed identification rate for special education.

The committee asked all of the groups what method they would support for generating the funds necessary to implement the formula. One superintendent reported that voters in the superintendent's district would likely oppose an increase in taxes since recent bond issues in the district had failed. However, most superintendents said that voters were supportive of their local school districts and would likely support measures to fund the new formula.

### **ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS RESULTS FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2007-2008**

Chairman Miera welcomed Dr. Veronica C. García, Secretary of Public Education, to present the adequate yearly progress (AYP) results for school year 2007-2008.

Dr. García provided the committee with two handouts, one explaining the concept of AYP in detail and providing some statewide student assessment results, and the other containing information about AYP and school improvement status of New Mexico public schools. She

reminded the committee that the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) requires schools to meet 37 separate achievement targets each year, giving them 37 ways to fail to make AYP.

Dr. García reported that, in school year 2007-2008, approximately 33 percent of New Mexico public schools made AYP and the remaining 67 percent did not make AYP. She noted, however, that 13 schools improved enough to make AYP for two years in a row and were therefore removed from the school improvement cycle. In addition, she stated, because of a change in the state Accountability Workbook, eight schools that made AYP last year and missed by a fraction of a percent this year would be counted as making AYP.

Dr. García explained the schedule of increases in Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) mandated by NCLB to reach the target of 100 percent proficiency in reading and mathematics by 2014. She explained that the AMOs are the percentages of students in each type of school configuration (K-5, K-6, K-8, K-12, 6-8, 7-8, 7-12, and 9-12) who must score proficient or better in reading and mathematics in order to meet AYP each year. The AMOs increase each year, she said; and between school year 2006-2007 and school year 2007-2008 the increases for both subjects and all schools showed an upward trend.

Dr. García cautioned against state-to-state comparison of AYP results, explaining that each state sets its own proficiency cut scores and designs its own test to measure AYP. New Mexico's standards, she emphasized, are relatively rigorous and the state's test is well aligned with the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which tests a representative sample of students in grades 4 and 8 each year. A number of other states, however, have lower standards and less rigorous tests and more schools making AYP. With regard to NAEP, Dr. García reported that New Mexico's performance on the NAEP has improved from 2003 to 2007 in fourth grade reading, and in both fourth and eighth grade mathematics.

Referring to one of the handouts in the committee's notebooks, Dr. García reported that the overall percentage of students scoring proficient or above on the state standards-based assessment in reading, mathematics, and science has increased steadily between 2005 and 2008. However, despite significant gains for English language learners, Hispanic, Native American, and economically disadvantaged students, the achievement gap in both math and reading continues to widen for all subgroups in all grades statewide. In fact, she said, there have been significant improvements by students in various ethnic groups in some grades and subjects; but because subgroups are generally improving at approximately the same rate, the achievement gap has narrowed slightly but will remain until lower achieving groups make bigger gains.

Calling attention to examples of success in the state, Dr. García said that Velarde Elementary School in Española Public Schools and Georgia O'Keefe Elementary School in Albuquerque Public Schools were named Blue Ribbon schools by the US Department of Education (USDE) because of their growth in student proficiency.

To conclude, Dr. García indicated that she would provide the LESC with updated AYP status and school improvement designations after the appeals process is completed.

### **Committee Discussion:**

Several committee members discussed the performance of the state's ethnic groups and some of the factors that may be influencing their academic achievement. Dr. García emphasized that it is critical that parents, community members, and state and business leaders look at achievement data for each individual school; ask about improvement strategies and data on progress; focus on the results of short-cycle assessments to track student performance throughout the year; and focus on individual student proficiency.

In response to a committee member's question how New Mexico's subgroup size was set, Dr. García said that the Public Education Department worked with USDE to set the size at 25 for reporting purposes. She said that, because the state has so many small districts, USDE would not likely approve a larger subgroup size.

In response to a committee member's question whether New Mexico develops its own standards-based test, Dr. García said that New Mexico enters into contracts with testing companies to work with the department in developing a test that is aligned with New Mexico's educational standards.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### ***a. Approval of LESC Minutes for August 2008***

A committee member had requested that the draft minutes for the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) audit of Rio Rancho Public Schools be amended to reflect that the LFC letter expressing concern about the performance of high school graduates at state postsecondary institutions was sent not only to legislators but also to school superintendents. The committee member also had requested that the minutes be amended to more accurately reflect the committee's concerns regarding the manner in which the LFC audit was conducted and the findings expressed in the report.

On a motion by Representative Stewart, seconded by Senator Asbill, the committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes as amended.

### ***b. Correspondence***

Ms. Ramírez-Maestas reviewed several items of correspondence included in the committee members' notebooks, adding that these items are also kept in the LESC permanent files. She directed the committee's attention to a Public Education Department (PED) letter outlining school bus fuel costs. Noting that the committee had requested PED to provide a monthly report on the average cost of diesel fuel, she noted a \$3.94 per gallon average wholesale diesel cost for the FY 09 first quarter (July, August, and September). A review of each month's average cost, she reported, indicates a downward price trend since July. She reminded the committee that, in the 2008 special session, the Legislature appropriated \$4.0 million from the General Fund to PED for FY 09 to provide supplemental funding to school districts for increased fuel costs for school bus transportation. These dollars, she reported, fund diesel fuel for public school transportation at \$3.59 per gallon. The Chair requested that the PED reports in the monthly interim meeting include information on the allocation and expenditure of the \$4.0 million appropriation.

Continuing with the correspondence items, Ms. Ramirez-Maestas reviewed responses to committee requests from previous LESC meetings and press releases regarding New Mexico's National Merit Semifinalists; six new charter schools approved by the Public Education Commission; and the selection of New Mexico to participate in an eight-state institute designed to help the states put assessment and accountability systems in place to ensure that all high school students graduate college and career ready.

*c. Written Report: Public School Capital Outlay Awards Annual Report*

Referring to the Public School Capital Outlay Awards Annual Report, Ms. Ramirez-Maestas informed the committee that the Public School Capital Outlay Council (PSCOC) announced approximately \$104.5 million in state awards for public school capital outlay projects statewide in school year 2008-2009. She said the awards include approximately \$93.4 million in state match awards to 23 projects in 15 school districts; \$1.7 million from the Charter School Fund to four projects in four districts; approximately \$47.1 million in PSCOC Lease Assistance Awards to 75 schools and charter schools in 21 school districts; and over \$2.3 million of state match awards for the demolition of eight old, abandoned facilities in seven districts.

Mr. Peter van Moorsel, LESC staff, reported that the awards include seven new awards to Albuquerque Public Schools (APS); however, he added that the state share of these awards after offsets or waivers is zero. Mr. van Moorsel explained that APS would be responsible for both the local and state share, therefore effectively repaying a \$52.4 million advance from FY 07 and paying down an offset balance of about \$26.9 million. Mr. van Moorsel said that APS' total offset and advance balance was \$79.3 million; and by repaying \$75.5 million in awards for this funding cycle, the balance would be reduced to \$3.7 million. Mr. van Moorsel concluded by saying that this remaining balance would likely be paid down in the next funding cycle.

There being no further committee discussion, Chairman Miera, with the consensus of the committee, recessed the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

**MINUTES  
LESC MEETING  
Thursday, October 9, 2008**

Representative Rick Miera, Chair, called the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) meeting to order on Thursday, October 9, 2008, at 9:06 a.m., Emmett Shockley Building (Board Room), Deming, New Mexico.

The following LESC members were present:

Representatives Rick Miera, Chair, Jimmie C. Hall, and Mimi Stewart; and Senators Cynthia Nava, Vice Chair, Vernon D. Asbill, and Gay G. Kernan.

The following LESC advisory members were present:

Representatives Andrew J. Barreras, Nathan P. Cote, Nora Espinoza, Mary Helen Garcia, Dianne Miller Hamilton, and Jim R. Trujillo; and Senators Lynda M. Lovejoy and John Pinto.

Also in attendance was Representative John Peña.

**COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESENTATIONS:  
P-20 PARTNERSHIPS WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

Chairman Miera recognized a panel of presenters from five southeastern New Mexico colleges and universities who were asked to describe their P-20 partnerships with local public school districts. The panelists were Dr. Waded Cruzado, Interim President, New Mexico State University (NMSU) main campus; Dr. Robert Moulton, Interim Provost, NMSU main campus; Dr. Michael Morehead, Interim Dean, School of Education, NMSU main campus; Dr. Cheri Jimeno, Campus President, NMSU–Alamogordo; Dr. Russell Hardy, Campus President, NMSU–Carlsbad; Dr. Margie Huerta, Campus President, NMSU–Doña Ana; Dr. Faye Vowell, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Western New Mexico University (WNMU); and Dr. Patricia Manzanares-Gonzales, Dean, School of Education, WNMU.

Ms. Ramirez-Maestas stated that the committee included in its 2008 interim workplan a series of hearings with representatives of two- and four-year public postsecondary institutions in each region of the state to determine if and to what extent postsecondary institutions and local school districts communicate and coordinate their efforts to prepare students for college-level study and the work force.

Institutional representatives were asked to describe the goals of their initiatives, the strategies they are using, the challenges they have faced, their evaluation of the initiatives, and any data they may have gathered showing results to date.

Panelists described a range of P-20 initiatives that each institution had created in partnership with local school districts to introduce students to potential courses of postsecondary study; to increase student engagement, high school graduation, and college enrollment and success; and to reduce rates of high school truancy and college attrition. Each representative said that recruiting students who might not otherwise be considering college or formal training after high school was one of the goals of their partnerships.

Panelists from most of the postsecondary institutions described dual credit opportunities as focal to their P-20 efforts as illustrated in the table below:

Dual Credit Program	Description	# of Partners	Enrollment
NMSU main campus	<i>not provided</i>	<i>not provided</i>	<i>not provided</i>
NMSU–Alamogordo	Both concurrent enrollment and dual credit	4 partner schools	Spring 2008 -203 dual credit students -15 concurrent enrollment students
NMSU–Carlsbad	building trades	2 districts	102 students
	digital media/video production	3 districts	101 students
	welding	2 districts	131 students
	health occupations	3 districts	158 students
	business office technology	1 district	59 students
	computer aided drafting	1 district	31 students
	<i>NMSU–Carlsbad summary:</i>	<i>3 districts</i>	<i>582 students (time frame not provided)</i>
NMSU–Doña Ana	Dual credit pathways in Project Lead the Way; manufacturing bridge certificate; automotive, drafting, and building construction; healthcare assistant; education; criminal justice	3 districts	Fall 2008 660 students

In addition to dual credit programs, panelists outlined other initiatives aimed at secondary student college preparation and career success:

- NMSU's main campus reported involvement in over 70 NMSU-sponsored youth development and educational programs serving K-12 students and teachers throughout the state, including:
  - the Science, Engineering, Mathematics, and Aerospace Academy program for high school students;
  - Mathematically Connected Communities partnerships with school districts;
  - Project Lead the Way to help students succeed in engineering; and
  - early childhood and Scientifically Connected Communities professional development programs for teachers.
- NMSU–Alamogordo reported that the college's advisory board also serves as the school board for Alamogordo Public Schools and that the college has K-12 partnerships supporting community education, career clusters, and vocational and technical training.
- NMSU–Carlsbad reported that several new dual credit programs are under development, including programs in culinary arts, automotive technology, auto body/collision repair, and agriculture.
- NMSU–Doña Ana reported that the community college is in the final year of a four-year Achieving the Dream grant focused on increasing college-entry mathematics preparedness for high school graduates and GED students.

#### **Committee Discussion:**

In response to a committee member's question whether students in the teacher preparation program at WNMU are required to take mathematics, Dr. Vowell replied that students are required to take a minimum of six hours in addition to what they have already received in their core subjects.

A committee member asked the panelists whether their institutions have any formal arrangements for college academic advisors to meet with high school counselors. In response,

- Dr. Vowell said that WNMU's dual credit advisor coordinator works directly with the high school counselors and, as the dual credit law stipulates, they both meet with parents and students to review the requirements;
- Dr. Huerta replied that NMSU–Doña Ana does maintain formal meetings between their academic advisors and high school counselors;
- Dr. Hardy said that NMSU–Carlsbad advising staff go to each of the high schools one day a week to work with the guidance counselors;
- Dr. Jimeno said that NMSU–Alamogordo has a session each semester where the advisors go and meet with the counselors and also with interested parents and students; and

- Dr. Cruzado said that NMSU's main campus has instituted a number of events throughout the year, culminating with a day-long session with advisors and counselors invited from throughout the state.

Several committee members expressed concerns that elementary teachers are not graduating from teacher preparation programs adequately prepared to teach reading and mathematics in the elementary grades, and they noted that school district superintendents have expressed similar concerns. In particular, several members were concerned that teacher preparation programs are not instructing teacher candidates in scientifically based methods of teaching reading.

In response to a committee member's question to the panelists regarding how many incoming freshmen require remediation, Dr. Cruzado replied that five years ago, 60 percent of students at NMSU's main campus were failing college algebra because they were entering the university under-prepared. As a result, she said, NMSU made several changes to the course syllabi and the content delivery; she said that, as a result, now 85 percent of students are passing college algebra.

On the same point, Dr. Vowell replied that, 10 years ago, 60 to 65 percent of freshman at WNMU needed to take one or more developmental courses. Since then, however, there has been a steady decline in those numbers, and the university continues to address the problem by having meetings with the local high schools to align the curriculum.

A committee member asked if the Compass placement test is aligned with the benchmarks and standards taught in high school. In response, Dr. Huerta said that NMSU-Doña Ana has been working with the high school faculty to align the curriculum. When she arrived at the college eight years ago, approximately 85 percent of the students had to take one or more remedial courses; today that percentage is 70-72. Dr. Hardy said that NMSU-Carlsbad is conducting a pilot program with Loving Municipal Schools to notify Loving High School what topics students have difficulty with they when they take the placement test. They hope to expand this effort to the Carlsbad and Artesia school districts.

In response to a committee member's question regarding the effect of military growth on enrollment at the postsecondary institutions, Dr. Jimeno said that the percentage of military personnel enrolled at NMSU-Alamogordo has declined; however, the college anticipates that enrollment among military personnel will increase after the F-22 fighter jets arrive at Holloman Air Force Base. Dr. Huerta replied that NMSU-Doña Ana has a strong presence at the White Sands military installation and that the growth has been steady. She noted also that they are seeing a huge surge of veterans taking advantage of veterans' benefits.

In response to a committee member's question regarding the growth in the Hotel Restaurant & Tourism Management program over the past several years, Dr. Cruzado said the program grew 8.0 percent in the last semester.

In response to a committee member's question regarding the mathematics requirements for a certificate in welding, Dr. Huerta said that, to receive the certificate at NMSU-Doña Ana, a student needs three to six credit hours and between nine and 12 credit hours for the associate degree. Dr. Hardy said that for an associate degree in welding NMSU-Carlsbad requires that students take college algebra and a trades math, which includes applied geometry, algebra, and pre-calculus.

Representative Stewart requested that NMSU and WNMU provide the committee with copies of their syllabi for both of the reading courses required for elementary education candidates.

Representative Hall requested that NMSU–Carlsbad provide the committee with an outline of the mathematics requirements for its welding certificate and associate degree program.

### **RETIREE HEALTH CARE FUND SOLVENCY**

The Chair recognized Mr. Peter van Moorsel, LESC staff, and Mr. Wayne Propst, Executive Director, Retiree Health Care Authority (RHCA), for a presentation on the Retiree Health Care Fund.

Mr. van Moorsel began by providing a review of the creation and purpose of the RHCA, which was created in 1990 to administer healthcare benefits and life insurance for New Mexico's current and future eligible retirees and their dependents. Currently, he said, 487 employers are participating in RHCA, representing approximately 42,000 employees enrolled.

Mr. van Moorsel explained that the Retiree Health Care Fund has four primary sources of income: (1) contributions from participating employers and active employees; (2) distributions from state income tax payments; (3) monthly premium contributions of enrolled participants; and (4) investment income.

Legislation enacted in 2007, he said, called for a study of issues concerning the fund and appropriated an additional \$3.0 million per year from the Tax Administration Suspense Fund to the Retiree Health Care Fund for FY 08 through FY 10. According to the work group convened during the 2007 interim to conduct the study, there are three significant issues facing RHCA:

- because annual revenues had fallen short of expenditures and the authority had taken funding from its reserves and long-term investment to cover current costs, the fund was projected to be insolvent by June 2014;
- new accounting standards require the state to publish the unfunded liability associated with non-pension retirement benefits, which, paired with a significant Unfunded Accrued Actuarial Liability, could eventually affect the state's bond rating; and
- increasing medical costs, increasing numbers of retirees entering the system, and little pre-funding of benefits has caused costs to exceed revenues.

Mr. van Moorsel said that the work group's recommendations for addressing these issues include:

- focusing on extending the solvency of the fund to 25 years;
- meeting the Annual Required Contribution;
- reducing the Unfunded Accrued Actuarial Liability;
- adjusting premiums;
- increasing the employer/employee contribution from 1.95 percent to a total of 2.4 percent of pay by increasing the employer's contribution by three-tenths of a percent from 1.3 percent to 1.6 percent;

- increasing the employee contribution by 15 hundredths of a percent from 0.65 percent to 0.8 percent;
- indefinitely extending the \$3.0 million transfer from the Tax Administration Suspense Fund;
- using the revenue to pre-fund future liabilities; and
- requiring a \$1.0 million annual assessment from non-state participating employers, except for public schools, in order to make an additional contribution to the fund.

Mr. van Moorsel reported that legislation based on the work group's recommendations was introduced during the 2008 legislative session; however, it did not pass.

Next, Mr. Propst discussed actions taken by the RHCA board to extend the solvency of the fund. He stated that, in both 2007 and 2008, the RHCA board approved changes that are expected to extend the solvency of the fund and that the board is considering further options.

Mr. Propst further reported that in August 2007 the board approved a number of measures intended to extend the solvency period, including:

- moving the self-funded Medicare prescription drug coverage to an RHCA-sponsored prescription drug plan;
- adjusting benefit designs, including increases to certain co-payments and out-of-pocket expenses; and
- approving an average 9.0 percent increase in premiums across the benefit plans effective January 1, 2008, and committing to tying future premium increases to medical and pharmacy trends.

Mr. Propst added that in March 2008 the RHCA board approved the following measures intended to extend the solvency period:

- increasing the level of contributions by an overall weighted average of 15.5 percent; and
- establishing a policy requiring future premium increases to track medical cost trends.

Finally, Mr. Propst reported that further actions being considered by the board to extend the solvency of the fund include:

- a resolution to hold fund balances harmless absent significant, unexpected increases in expenses;
- requiring that all enrollees attest that they are not eligible for other healthcare coverage due to other employment;
- requiring a medical exam prior to reentry into the system;
- adopting an effective disease management program;
- creating further incentives to encourage the use of generic and mail-in prescription drug programs; and
- providing no subsidy after July 1, 2009 for new hires with less than 15 years of service.

#### **Committee Discussion:**

In response to a committee member's question how the Retiree Health Care Fund is invested, Mr. Propst said the investments are managed by the Chief Investment Officer.

In response to a committee member's question why the investments of the Retiree Health Care Fund performed relatively better than the investments made by the Educational Retirement Board (ERB), Mr. Propst said that the RHCA board was more conservative in its investments than the ERB and therefore suffered smaller losses.

In response to a committee member's question regarding the employer/employee contributions for retiree healthcare, Mr. Propst stated that the total contribution is currently 1.95 percent; and he added that RHCA recommends that this be increased 3.0 percent, which would require a change in statute.

In response to a committee member's question regarding the board's recommendation to require attestation regarding other coverage prior to reentry into the system, Mr. Propst explained that an active employee who is receiving healthcare coverage from another provider must report other coverage to RHCA.

In response to a committee member's question regarding the management of prescription drug costs, Mr. Propst stated that he would like to include a pharmacist in his staff in order to better understand the complicated prescription drug pricing system.

In response to a committee member's question if a member of RHCA would be refused coverage if, prior to retirement, the member has a preexisting condition, Mr. Propst said that the member would not be refused coverage.

In response to a committee member's question if RHCA members can change their enrollment from one plan to another, Mr. Propst said that this change is allowed during the open enrollment period.

#### ***STUDY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP CURRICULUM, HM 46/SM 36 (Identical)***

Chairman Miera recognized Dr. Melissa W. Lomax, Bureau Chief, Career Technical and Workforce Education, Public Education Department (PED), and Representative Richard J. Berry to discuss the Pre-Apprenticeship Study Committee recommendations regarding House Memorial 46 and its identical counterpart, Senate Memorial 36, *Study Pre-Apprenticeship Curriculum*.

Dr. Lomax explained that, during the interim, the study committee compiled information derived from research activities, a resource mapping survey of existing industry training programs, and career-technical education programs in public secondary and postsecondary institutions, as well as commentary from those interested in partnering with education to create new opportunities for high school students.

After its deliberations, the study group recommended that the LESC consider several action steps:

- Support legislation for the creation and funding of a New Mexico pre-apprenticeship curriculum pilot project that will provide student access to apprenticeable careers, training from industry experts, industry-recognized certification in pre-apprenticeship courses, and elective or dual credit toward high school graduation. The purpose of such legislation is to prepare high school students for apprenticeable occupations.

- Request that the Public Education Commission (PEC) and the PED coordinate with the State Apprenticeship Council and/or the US Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship for the creation and oversight of pre-apprenticeship program standards.
- Support requests for state, federal, and private funding of student opportunities to explore apprenticeable occupations via activities that may yield high school credit toward graduation.

Representative Berry provided a synopsis of the draft legislation to enact the *Running Start for Careers Act*. He explained that Running Start for Careers is a six-year pilot project that allows qualified juniors and seniors in public high schools to use elective credits to participate in approved industry-taught or -guided pre-apprenticeship programs. Upon graduation from high school, he noted, a Running Start student will receive a regular high school diploma as well as a certificate of completion of the pre-apprenticeship program. He said that the pre-apprenticeship certificate will count toward the supplemental instruction requirements of regular industry apprenticeships and that a student may receive college credit, depending on program courses.

The PEC, Representative Berry continued, will supervise PED's administration of the pilot project. Providers, industry instructors, and programs are to be approved by the PEC, and each local school board will approve the programs to be offered in its high schools.

Representative Berry said the project would be open to all school districts, although there will be no mandate for districts to participate. He added that the project is intended to expand, not supplant, current public school programming. He noted that there are approximately 900 trades to which pre-apprenticeship programs are applicable.

Because Running Start is not an on-the-job training program, Representative Berry explained, students will not be working at a job site; however, a particular program may require students to use tools and equipment in a classroom or laboratory setting. Pre-apprenticeship programs, he added, will be offered during the school day whenever possible and may be conducted at a location approved by the PEC and the local school board. Because instructors will be industry experts, he said, they will not be required to have a teaching license; however, they must pass a background check before they can teach students. Although the project is limited to public school students, nothing in the act precludes industry from offering pre-apprenticeship programs to private and home schooled students, as well.

Finally, Representative Berry said that the draft legislation included the creation of a non-reverting Running Start for Careers Fund. Although industry would bear most of the cost of the program, the industry provider could receive a per-contact hour reimbursement, not to exceed \$4.00 per hour, from available dollars in the fund.

#### **Committee Discussion:**

In response to a committee member's question regarding her familiarity with Skills USA, a program at both the high school and postsecondary levels, Dr. Lomax said that Skills USA is one of the six state-sponsored career technical student organizations. The initiative aligns leadership training experiences from high school into postsecondary education, including opportunities for competition in leadership, skills demonstration, service learning, and public speaking. She said that, should a project such as Running Start for Careers be implemented, it would be another avenue for participation and would appear not to interfere with Skills USA. On this point, Representative Berry added that, while other successful projects are available, his pilot project would expand opportunities throughout the state.

In response to a committee member's question whether energy is considered an apprenticeable trade, Representative Berry answered, "Yes."

In response to a committee member's question regarding the distribution of the resource mapping survey, Dr. Lomax said the surveys were distributed to secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, registered apprenticeship program participants, and industry.

In response to a committee member's question about the composition of the Pre-Apprenticeship Study Committee, Dr. Lomax said the memorial identified the areas and groupings from which the membership should be taken.

## ◊ SUPERINTENDENTS AND COMMUNITY INPUT

### Nursing Programs

Mr. Ed Kemp, Professor, Western New Mexico University, emphasized the current nursing shortage that exists in both the state and the nation and he asked that the LESC keep nursing programs in mind when it came to allocating funding during the upcoming legislative session.

### Teaching of Biological Origins

Ms. Jennifer Cunniff, resident of Las Cruces, spoke in favor of legislation that will be introduced during the upcoming legislative session to protect teachers' rights to teach weaknesses that exist in Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution.

### New Mexico Association for the Gifted

Dr. Teresa Rowison, Publicity Chair, provided the committee with proposed changes to the funding formula bill that would include gifted education in the proposed new funding formula and require the Public Education Department to monitor and enforce educational standards for gifted education.

There being no further committee discussion, Chairman Miera, with the consensus of the committee, recessed the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

**MINUTES  
LESC MEETING  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2008**

Representative Rick Miera, Chair, called the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) meeting to order on Friday, October 10, 2008 at 9:05 a.m., Emmett Shockley Building (Board Room), Deming, New Mexico.

The following LESG members were present:

Representatives Rick Miera, Chair, Jimmie C. Hall, and Mimi Stewart; and Senators Vernon D. Asbill and Mary Jane M. Garcia.

The following LESG advisory members were present:

Representatives Nathan P. Cote, Nora Espinoza, Mary Helen Garcia, Dianne Miller Hamilton, and Jim R. Trujillo; and Senator John Pinto.

Also in attendance was Representative John Peña.

**INTERSTATE COMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR  
MILITARY CHILDREN**

Dr. David Harrell, LESG staff, introduced Mr. James D. Rickel, Quality of Life Regional Liaison, Department of Defense (DoD), State Liaison Office. In addition, Mr. Thomas A. Hinton, Senior State Liaison, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, DoD, was present and available for questions. Also present were Mr. Rod Ventura, Legal Counsel, Public Education Department (PED); and Ms. Melanie Goodman, representing US Senator Jeff Bingaman.

Dr. Harrell said that the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children is a document that states are being encouraged to adopt to address the educational transition issues of children of military families. He noted the staff report with three attachments and the companion document to the report, *Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children: Legislative Resource Kit*, which contains the model compact itself as well as additional information.

In describing the need for the compact, Mr. Rickel noted that military children move from six to nine times during their K-12 school years, often on very short notice and often with multiple moves during the high school years overall—the senior year in particular. These circumstances frequently create problems or barriers with regard to such matters as transfer of records and credits, eligibility for particular courses, and fulfillment of local graduation requirements. Mr. Rickel further explained that approximately 90 percent of the enlistees are single, ages 17-21; however, by the time they make the decision to stay or leave the military, a large number are married. At that point, educational opportunities are an important factor in the decisions they make. He said that the compact will create an even playing field for the approximately 6,000 eligible military children in New Mexico. In addition, he said, the DoD feels that the compact is an important issue that will have an impact on military readiness.

Partly for that reason, Mr. Rickel continued, in 2006 the DoD partnered with the Council of State Governments (CSG) to develop this interstate compact; and by November 2007, CSG delivered a compact ready for marketing in the United States. Among its provisions, he said, the compact requires member states to establish councils for internal coordination, appoint a military family education liaison, and appoint a commissioner to represent the state on the Interstate Commission. Among its duties, this commission, comprising one representative from each member state, will promulgate rules; provide oversight, education, guidance, and enforcement; and resolve disputes. Mr. Rickel added that states jointly establish funding formulas for member-state contributions to the commission.

Another provision of the compact, Mr. Rickel said, is that it becomes effective when 10 states adopt it. As of the time of the presentation, 11 states had adopted it; therefore, it has gone into effect. The first meeting of the Interstate Commission, he added, was scheduled for late October 2008.

Noting that New Mexico has a significant military presence, Dr. Harrell reviewed some of the provisions already in place to address the needs of military children, such as recent legislation that makes them eligible for the Lottery Success Scholarship under certain conditions and PED rules and bylaws of the New Mexico Activities Association (NMAA) that address the needs of transitioning students in general. Nonetheless, Dr. Harrell continued, there may be a need for additional attention to the needs of military children. One factor is the anticipated growth by approximately 7,000 new students of military families through school year 2010-2011 in the school districts situated near military installations—Cannon Air Force Base, Holloman Air Force Base, Kirtland Air Force Base, and White Sands Missile Range.

As for the compact itself, Dr. Harrell said that some of its specific provisions are unlikely to create issues or problems for New Mexico; but he suggested that the committee give particular attention to the broader policy implications, some of which other states have already noted. Perhaps the broadest issue is the ceding of state sovereignty, a point also noted in a draft memorandum to a legislator in Washington from the Federal Affairs Counsel for Education with the National Conference of State Legislatures. For one thing, the provisions of the compact in general take precedence over state law: "All member states' laws conflicting with this compact are superseded to the extent of the conflict." For another, the rules promulgated by the Interstate Commission "shall have the force and effect of statutory law and shall be binding in the compact states to the extent and in the manner provided in this compact." Dr. Harrell noted that two of the states that adopted the compact did so with particular attention to these provisions. Florida law contains a repeal clause, effective two years after the effective date of the legislation. According to an analysis of the Florida legislation, "The repeal will allow the Legislature to review the compact after the adoption of rules by the Interstate Commission." North Carolina law amends this provision of the compact to read that a rule promulgated by the Interstate Commission "has the force and effect of rules promulgated under the [state] *Administrative Procedures Act*."

Other dimensions of the compact's far-reaching impact, Dr. Harrell continued, are the enforcement provisions and the obligations for data collection. On the first point, the state's executive, legislative, and judicial branches would be responsible for enforcing the compact; and the state itself could be subject to injunctive relief and damages through legal action in the US District Court for the District of Columbia if the Interstate Commission determined that the state had defaulted in the performance of its obligations. On the second point, one of the duties of the

Interstate Commission is to “collect standardized data concerning the educational transition of the children of military families under this compact as directed through its rules which shall specify the data to be collected, the means of collection and data exchange and reporting requirements.” Although both CSG and DoD have said that this compact requirement is not likely to require a state to make any data-related changes, Dr. Harrell suggested that, given the complexity and expense of data systems and the uncertainty of the commission’s rules, this provision merits attention.

The compact, Dr. Harrell continued, would also have an undetermined fiscal impact on the state, in the form of membership fees payable to the Interstate Commission; expenses incurred in state-level administration, including the state council and the military family education liaison that the compact requires; expenses to attend out-of-state meetings of the commission; and any penalties that the commission may assess against the state. At this point, Dr. Harrell said, the CSG and DoD expect the first membership assessment during FY 10, and they estimate the cost to states at \$1.00 per eligible military student. At this rate, and with the current population of 6,070 eligible students, according to CSG and DoD, the initial assessment to New Mexico would be approximately \$6,070. However, Dr. Harrell cautioned, this figure may not reflect the actual cost. He cited examples of other states that had estimated considerably higher costs and noted that it was on fiscal grounds that the Governor of Georgia vetoed that state’s compact legislation.

As his final points, Dr. Harrell alluded to several existing organizations that provide a variety of services to military families with school-age children—one of them, the Military Child Education Coalition, active in New Mexico—and he enumerated several policy options for the committee’s consideration:

1. endorse legislation to adopt the model compact as presented;
2. endorse legislation to adopt the compact with certain amendments, to be determined;
3. endorse a memorial requesting that PED, in collaboration with the NMAA, school districts, charter schools, and representatives of military families, examine the potential effects of the compact upon students, school districts, charter schools, and PED; and report findings and recommendations, if any, to the LESC;
4. endorse a memorial requesting that PED, in collaboration with the NMAA, school districts, charter schools, and representatives of public school students and their families, examine the provisions in the *Public School Code*, PED rule, the bylaws of the NMAA, and local school board policies that affect transferring students, especially military students, to determine whether these provisions serve the needs of transferring students in general; and report findings and recommendations, if any, to the LESC; or
5. send a letter to the Secretary of Public Education requesting that PED, in collaboration with school districts, charter schools, local school boards, and military families, consider whether school districts near military installations should become affiliated with the Military Impacted Schools Association (one of the organizations serving military families that is currently not operating in New Mexico).

#### **Committee Discussion:**

In response to a committee member’s question how often the Interstate Commission will meet, Mr. Rickel said that it will meet at least once a year following the establishment of the commission. Mr. Rickel added that the compact approach is being used instead of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) because there is no way to guarantee that the policies are followed with an MOU.

Chairman Miera said that he would like to hear from the Military Child Education Coalition, the Secretary of Public Education, and the Governor regarding this proposed compact. Mr. Rickel offered the assistance of legal experts with the CSG and the DoD.

A committee member asked whether the compact addresses only these specific matters: transferring of records, core sequencing, graduation requirements, extra-curricular activities, missing of entrance and exit testing, kindergarten, first grade ages, and the power of custodial parents. In response, Mr. Hinton said that the committee member had described the "fence posts" and that the rules cannot go outside the fence posts.

In response to a committee member's question about the status of the compact in other states, Mr. Hinton said that both California and Texas were considering adopting the compact. He also encouraged the committee to support the compact partly because, the sooner the state adopts it, the greater voice New Mexico will have in the rules that the Interstate Commission promulgates. In addition, Mr. Hinton emphasized that the compact is a state-based, not federal, initiative and that the DoD will have no say in the rules or activities of the commission. He further noted that, while no federal funding is expected to support the compact, the DoD will provide whatever assistance it can.

Continuing to address the need for the compact, Mr. Hinton said that the compact would be particularly helpful to those districts that so far have had limited experience with serving military families. New Mexico in general, he added, has already done a great deal to provide for military families; however, this compact would help the state address what the Pentagon sees as one of the greatest issues facing military families and the military in general.

In response to a committee member's question whether the compact would have any effect on the state's compliance with the federal *No Child Left Behind Act*, Mr. Hinton said that it would not.

In response to a committee member's question whether, if New Mexico were to join the compact, the state could later withdraw from it, Dr. Harrell explained that, because legislation would be required to enter the compact, additional legislation would be required to withdraw from it.

In response to a question from the Chair whether the provisions of the compact would indeed supersede state law, Dr. Harrell said, yes. Ms. Jonelle Maison, Senior Bill Drafter, Legislative Council Service, concurred.

Several committee members agreed that the compact merited a thorough review by PED and perhaps the Attorney General and a legislative judiciary committee. In addition, three committee members—Representative Cote, Representative Hamilton, and Senator Garcia—offered to serve on a task force if one were formed to study the compact.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS

Ms. Pamela Herman, LESC staff, introduced Dr. Jerry Harmon, Dean, College of Education and Technology, Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU), and Dr. Michael A. Morehead, Interim Dean, College of Education, New Mexico State University (NMSU), to provide the committee

with their perspectives as deans of colleges of education engaged in ongoing professional development school (PDS) partnerships. Ms. Herman also introduced Dr. Linda Coy, Director, and Ms. Sha Lyn Weisheit, Transition Liaison, Educator Support Center, Farmington, who were involved in encouraging the formation of PDS partnerships in northern New Mexico.

Ms. Herman said that the 2006 LESC Work Group on College/Workplace Readiness and High School Redesign had recommended improving the preparation of new teachers by expanding and better supporting field experiences in colleges of education, and moving more of the work of teacher education programs into the schools. In 2007, the LESC endorsed legislation to appropriate \$2.0 million to the Higher Education Department (HED) to support the expansion and improvement of educator preparation field-experience courses at public postsecondary educational institutions statewide, "by expanding field experiences prior to student teaching, providing supervision training for cooperating teachers and administrators, and establishing a model of shared responsibility between the teacher preparation programs and public schools." However, the measure did not pass.

Ms. Herman said that the PDS model is one of the most widely known types of school-college partnerships that integrate expanded field experiences into teacher preparation, with four mutually reinforcing goals: (1) to prepare future teachers; (2) to provide current educators with ongoing professional development; (3) to improve student learning in P-12 classrooms; and (4) to encourage joint research in education-related issues. Since the 1980s, hundreds of school-college collaborations have emerged, in many different forms and at many levels of intensity and mutual commitment. In 1995, Ms. Herman continued, to support and strengthen these reforms and encourage meaningful assessment and evaluation of their outcomes, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), a national professional accrediting organization for teacher preparation programs, undertook a six-year effort to develop and field test PDS standards, which she said were outlined in the staff report. She said that the NCATE PDS standards recognize that PDS partnerships evolve as they develop, and they include developmental guidelines describing how PDS models should operate as they mature. NCATE suggests that both the standards and developmental guidelines be used by PDS partners for in-depth self-study and assessment.

Ms. Herman provided the committee with a brief review of research regarding the effectiveness of the PDS model in improving teaching and learning of students and educators. According to NCATE, if a PDS can be shown to adhere to commonly agreed upon standards, then research that attempts to measure its outcomes, or that aggregates data across many studies of similar programs, is likelier to lead to reasonable conclusions about the value of the PDS model. Ms. Herman said that the staff report included some results of a 2004 NCATE publication compiling findings from 48 research studies of outcomes for students, pre-service educators, experienced educators, and, to a limited extent, the institutions in PDS partnerships. She noted that many of the studies in the NCATE publication lacked scientific rigor but that, according to NCATE, the quality of the most recent research into PDS effectiveness was improving.

According to the NCATE report, Ms. Herman continued, studies based on self-reported outcomes or, in a few instances, external observations and test data of pre-service educators seem to indicate that those who participate in a PDS are more likely than their non-PDS counterparts to feel prepared to teach and to remain in the profession. In particular, she noted three studies of teacher retention that showed that, over three to five years, the attrition rate for non-PDS trained teachers was approximately three times higher than that for PDS trained teachers, with even greater differentials for Hispanic and male teachers.

With regard to experienced educators, NCATE cited several qualitative studies that reported positive changes in the attitudes and behaviors of classroom teachers and, less frequently, administrators or college faculty. However, NCATE does not report evidence from which to generalize about the value of a PDS setting for teachers, who, according to anecdotal reports, tend to self-select into or out of PDS environments based on personal disposition.

Regarding outcomes for students, several studies in the NCATE report looked at learning measured by standardized tests and seemed to indicate that the PDS model, particularly if implemented faithfully, has the potential to improve student performance. Ms. Herman said that some of these studies included large cohorts of students and a scientific research design involving control groups. Among them, five studies conducted detailed analyses that appeared to link student test score gains to specific PDS interventions such as service-learning tutoring, action research to better understand student learning, and specific instructional approaches. Three of these studies attempted to assess how well the studied site met the NCATE PDS standards, and they made a tentative link between improved student learning and fidelity to the PDS ideal.

Ms. Herman pointed out that, while the research cited by NCATE appears to show that a PDS can make a difference in learning for teacher candidates and public school students, questions remain regarding when those improvements in learning occur, with which students, and what practices and circumstances produce those benefits. Thus, there is a need for more research designed to explore the answers to these questions, using an experimental or quasi-experimental design, in order to provide guidance to educators who wish to implement the PDS model with maximum results. Ms. Herman proposed that, as interest in the PDS model for teacher preparation grows in New Mexico and nationally, the LESC may wish to consider requesting future presentations from participants, with reports of research results and data from the Teacher Education Accountability Reporting System that offer evidence of the benefit of PDS partnerships in New Mexico.

Before turning over the presentation to PDS practitioners, Ms. Herman noted two initiatives underway to expand the presence of the PDS model in the state. One was the federally funded Teacher Quality Enhancement-Recruiting (TQE-R) grantees in New Mexico. The US Department of Education makes three-year TQE-R grants to promote reform in teacher recruitment through strategies that improve capacity to hire and retain highly qualified teachers. Currently, New Mexico has two such programs, both of which are supporting the development of the PDS model.

One of the New Mexico grantees is the Educator Support Center at Farmington Municipal Schools. Noting that Dr. Coy and Ms. Weisheit would describe this program in more detail, Ms. Herman described the program of the other New Mexico grantee, the Northern New Mexico Network for Rural Enhancement (the Northern Network).

Currently in year two of a three-year, \$3.0 million TQE-R grant designed to develop a cadre of 80 master mentor teachers in the 28 Northern Network school districts, the Northern Network, Ms. Herman explained, states that it is helping to establish new PDS partnerships that host elementary education classes on site and to provide a community base to recruit high school students into Future Educator Clubs and dual credit lower division education classes.

Ms. Herman said that Northern Network staff identified three partnerships as components of their PDS initiatives: (1) Northern New Mexico College partnering with Barranca Mesa

Elementary School in Los Alamos Public Schools, and in 2008 expanding to two new sites, Tony Quintana Elementary in Española Public Schools, and Ohkay Owingeh, a Bureau of Indian Education; (2) New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU) in partnership with La Union Elementary School in West Las Vegas Public Schools; and (3) UNM-Taos in partnership with Enos Garcia Elementary School and expanding to Ranchos Elementary School in Taos Municipal Schools.

Ms. Herman concluded by stating that approximately 60 New Mexico college of education faculty, public school teachers, and administrators statewide who are involved or interested in PDS partnerships had formed the New Mexico Professional Development Schools Network. The organization held its second annual conference in Taos in September 2008, and it plans a third annual meeting in early autumn 2009 in Las Cruces.

Dr. Harmon described the ongoing PDS partnerships between ENMU and four local elementary schools: James Elementary in Portales Municipal Schools, a 13-year-old partnership; Monterrey Elementary in Roswell Municipal Schools, a three-year-old PDS based on an earlier ENMU-Roswell partnership; Sunset Elementary in Roswell, a limited PDS expansion site starting in school year 2008-2009; and Bella Vista Elementary in Clovis Municipal Schools, targeted as a future expansion site. He said the partnerships involve seven full-time ENMU tenure-track faculty and one expert practitioner who spend part of their time teaching and coordinating PDS activities in Roswell and Portales. Approximately 170 ENMU teacher candidates take courses and participate in field experiences at PDS sites in Roswell and Portales each year. Activities at the ENMU PDS sites include the following:

- two six-credit Integrated Curriculum classes—one in math and science methods and one in language arts and social studies methods, with arts integrated throughout;
- a required 60-hour classroom practicum linked to the methods classes;
- professional development for school district classroom teachers in integrating arts into the curriculum, funded by a grant from the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts;
- mentoring new teachers;
- English as a Second Language classes for parents;
- Future Teachers organizations and other recruitment activities;
- community outreach; and
- action research.

Dr. Morehead explained that NMSU has three PDS partnerships currently in operation and others in the planning stages. MOVEMOS (Moving Elementary Methods On-Site), at Hermosa Heights Elementary School in Las Cruces Public Schools, is a 12-year-old elementary education partnership in which 15 to 20 candidates annually complete a total of 540 contact hours over two semesters in methods courses and on-site practica before they begin their student teaching. BIL-ELEM (Bilingual Elementary), at Central Elementary in Las Cruces Public Schools and San Miguel Elementary in Gadsden Independent Schools, began in fall 2007 for elementary education candidates seeking a bilingual endorsement. In this partnership, 40 candidates annually complete 540 contact hours over two semesters, one semester at each site, in methods classes and dual language classroom practica before their student teaching. Myrna's Children's Village on the NMSU campus is a multi-partner collaboration with La Clinica de Familia Early Head Start, Doña Ana County Head Start, and Las Cruces Public Schools. It began in 2007 for early childhood education candidates, who annually complete over 200 practicum hours supervised by public school, Head Start, and university faculty prior to student teaching.

According to Dr. Morehead, a fourth elementary PDS program will open in Las Cruces and Gadsden during school year 2008-2009, and a potential on-campus secondary-level PDS program is being explored. Altogether, 15 faculty members spend a portion of their teaching time on site at these PDS schools, where public school teachers, administrators, and university faculty collaboratively plan the program and assess candidates. In addition, the Professional Development Schools Committee, including representatives from all participating schools and NMSU faculty, meets monthly to coordinate PDS programs. Dr. Morehead said that correctly operating a PDS is time intensive and expensive and that NMSU faces the challenges of providing adequate funds to reward mentor teachers.

The Chairman recognized Mr. Herb Torres, Associate Superintendent, Las Cruces Public Schools, from the audience. Mr. Torres confirmed the value to the school district of the PDS at Hermosa Heights Elementary School under the guidance and support of NMSU faculty, adding that the program has been a model for development in other schools. He said that he hoped that the public school district and the university can continue as partners as they look at models for middle and high schools, and he expressed support of the PDS model on behalf of the Las Cruces Public School Board and superintendent.

Dr. Coy told the committee that the Educator Support Center in Farmington is in the final year of a \$3.0 million federal TQE-R grant, awarded in 2005, whose goals are recruiting and providing scholarship support for teacher candidates and mentoring new classroom teachers in the Four Corners and Los Alamos areas. Dr. Coy said the program has recruited over 300 beginning teachers and that, to provide beginning teachers with more supported time in the classroom, has encouraged the formation of a PDS. Noting that the pool of over 300 recruits provides her with good information for comparative study, Dr. Coy said that the new teachers, especially the ones in the Las Cruces area, who have participated in a PDS have needed less coaching and assistance in the classroom. She said the Educator Support Center has sponsored three annual teacher education forums in New Mexico, during which many participants expressed the need to expand PDS initiatives as an important way to support beginning teachers and build relationships with the K-12 schools within the P-20 initiative.

Ms. Weisheit described PDS plans in Farmington, where meetings over the past year have included Farmington, Aztec, and Bloomfield schools and local teacher preparation programs. She said that Central Consolidated Schools has also begun exploring the PDS model. These rural districts are not near a four-year postsecondary institution, but they host student teachers from teacher preparation programs at NMHU, UNM-Farmington, the San Juan College Alternative Licensure program, and Fort Lewis College (in Durango, Colorado), which have been involved in the talks. Ms. Weisheit confirmed her impression that PDS participants tend to be more effective and more confident when they begin teaching. Dr. Coy said that a second PDS partnership in Gallup is under discussion. It could include the Gallup-McKinley County Schools, UNM-Gallup, and Western New Mexico University. If launched, the new partnerships would not start as fully-developed PDS arrangements, according to Dr. Coy.

#### **Committee Discussion:**

In response to a committee member's question if there is a difference in retention among the teachers who have attended a PDS and those who have not, Dr. Harmon said that no such study has been done in New Mexico; however, he suggested it would be feasible to do a comparative study of the two groups, both of their student teaching performance and their retention and performance evaluation using Public Education Department (PED) data. Dr. Harmon said ENMU has approximately eight years of teaching performance data on an instrument based on the New Mexico competencies for beginning elementary teachers, including a significant number

of candidates who did field placements at James or Monterrey elementary schools in Portales previous to their student teaching, as well as a significant number who did not experience the PDS model at the practicum level. He said that anecdotal evidence from faculty, cooperating teachers, and administrators, suggests that candidates from the PDS sites develop an understanding of the culture and curriculum more quickly during student teaching than those students who did not attend professional development schools. He hypothesized that, because these teachers are better prepared for student teaching, they may also be better prepared for that first year of teaching.

Dr. Morehead added that trends seem to indicate that, in the first five years of teaching, teachers who had been through a PDS were more likely to remain than those who have not. Referring to the staff report, Ms. Herman noted the results of studies of teacher retention showing much lower attrition for PDS-trained teachers.

A committee member advised the presenters that, in assessing the benefits of the PDS model, they consider if the partnership assists schools in meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP). The member called the presenters attention to the information provided by the Secretary of Public Education showing that the schools involved in PDS partnerships have not made AYP for several years and are in School Improvement 2 or Restructuring. The member also pointed out that none of the schools were on the list provided by PED of schools that missed AYP by only one to three measures. Another committee member questioned why the schools in question were not making better progress in improving math and reading performance and questioned whether teacher candidates in PDS partnerships had been appropriately trained in math and reading methods.

Dr. Harmon said the faculty at ENMU is grateful to Portales Municipal Schools' hospitality to continue to allow them to work at James Elementary School, which has not met AYP. He said that ENMU faculty are shoulder to shoulder with those teachers in implementing curriculum in professional development stages and in the classroom, to address reading, math, attendance, and the full range of issues that constitute AYP.

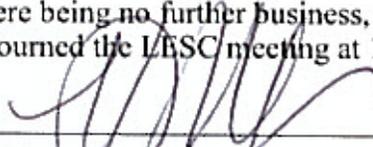
On this point, a committee member reminded the other members that sometimes schools fail to make AYP because of such factors as attendance rather than curriculum issues. The committee member said that there are high mobility and poverty rates at Hermosa Heights Elementary School.

The Chairman noted that the discussion had raised several good questions that likely needed more research. He stated that, while in the short term, funding for a high-end study would probably not be available, he hoped that the institutions could do some of this research with existing resources.

There being no further questions or discussion, the Chairman thanked the presenters.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, and with the consensus of the committee, Chairman Miera adjourned the LESC meeting at 11:40 a.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

*Jan 19, 2009*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date