



LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Special Education

Problem Statement	Federal law requires states provide students with disabilities the same opportunity for education as students without disabilities, and the state constitution guarantees an adequate, sufficient education to special education students. However, the consolidated <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> lawsuit found the state failed to meet its constitutional obligation to special education students, and it appears special education students are not being adequately served as reflected through low graduation and proficiency rates and LESCS special education stakeholder engagement process in the 2023 interim. A five-year plan to systemically improve student outcomes through an adaptive lens to special education policymaking grounded in community voice will provide a roadmap to drive improved outcomes for special education students through a more effective provision of special education services in New Mexico.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>Spring 2024: Continue participation in Senate Memorial 68 (SM68) Restraint and Seclusion Working Group. Conduct research on what other states are doing and best practices.</p> <p>Summer 2024: Draft proposed five-year plan based on 2023 interim work and share with stakeholders for feedback.</p> <p>June 2024: SM68 report provided to LESCS and other committees.</p> <p>July 2024: Present brief, including five-year plan to systemically improve special education student outcomes through policy change, to LESCS. Present with panel on SM68 report and policy recommendations.</p> <p>December 2024: Craft special education bill proposal and present to LESCS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create five-year plan to systemically improve special education student outcomes through an adaptive lens to policy making; - Monitor special education implementation and outcomes for special education students in New Mexico; and - Work with SM68 working group to develop policy recommendations regarding restraint and seclusion, including but not limited to improvement of definitions, standards for restraint, and proposed bans of certain types of restraint.

Questions to Address	What statutory changes can improve the provision of special education services in New Mexico and address the judge's findings related to special education in the <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> lawsuit?
	How can statutory change remedy concerns and positively change the provision of restraint and seclusion in New Mexico, for special education students and all students?
	How does the provision of evidence-based practices in special education differ among states; How does New Mexico compare?
	What constitutes adequate funding for special education programs and services for school districts and charter schools to effectively implement, and for PED to monitor, special education programs and services?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature enacts statutory changes based on a five-year plan to systemically improve special education student outcomes and adequately funds related programs and services, and the PED provides systemic frameworks and required technical assistance and the districts and schools effectively implement special education programs and services, then the provision and coordination of special education services will improve allowing special education teachers to focus on teaching, and as a result special education student engagement will increase and student learning will increase, and finally provide special education students with a constitutionally sufficiency public education, as required by the consolidated <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> education
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<p>In-state: Public Education Department, Early Childhood Education and Care Department, Higher Education Department, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Developmental Disabilities Council/Office of the Special Education Ombud, SM68 working group, special education stakeholder working group, students with disabilities, special education parents and guardians, special education teachers, school districts, charter schools, school boards, special education advocacy groups, unions.</p> <p>Research/national engagement: National Conference of State Legislatures, Education Commission of the States, Learning Policy Institute, additional research organizations as determined as the work progresses.</p>
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Resources Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data needs include, but are not limited to, last five years of STARS data (all reporting periods) for all three special education templates, student-level achievement data from summative assessments, restraint and seclusion data, suspension and expulsion data. - More research on what other states are doing; special education best practices, including for educator preparation programs.
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan

Program Evaluation: Literacy

Problem Statement	Literacy is a foundational skill, but most students in New Mexico cannot read or write proficiently, setting them up for difficulty in school and beyond. While legislative investments in structured literacy and other evidence-based policy and program may have contributed to improved statewide student proficiency in reading, evaluation tying particular programs to student outcomes must be done to understand the successes of state investments, and to help determine a path forward for policymakers. LESG staff will evaluate how and in what ways student growth in reading is impacted by the type of structured literacy support received, whether as a model school, support school, or through receiving general structured literacy supports.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>Spring/Summer 2024: Complete literacy evaluation design and obtain data needed from the Public Education Department (PED).</p> <p>June 2024: Monitor implementation of summer structured literacy institute and potentially partner with PED on evaluation design of program.</p> <p>September 2024: Panel discussion to LESG on initial outputs of summer literacy institute. Present brief on structured literacy evaluation to LESG along with policy considerations for the 2025 session.</p> <p>December 2024: Craft bill or budget proposal and present to LESG.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor structured literacy implementation and outcomes. - Offer partnership to PED regarding evaluation design of the summer literacy institute. Work with PED to determine initial outputs of the program for study. - Develop and refine structured literacy policy considerations based on research and evaluation.

Questions to Address	What are the differences in funding levels and support offered between structured literacy model schools, support schools, and general structured literacy supports?
	What initial outputs of the summer literacy institute should be reported and tracked for evaluation purposes?
	How and in what ways do the levels of structured literacy support received by schools impact reading outcomes?
	How and what can we learn from other states and better leverage evidence-based practices to teach the science of reading in New Mexico?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature has research from LESG staff showing how New Mexico's structured literacy initiative has impacted student growth and achievement and PED has partnered with LESG staff to provide data on student growth and achievement for each type of structured literacy support offered and the districts and schools have provided accurate Istation data to PED and thus LESG staff then the Legislature can make data-driven decisions and determine next steps in structured literacy implementation and as a result, continue to grow student achievement in reading statewide and ensure students have the literacy skills needed to succeed in school and finally, graduate from high school college, career, and civic ready and benefit the economic development of the state of New Mexico.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<p>In-state: PED, particularly PED's Literacy and Humanities Bureau; school districts, charter schools, school boards, educators, educator prep programs, other education stakeholders.</p> <p>Research/national engagement: National Conference of State Legislatures, Education Commission of the States, Learning Policy Institute, additional research organizations as determined as the work progresses.</p>
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Resources Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data needs include, but are not limited to, list of structured literacy model and support schools and all types of support offered including funding; Istation achievement data for kindergarten through third grade students at structured literacy model schools, support schools, and schools receiving general supports; and teacher roster data. - Research on what other states are doing regarding structured literacy implementation. - Partnership with PED's Literacy and Humanities Bureau.
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Principal Preparation

Problem Statement	Research demonstrates school leadership is second only to teaching amongst school-based factors influencing student success. Evidence suggests high-quality principal preparation programs can improve principals' feelings of preparedness, teacher satisfaction and retention, and student achievement. In New Mexico, both principal and teacher turnover rates are high, presenting a barrier for schools to implement the investments our state makes in schools. A principal preparation task force, formed by the New Mexico Association of Colleges and Teacher Education, developed a series of recommendations to bring school administrator preparation in line with national best practices. To support this work, LESC staff will continue to fine-tune the associated legislation filed in the 2024 session; explore costs and funding options; and consider the development of separate education administrative licenses or endorsements for different administrative roles.
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Long Term

Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>April: Visit Chicago Public Schools residency program.</p> <p>May: Present to committee working group update, PED use of FY24 RFA, and PED FY25 RFA. Research residency funding and administrator licensure and endorsement best practices.</p> <p>November: Present new bill draft to committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support introduction of legislation in the 2025 session, supported by PED and EPPs. - PED, EPPs, and districts implement administrator residencies in SY2025. - LESC evaluates administrator residency program implementation and makes implementation recommendations. LESC evaluates administrator residency program outcomes. - The Legislature determines whether to appropriate recurring funding for principal residencies.
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Questions to Address	How can the state prepare school administrators who are highly effective and remain in their positions long-term?
	Are there other sources of funding for administrator residencies (federal, local, etc.) in addition to state funding?
	Are there ways to narrow which administrator residencies are funded?
	How might educator preparation programs better meet the varied needs of different school administrator positions (ex. Principals, superintendents, and special education directors)?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature learns how best to structure and fund residencies, and the PED builds programs around these best practices and supports strong implementation, and if EPPs implement high quality programs, and the districts and schools partner with educator preparation programs to implement the residencies to fidelity, then we will be able to study administrator residency program outcomes, and adjust programs as needed, and as a result the state will be able to expand an effective and sustainable administrator residency program, and finally all teachers and students in New Mexico will have access to well-prepared school administrators and student outcomes will improve.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EPPs - PED - Teacher unions - Thornburg and Education Research and Development contractors - ABQ Greater Chamber of Commerce
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Resources Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrator preparation program data (number of program completers, which positions they take after graduation) - Relationships with partners and stakeholders - Research on best practices - Working group on administrator licensure, led by education research and development contractors and PED
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Teacher Supports

Problem Statement	New Mexico continues to face challenges in staffing all schools with diverse, well-prepared educators who remain in the profession. Educators are the most important school-based factor on student outcomes, with the largest positive effect for at-risk students. As New Mexico seeks to build and retain a diverse and high-quality educator workforce, legislators must decide which evidence-based policy levers to invest in. Over the 2024 interim, LESG staff will investigate educator supports, including class size reductions, career advancement opportunities, and innovative staffing models, with the goal of improving teacher retention. LESG staff will approach these analyses from a lens of funding for excellence, while acknowledging that sustainable funding will be key to ensuring long term outcomes.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	April-May: Scope project and request data June: Research best practices July: Conduct data analyses August: Write brief September: Present to Committee	LESG staff will perform a deeper analysis of recruitment and retention levers based on Committee interest with the goal of supporting any associated legislation that Legislators desire.

Questions to Address	How do PreK-12 class sizes compare around the state?
	Can the legislature expect reducing current statutory class size maximums to improve teacher retention and student proficiency outcomes? What would be the estimated cost of implementation? What might be unintended consequences?
	Can the legislature expect implementation of innovative staffing models to improve teacher retention and student proficiency outcomes? What would be the estimated cost of implementation? What might be unintended consequences?
	Can the Legislature expect teacher professional advancement through a level IV teacher license to improve teacher retention and student proficiency outcomes? What would be the estimated cost of implementation? What might be unintended consequences?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature understands how best to sustainably support educators, and what outcomes and costs could be expected to implement evidence based policy levers to meet these needs, and the PED implements these supports through rules and programming, and the districts and schools implement these policies and rules with fidelity, then school districts around the state will see improved rates of teacher recruitment and retention, and eventually, improved student outcomes.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	Districts, principals, teachers, PED, LFC, teacher unions
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Resources Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher (and other staff) data to analyze recruitment and retention over time and by district - Class size data - Research on best practices - Input from teachers and other stakeholders
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan

Program Evaluation: Educator Clinical Practice

Problem Statement	Aspiring educators in New Mexico may choose between traditional and alternative preparation programs. Some research suggests alternative licensed educators have higher rates of attrition, perhaps because they often enter classrooms with little clinical experience. Clinical teaching experiences take two forms in our state—16 weeks of paid student teaching and year-long paid residencies. Research suggests residency programs produce more diverse teachers with lower attrition rates; and their students demonstrate stronger outcomes than those of teachers without extensive clinical experience. Given these promising outcomes, the Legislature has appropriated over \$33 million since FY20 for teacher residency programs, as well as another \$60 million for educator practice for FY25 to FY27. To determine the most effective methods of preparing educators in our state, and to guide future legislative investments, LESC staff will evaluate residency and student-teaching clinical experiences and how they interact with traditional and alternative educator licensure pathways.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	April: Develop strategy, request data May: Research best practices, create rubric June-July: Analyze student data, select EPPs August: Study implementation (site visits, etc.) September: Synthesize analyses & write brief October: Present 2024 portion of evaluation	- Spring/summer 2025: Analyze initial teacher retention and continue analysis of student outcomes. - Fall/winter 2025: Present 2025 portion of evaluation.

Questions to Address	What are the effects of teacher preparation pathways and clinical experiences on student growth as measured by student proficiency growth on state assessments? Are there effects on student attendance?
	Are there dimensions of educator preparation program and clinical practice implementation that are associated with greater student proficiency growth? On greater improvement in student attendance?
	How does the implementation of teacher preparation clinical experiences compare to statutory requirements and best practices?
	What are the effects of teacher preparation pathways and clinical experiences on teacher candidate diversity, teacher retention, teacher perceptions of readiness, principal perceptions of efficacy, and observed efficacy?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature understands which licensure pathways and teacher clinical practice programs are associated with improved student growth, and the PED requires and supports educator preparation programs to implement effective programs, and EPPs implement these programs using best practices, and districts and schools collaborate with educator preparation programs to ensure effective implementation, then all teachers will be well prepared to enter the classroom. And as a result, student outcomes and teacher retention will improve.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	PED, Deans & Directors, EPPs, school districts, LFC
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Resources Needed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data from EPPs or PED or districts (candidate info for each of 4 sample groups and their teaching environments, student descriptive data and student outcome data). 2. Data analysis support. 3. Research on best practice, statutory and rule requirements for prep programs and clinical experiences. 4. Information from EPPs about makeup of preparation programs. 5. Site visits and calls with select EPPs and districts to study implementation (interviews, possibly observations).
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan

Program Evaluation: Learning Time

Problem Statement	For more than a decade, the Legislature has made significant investments in increasing the amount of time students spend at school. In 2023, the Legislature passed House Bill 130, which universalized the Extended Learning Time Program by increasing the minimum <u>hours</u> students spend at school. HB130 also created the K-12 Plus program, offering every school a substantial monetary incentive to add additional <u>days</u> of school. The learning time law was based on four evidence-based policy pillars: increasing instructional time, supporting embedded professional work time, offering flexibility to build calendars responsive to local needs, and fostering innovative use of calendars to reengage students. A 2023 LES C report on the K-12 Plus program pointed out that the program resulted in a wide variation in district strategies, with some districts adding additional hours and others reducing hours in favor of other strategies. LES C staff proposed an evaluation of the first year of implementation of the program, which will attempt to quantify the extent to which increased (or even decreased) learning time impacted students' academic growth.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verify accuracy of school calendar datasets for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years. - Validate a measure of year-over-year student growth based on Spring 2023 and Spring 2024 student-level assessment results. - Model the extent to which changes to instructional time impacted student growth. - Using the model, identify schools that are thriving, innovating, struggling, or regressing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Author program evaluation report and present findings alongside LFC staff. - Identify high-performing schools for potential case studies in effective use of instructional time and professional work time. - Create budget and policy considerations related to the K-12 Plus program.

Questions to Address	How and in what ways did changes in learning time affect student growth during the 2023-2024 school year?
	Did schools make effective use of the flexibility offered in the K-12 Plus program? Did flexibility result in a net positive or negative impact on student growth?
	Should the K-12 Plus statute be amended to create additional guardrails to guide PED's implementation of the program?
	Are the resources and supports provided to schools adequate to support effective implementation of the K-12 Plus program?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature creates a flexible framework for increasing learning time and provides sufficient resources for schools to increase learning time, and if PED supports and honors flexibility and innovation in school calendars, and if schools have visionary, effective leaders who harness learning time and professional work time to great impact, then schools will create innovative, engaging school calendars, and students will be less likely to be chronically absent and be more engaged in their learning, and students will experience greater academic gains.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	Legislative Finance Committee, Public Education Department
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Resources Needed	Verified FY23 and FY24 school-level calendar data sets, Spring 2024 assessment results.
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Data Governance

Problem Statement	The purpose of data is to support individuals in answering questions and making decisions. Policymakers rely on data to make informed investments, school leaders rely on data to design academic programs and supports, educators use data to drive everyday instruction, and even students themselves need data to understand whether they are on-track to graduate and to navigate the transition from high school into higher education and the workforce. These types of decisions are only made possible when data systems are carefully designed to meet the needs of the many stakeholders they serve. New Mexico has a wealth of data expertise across the many state agencies that collect education data, including notable current efforts to build a real-time data system at the Public Education Department (PED) and a statewide longitudinal data system at the Higher Education Department (HED). However, these efforts appear to be isolated within state agencies, rather than aligned to a coordinated long-term vision to use data to improve student outcomes. Throughout the 2024 interim, LESC staff will study current efforts to build and improve data systems, working with the state's data experts to identify a pathway to a coordinated data governance structure that builds the state's capacity to organize and analyze data, improves access to data for all stakeholders, and ultimately, helps all stakeholders make data-informed decisions that improve student outcomes.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connect with RISE NM team to learn about current efforts to build the SLDS - Learn from PED about the first year of Project Nova, the real-time student data system. - Study effective state models of data governance, and highlight elements of effective systems needed in New Mexico. - Assess the political will of state agency stakeholders to build a formal data governance structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommend budget necessary to allocate necessary resources to data collection and reporting efforts. - Author legislation based on national best practices and current state priorities for LESC endorsement. - Advise and participate in forthcoming data governance structure. - Help school district leaders build local capacity to use data to evaluate current programs and improve student outcomes.

Questions to Address	What is the current status of Project Nova at PED and the RISE NM longitudinal data system at HED?
	What are the needs and priorities of the various stakeholders who use education data? Are there shared priorities among agency heads that can guide data governance?
	What are the differences between New Mexico's approach to data and effective national models of data governance? What resources does a data governance board or council need to be successful?
	What is the administrative feasibility of creating a multi-agency data governance board or council, or an independent agency responsible for data analysis?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature builds a statutory framework for data governance and provides sufficient resources for data warehousing and analysis, and if PED, HED, ECECD, and DWS collaborate to author shared priorities for data collection and analysis, then the state will build a strong and thriving ecosystem for collecting, sharing, and analyzing data, and as a result, stakeholders will have improved access to data and an improved ability to make data-informed decisions.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	Public Education Department, Higher Education Department, Early Childhood Education and Care Department, Department of Workforce Solutions, New Mexico Children's Cabinet, Data Quality Campaign, National Conference of State Legislatures.
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Resources Needed	Connections to state agencies, including RISE NM team and Project Nova team. Connections to national experts, including the Data Quality Campaign, National Conference of State Legislatures, and other states with data governance structures.
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Defining Tribal Education Sovereignty

Problem Statement	Understanding the significance of tribal educational sovereignty and acknowledging tribes' efforts to help shape educational experiences that honor their unique cultural identities, values, and aspirations, is crucial for preparing Native American students for success in both Indigenous and mainstream context. However, a lack of comprehension regarding tribal educational sovereignty may act as a barrier to progress. By creating a strong foundational understanding by accurately defining and grasping the concept of tribal educational sovereignty, we can effectively foster appropriate remedies to address the <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> education lawsuit. Through a shared understanding of tribal educational sovereignty, we will understand the historical context of how traditional Western educational models often marginalized Indigenous students and the intricate jurisdictional
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Short Term

Long Term

Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>Ongoing: Interview and collaborate with tribal education leaders, Native American education representatives from PED, LEA's, and postsecondary Native American studies. Identify the major themes and the difference in tribal education sovereignty across all agencies. Compare the identified themes with PED's principles and practical implications. Integrate insights from national/global research.</p> <p>June 2023: Present a brief on what tribal educational sovereignty means across New Mexico.</p>	<p>The LESG and the broader Legislature will gain foundational knowledge on tribal education sovereignty, to enable informed decision-making and foster effective remedies to address some of the issues raised in the <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> sufficiency lawsuit.</p>
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Questions to Address	<p>What are the fundamental principles and practical implications of tribal education sovereignty, particularly concerning the rights of Indigenous tribes to self-governance, cultural autonomy, and equitable access to education across the state?</p> <p>How does tribal education sovereignty intersect with broader issues of educational policy, jurisdictional authority, and community engagement, and what are the implications for addressing historical inequities and promoting culturally responsive education for Native American students?</p> <p>What strategies and perspectives do tribes employ to cultivate and navigate their relationships with school boards, and how do they actively engage with school districts to advocate for their educational priorities and ensure cultural relevance and inclusivity in the educational system?</p> <p>In what ways do the principles and exercise of tribal educational sovereignty diverge from those of individual sovereignty and governmental sovereignty?</p> <p>What are the key challenges and opportunities associated with integrating tribal sovereignty principles into broader efforts to reform educational systems and promote educational equity for Indigenous communities as it relates to the findings of the <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> education sufficiency lawsuit?</p>
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Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature fully understands what tribal educational sovereignty means and prioritizes intentional collaboration with tribal leaders and adequate funding, and the PED helps support and maintain a harmonious relationship with tribal leaders, collects and analyzes data, and monitors funding and resources, and the districts and schools recognize and honor tribal educational sovereignty by fostering partnerships with local Indigenous communities, promoting Indigenous perspectives in educational materials, and supporting initiatives that empower Indigenous students to thrive academically and culturally, then the Legislature will have a respectful understanding of tribal educational sovereignty and they will be more inclined to partner with tribal leaders to support Indian education and tribal leaders will have an equal responsibility to shaping education in New Mexico for Native American students and as a result PED, districts, schools, and communities will work collaboratively with tribal nations to create inclusive learning environments that celebrate diversity and promote educational equity for all students which will improve educational outcomes, preserve cultural identity and language, and support the well-being of students, and finally, establish goals that will resolve the <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> education sufficiency lawsuit.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<p>In-State Partners: Tribal Education Leaders, PED (Indian education, <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> consolidated lawsuit), Transform Education, Tribal Education Alliance, UNM, SIPI, Navajo Tech University, NMABE, school boards, school districts, charter schools, tribal schools, students and families, community partners (tribal libraries, other tribal related educational programs)</p> <p>National Research: U.S. Department of Education- Office of Indian Education, WestEd, Association on American Indian Affairs.</p>
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Resources Needed	Native American student data; Tools to identify culturally responsive and language educational initiatives; Interview skills (e.g. Tribal educational leaders, LEA's, PED, community, students).
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan The Status of Homeless and Foster Students

Problem Statement	Many homeless and foster students face significant barriers to accessing quality education due to lack of stable housing, foster placements, and inadequate support systems. This often results in lower graduation rates, increased dropout rates, and inferior academic outcomes compared to their peers. Homeless and foster students require comprehensive support services to address their unique needs. However, the extent of support provided by the education system for homeless and foster students remains uncertain. To gain deeper insights into the educational experiences of homeless and foster students, LESCS will investigate the root causes that will enable the development of actionable recommendations fostering significant improvements in educational outcomes.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>Ongoing: Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment by collaborating with representatives from PED, schools, and community liaisons for homeless and foster students. Identify effective mechanisms for supporting these students statewide. Align identified strategies with PED's vision for serving homeless and foster students, and integrate insights from national research.</p> <p>September 2023: Provide a landscape analysis of homeless and foster students in New Mexico as it currently exists.</p>	<p>The LESCS and the broader legislature will have a clear understanding of the complexities of the education system that serve homeless and foster students along with evidence-based strategies to ensure equitable access to education, promote academic success, and enhance the overall well-being of homeless and foster students in New Mexico.</p>

Questions to Address	<p>What comprehensive measures does the state employ to ensure the complex needs of homeless and foster students are effectively addressed?</p> <p>What strategies and support systems do schools implement to effectively serve the unique needs of students who experience foster care placement, housing instability, or homelessness? Specifically, what programmatic and funding choices are the districts and schools making to support homeless and foster students?</p> <p>What systemic challenges and limitations exist within current methods for identifying students who are homeless and in foster care, and how might these methods contribute to undercounting or overlooking vulnerable students?</p> <p>What considerations and provisions are integrated into the current funding formula to account for the unique needs and challenges faced by homeless and foster students within educational systems?</p>
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Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature understands the current state of homeless and foster students and prioritizes intentional funding and resources, and the PED collects and analyzes data, monitors funding and resources, provides services to students and families for students to access education and education supports, and the districts and schools implement, maintain, monitor, and report on all (effective and ineffective) strategies in relation to student personal life and the impact that such experiences have on student achievement, outcomes, and well-being, then the legislature will gain greater insight on how to appropriately fund and implement intentional solutions that will support homeless and foster students, and as a result PED, districts, schools, and communities will consensually identify and support all students experiencing homelessness and foster placement, including other at-risk students who may slip through the cracks with readily available resources and potentially influence positive change within the students personal life, and finally, of equal significance, decrease the academic statistics placed on homeless and foster youth by improving opportunities for success, educational outcomes, well-being and stability.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<p>In-State Partners: CYFD, HousingNM, Homeless & Foster Care at PED, school districts, charter schools, tribal schools, students and families, community partners (Adelante, NM Voices for Children, NM Friends of Foster Children, Red Mountain Family Services INC.)</p> <p>National Research: National Center for Homeless Education, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), McKinney-Vento, Schoolhouse Connection, WestEd.</p>
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Resources Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Homeless and Foster student data. - Information on readily available resources for schools and students across the state. - Including services that may or may not be connecting with homeless and foster students. - Tools to identify locations of hope. - LESCS staff will partner with PED to understand the complexities within the system that target homeless and foster students.
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Family Income Index

Problem Statement	<p>Research suggests poverty is a key factor adversely influencing student achievement, particularly when there is a significant concentration of poverty in any one community. To alleviate the adverse impact of poverty on student achievement, the Legislature has appropriated supplemental nonrecurring funding through the Family Income Index (FII) for schools with the highest concentrations of poverty. Much of the resulting funding has been used at the school-site level to support after-school enrichment programs, professional learning, counselors and social workers, and academic interventions. However, various challenges have emerged in the administration of the FII, particularly when school leaders are unaware of their school's FII distribution, or when they are informed of their distribution in the closing months of the academic year. In studying these opportunities and challenges, LESG staff will collaborate with external stakeholders in assessing the impact of the FII on student achievement and building the capacity of school leaders, for the purpose of recommending the continuance or discontinuation of the existing program in FY26.</p>
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>May-June 2024: Gather and assess quantitative and qualitative data on the uses of FY22, FY23, FY24, and FY25 FII allocations. July 2024: Present FII brief to the LESG. November 2024: Present the LESG's FY26 public school support recommendation.</p>	<p>Monitor uses of FY25 allocations from the FII, including the programming supported, services provided, and full-time employees funded by the program.</p>

Questions to Address	<p>How are funds from the FII currently being used by schools and how have they been used in the past?</p> <p>What impact have programming and services that were sustained by the FII, such as those focused on student attendance and behavioral health, had on student achievement?</p> <p>Are public schools braiding FII with other funding sources, such as Title I, II, and III, community schools, out-of-school time, K-12 Plus, and CTE, and has that yielded any insight into the unique needs of certain communities?</p> <p>Is there sufficient capacity at the school-level to appropriately use FII or other supplemental funds on data-driven practices that improve student achievement?</p>
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Theory of Change for Initiative	<p>If the Legislature finds poverty is a key factor adversely influencing student achievement and believes public schools serving students living in poverty should be allocated additional financial supports, and PED has a transparent and locally responsive methodology for identifying concentrations of poverty, and each public school is allocated a particular amount for flexible and discretionary use at the school-site level, then school leaders will be empowered to use that flexible funding in ways that effectively serve the comprehensive needs of low-income students, and as a result the adverse impact of poverty on student achievement will be alleviated and public schools will have a stronger base from which to improve achievement among low-income students, and thereby provide low-income students with a constitutionally sufficient public education, as required in the findings of the consolidated <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> education sufficiency lawsuit.</p>
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Education Department - School districts and charter schools - Legislative Finance Committee
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Resources Needed	<p>FY25 school-site FII data and programmatic uses of each distribution</p>
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Cash Balances

Problem Statement	There is a perception among some stakeholders in New Mexico that the aggregate amount of cash balances held by school districts and charter schools may be considered excessive, particularly in relation to the Legislature's annual appropriation to the state equalization guarantee (SEG). Some local educational agencies (LEAs) have suggested their growing cash balances may be attributed to various challenges associated with the Public Education Department's (PEDs) reimbursement process, as well as a general need to have funds on-hand for capital outlay projects. As a related component of the LESG's simultaneous revision of the SEG, LESG staff will collaborate with external stakeholders in assessing the root causes of some LEA's growing cash balances, whether particular processes at PED or in the capital outlay process are contributing to the growth of those cash balances, and whether there should be recommended thresholds for cash balances that are responsive to different LEAs.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>July 2024: Pull cash balance report from OBMS.</p> <p>August 2024: Collaborate with PED on identifying the status of the department's revisions to the reimbursement process.</p> <p>September 2024: Present cash balances brief to the LESG.</p>	Monitor cash balances in FY25, particularly in relation to a potential phase-in of the SEG revision.

Questions to Address	What is the appropriate level of cash balances and does that threshold vary by the size and rurality of an LEA?
	What is the estimated impact of PED's planned improvements to the reimbursement process on cash balances in FY25?
	Will cash balances begin to draw down as federal Covid-19 relief funding expires, health and risk premiums increase, and capital outlay projects are completed?
	What impact do particular below-the-line programs have on the reimbursement process and could a long-term transition of that funding to the SEG alleviate those challenges?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature determines the current aggregate amount of cash balances held by school districts and charter schools is excessive, and PED consistently implements and sustains comprehensive improvements to its reimbursement process, and each school district and charter school is adequately supported with timely reimbursements and adequate fiscal support in the funding formula, then local leaders may have the fiscal and logistical capacity to prevent further increases in their cash balances and to potentially draw down their existing cash balances, and as a result, a greater amount of existing funding may flow to programs and services intended for students, and thereby provide all students with a constitutionally sufficient public education, as required in the findings of the consolidated <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> education sufficiency lawsuit.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Education Department - School districts and charter schools - Legislative Finance Committee
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Resources Needed	Cash balance report from OBMS
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Middle School Study

Problem Statement	As the pivotal transitional phase between elementary and high school, middle schools play a crucial role in shaping students' academic, social, and emotional development. However, existing middle school structures often fail to adequately address the needs of adolescents and their educators, evidenced by disengagement, drops in math and reading achievement, challenges with attendance that emerge in middle school, and educator wellbeing. This research aims to evaluate current middle school structures (funding, scheduling, staffing, design) and propose reforms to create more responsive school environments. Through comprehensive evaluation methodologies, including stakeholder input, data analysis, and study of successful models in New Mexico, nationally, and internationally, this research endeavors to provide actionable insights and evidence-based recommendations for shaping policies that foster the creation of more supportive, inclusive, and effective middle school environments, thereby enhancing student engagement, academic success, educator wellbeing, and overall function of middle school systems.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>April-May 2024: Research and literature review of middle school design and structures; Development of invites and working plan for middle school engagement; Initial presentation to LESG.</p> <p>June-September 2024: Working group meetings; Site visits; Statutory and administrative rule review; Drafting of recommendations.</p> <p>October 2024: Final report and presentation to LESG summarizing research and findings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a recommendation on policy options to support effective middle school environments. - Support LESG members with possible statutory changes to align with the recommendations from the research study. - Develop a statewide approach to middle school structures that allows for greater student and educator satisfaction and that ultimately, bolsters middle school outcomes.

Questions to Address	What are the models of middle school environments being used across New Mexico; How and in what ways do these align with research and best practices on middle school design?
	What is the relationship between various middle school designs (K-8 schools; 6-8 grades; 6th grade academies, etc.) and student outcomes (in available data)? If there are differences, what are the key drivers?
	What are the articulated needs of middle school students and educators and how does middle school design align to these needs?
	What is a plausible statewide policy approach to support middle school students? How can the legislature support middle school environments that enable student success?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature better understands learning needs in middle school years and how the state can statutorily and financially support responsive middle school environments, and the PED provides supports and technical assistance aligned with research and identified community needs, and school districts and schools offer professional learning and appropriate student learning environments, then middle schools can be staffed, structured, and designed in ways responsive to adolescent and educator needs and the state will have an aligned strategy to middle school education, and as a result the state will create and offer more robust middle school options, and finally, see improved student engagement and outcomes and readiness for high school.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<p>In-State: LESG members; A representative group of youth that reflect New Mexico's student demographics and the student groups named in the <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> consolidated lawsuit; teacher preparation program leaders; middle school teachers and educational leaders; school counselors and other instructional support providers, school safety and school resource officers; higher education institutions; health professionals; community members; the Public Education Department (PED);</p> <p>Out-of-State: National and international experts in middle school design (potentially the Remaking Middle School group at the University of Virginia, Education Commission of the States, and similar education organizations).</p>
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Resources Needed	<p>Research needs will include, but may not be limited to: Research and data about possible middle school scheduling and staffing models, both in-state and out-of-state; Research about adolescent developmental needs; Research about best practices in middle school instruction and school structures related to components such as scheduling, school building design, career and technical education, core academic needs, etc.</p> <p>Data needs will include, but may not be limited to: School attendance disaggregated by grade and student demographics; School achievement data disaggregated by grade and student demographics; Data about middle school discipline; Workforce data for middle school educators; Survey results related to school engagement. By working with a robust study group, there will also be room for qualitative data gathering about middle school structures and models alongside reviewing statewide data.</p>
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan

Program Evaluation: Career and Technical Education

Problem Statement	Dissatisfaction with New Mexico's public education system has prompted interest in comprehensive measures of student success that encompass both traditional measures (attendance, achievement, graduation rates), and broader metrics that matter to lawmakers, families, and communities, particularly in the evaluation of key legislative investments, such as career and technical education (CTE). The evaluation of CTE programs is essential for assessing their effectiveness in preparing students for success in life after high school. However, current evaluation frameworks often lack comprehensiveness and fail to adequately measure the multifaceted outcomes of CTE, which include traditionally sought measures alongside more holistic indicators such as career readiness, social emotional development, and post-graduation outcomes. This research aims to address this gap by defining comprehensive measures of student success and developing an evaluation framework to assess the full spectrum of CTE programs, namely the state's NextGen CTE pilot project. By identifying key indicators and methodologies for evaluation, this study seeks to provide insights to improve the quality, relevance, and cost effectiveness of CTE offerings, while also exploring the use of more holistic student outcome measures for use by the Legislature.
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	Short Term	Long Term
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>Winter 2023-2024: Submission of project proposal to LESG leadership and Harvard Strategic Data Project team; Feedback and iteration.</p> <p>April-May 2024: Data requests submitted to PED and other state agencies; LEA selection for qualitative partnership; Project kickoff with PED.</p> <p>June-July 2024: Data analysis of initial findings; initial report to LESG members.</p> <p>Fall/Winter 2024: Continued iteration validating student success metrics.</p> <p>May 2025: Final Harvard Strategic Data Project deliverables expected; To be shared with LESG members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LESG staff will offer LESG members a comprehensive evaluation frame for CTE programs and similar legislative investments; This initial evaluation will offer a robust look at the Legislature's investment in CTE programs while also contributing to a broader tool to institutionalize and operationalize the use of metrics to evaluate legislative proposals. - LESG staff will contribute to the development of a more holistic definition of student success that the Legislature can use to assess investments on student outcomes and the education system. - LESG staff will provide research about data points to track progress and connect legislative investments to a holistic definition of student success. - The state will make progress in addressing the <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> lawsuit and aid the Legislature in creating an education system that offers college, career, and civic readiness to all students.

Questions to Address	<p>How and in what ways do student outcomes (achievement, including proficiency and growth, attendance, and graduation rates) differ among school districts and charter schools that receive CTE funding and those that do not?</p> <p>What is the CTE program investment needed to contribute to robust CTE programming in school districts and charter schools; How do New Mexico's investments compare?</p> <p>What additional student outcomes are expected of school systems outside of attendance, graduation rates, and achievement scores; What data streams might be valid and reliable to track progress toward these outcomes?</p> <p>What is the specific relationship between legislative investments such as CTE programs and student outcomes; Can a model to help predict these relationships be created?</p>
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Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature better understands multifaceted and holistic outcomes of its investment in CTE programs and gains insight into the cost, scope, and structure of effective CTE programs, and the PED disperses supports, funding, and technical assistance aligned with research findings, and school districts and schools are able to offer aligned, well designed, and comprehensive CTE programs tailored to their local context, then CTE programs will be structured to meet modern needs and the state will have an aligned strategy to offer robust and compelling CTE programs and as a result, the state will better understand how CTE programs contribute to overall student success, and finally, see improved student engagement and outcomes that offer genuine pathways to college, career, and civic readiness.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<p>In-State: LESG members; School districts and charter schools; CTE students and educators; Public Education Department; Higher Education Department; Department of Workforce Solutions; Local education organizations and nonprofits.</p> <p>Out-of-State: Harvard Strategic Data Project.</p>
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Resources Needed	<p>Stakeholder needs: LESG will partner with a limited set of school districts/charter schools to offer qualitative insights and data in addition to statewide data sets.</p> <p>Research needs will include, but may not be limited to: Research and literature review of CTE program structures and funding; Research and literature of promising "student success" metrics including validated measures of assessing such metrics.</p> <p>Data needs will include, but may not be limited to: School enrollment and demographic data (disaggregated); Attendance data (disaggregated); Achievement data (disaggregated); Graduation rates by LEA; CTE course enrollment data; CTE offerings by LEA; CTE funding by LEA; CTE educator workforce and licensure data; CTE credential completion by LEA and student demographics; Results from student and staff/family wellbeing and competency survey; Data about student pathways post-graduation; Community school funding and status by LEA.</p>
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Universal School Meals

Problem Statement	<p>Research shows that providing all students with free school meals improves overall readiness to learn and increases academic performance. In 2023, the New Mexico Legislature unanimously approved the Healthy Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act, requiring the Public Education Department (PED) to implement a program to provide free and high-quality meals for all New Mexico students. PED's updated projected cost of the Healthy Universal School Meals (HUSM) program for FY24 came in at just under \$44 million in January 2024, exceeding the Legislature's \$22.5 million appropriation. For FY25, the Legislature has appropriated \$41 million, while PED is projecting a price tag of \$42.2 million. With this ongoing underfunding issue in mind, it is necessary to assess whether the current methodology for determining program funding is responsive to local needs and adequate for the purpose of state financial planning. In addition, the act requires school food authorities to meet PED-set meal quality improvement standards beginning July 1, 2025, but compliance with this requirement is currently unknown, nor is the degree to which the HUSM program has been adopted across the state fully understood. LESC staff will engage with PED officials and school district leaders to assess the existing methodology for financial projections, the on-the-ground application of and compliance with the HUSM program's provisions, and challenges for local education agencies (LEAs) in scaling up their food programs.</p>
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>March/April: Finalize work plan and select 10 districts/charters for qualitative research. Meet with PED/GOV to discuss program oversight and implementation.</p> <p>April/May: Engage with LEAs on their experiences with the HUSM program to date.</p> <p>May/June: Analyze compiled data and prepare draft brief for review. Identify district(s) to testify at September meeting.</p> <p>July/August: Finalize brief.</p> <p>September: Present findings to Committee.</p>	<p>After a few years of the program being in place (after meal quality improvement guidelines become required in 2025-2026 for maximum funding), a program evaluation will be necessary to assess the correlation between providing universal school meals and student achievement.</p>

Questions to Address	<p>Which LEAs offer free meals and which do not, and how many are designated as standard program schools versus CEP schools?</p> <p>For maximum state funding going forward, PED-set meal quality improvement requirements must be met by July 1, 2025, how far/close are LEAs to meeting these requirements?</p> <p>What challenges have LEAs faced in scaling up their food programs for increased student participation (kitchen improvements, meal count projections, etc.)?</p> <p>Why are program cost projections consistently coming in higher than expected and does the current methodology for estimating cost need revision?</p> <p>Are current PED mechanisms for determining federal funding eligibility adequately identifying all students and how is this impacting the state's ability to maximize federal funding and accurately estimate program funding needs?</p>
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Theory of Change for Initiative	<p>If the Legislature fully funds and establishes clear meal quality improvement standards for universal school meals, and the PED develops a strong partnership with LEAs to ensure compliance with those standards, and the districts and schools scale up their food service programs and upgrade kitchen infrastructure to ensure all students who want a nutritious meal receive one, then students will be able to come to school knowing they will have consistent access to nourishing foods throughout the day and will not have to worry about an empty stomach while learning or the stigma surrounding free and reduced meal eligibility, and as a result can feel safe and nurtured at school and able to focus on their studies, and then the academic outcomes and overall wellbeing of New Mexico students will improve.</p>
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<p>PED, Governor's Office staff, local school district/charter leaders; Sen. Padilla; Sen. Jaramillo</p>
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Resources Needed	<p>From PED: Data on number of schools currently participating in HUSM (X); explanation of cost projection methodology; meal count data for LEAs; Tracking data on NM School Kitchen Infrastructure Improvement Grant funding + USDA Equipment Grant funding.</p> <p>From LEAs: information on experiences implementing HUSM; explanation of use of funding for infrastructure improvement.</p>
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan STEM Innovation Network

Problem Statement	As science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) topics take on an even more significant role in our economy and society, it is critical that New Mexico students are equipped with STEM-related skills to enable them to lead fulfilling, prosperous lives after they complete schooling. Recent PED data on science and math indicate low levels of proficiency for New Mexico students and stakeholders routinely note the inequity in how STEM resources are distributed across the state. To that end, advocates have proposed a statewide STEM innovation network to ensure students across the state have access to robust and rigorous STEM resources. LESL staff will research similar networks in other states and collaborate with external stakeholders and PED to understand how such a network could be established, how existing programs and organizations can be leveraged, and the expected role of the state in network governance.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>March/April: Meet with Innovation Network advocates; consult with PED, MSAC, various stakeholders. Reach out to STEM network officials in other states.</p> <p>April/May: Engage with advocates of the effort to overview proposed structure. Create brief skeleton.</p> <p>May/June: Write brief draft and submit for edits. Work with advocates to organize presentation on tweaked proposal to committee in July.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">July: Present findings to Committee.</p>	Coordinate with advocates, LCS, PED, MSAC, and bill sponsor(s) to craft bill text that reflects changes made since the prior effort ahead of the 2024 session.

Questions to Address	What network structure best fits the needs and context considering the assets and gaps in New Mexico STEM education?
	How will establishing the network better allow New Mexico to provide quality STEM education to students across the state?
	How will the network be governed and who will have final say on how funding appropriated for the effort is used?
	How can existing organizations and programs be leveraged to establish the network?
	What would it cost to develop a STEM network and how does the choice of model impact the funding need?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature appropriates funding and establishes a framework for a statewide STEM Innovation Network, and HED develops a clear, consistent regulatory regime to establish minimum standards and direct funding to specific programs and regions, and LEAs develop partnerships with STEM organizations and leaders both in their communities and beyond, then students across New Mexico will have more equitable access to rigorous STEM education opportunities in and out of the classroom, will be able to engage with STEM topics and industry leaders from throughout the state, and will consequently demonstrate greater enthusiasm for STEM education and produce improved academic outcomes.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	NMPMSE; PED; Society of Women Engineers; Senator Harold Pope, Jr.; Ohio STEM Learning Network; STEMx; Nevada STEM Network; NMSU STEM Outreach Center.
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Resources Needed	PED data on students' STEM performance; 2016 NM First report on STEM network; background materials from SWE + LANL foundation re: support for network; Ernst & Magliaro 2018 study on existing STEM infrastructure in NM; Data on underrepresentation of women, people with disabilities, and minority groups in STEM careers.
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Broadband and Education Technology

Problem Statement	The New Mexico Legislature and the federal government have dedicated considerable time and resources to establish the necessary infrastructure for widespread internet access for students and teachers across the state. This effort includes the creation of a Statewide Education Network (SEN), which encompasses a comprehensive education technology infrastructure network "that integrates regional hub locations for network services and the installation and maintenance of equipment." LESCS staff will work in collaboration with external stakeholders to assess the progress of these initiatives and gain insight into the entities involved, and their respective responsibilities. Additionally, staff will conduct research to ascertain whether teachers are adequately supported in utilizing available technology for instructional purposes.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>June-August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request updated Org. Chart for SEN/OBAE structure and partners. - Reach out to partners (PSFA/DOIT, Superintendents, PED, and other OBAE/SEN partners). - Request current work plans, work schedule, and progress reports. - Request coverage plot maps. - Establish clear picture of project scope, initiatives, and key aspects of project. <p>August: Compile data, materials, and continue analysis (collaborate with internal staff for insight).</p> <p>September-October: Prepare and finalize presentation for committee members</p> <p>November: Present update on SEN and teacher support (Ed Tech) to committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor project progress and gather performance metrics on an ongoing basis. - Attending any scheduled meetings related to the project. - Continue to collaborate with stakeholders to identify successes and challenges with implementation. - Add cybersecurity efforts to focus of monitoring. - Respond and implement any requests from LESCS members or staff in monitoring process.

Questions to Address	How much of the state (districts) currently have broadband access?
	Which organizations are involved in the process and what are their responsibilities?
	How are districts that do not have broadband coping? What is being done and what is the schedule to get these districts online?
	How is PED providing support to educators to ensure effective utilization of technology for instructional purposes?

Theory of Change Initiative	If the Legislature has current information on the progress of the statewide broadband initiative (SEN-OBAE), and who the stakeholders are (PSFA/DOIT, Superintendents, PED, and other OBAE/SEN), and what the role is of each respective entity is and how each stakeholder is progressing in their respective role, and the state of the project and any detractors or obstacles to progress and if the PED is providing the adequate technology support to educators, then the Legislature can make data-driven decisions that may be necessary for success, and ensure that broadband access is provided to students and teachers, and that students have access to this resource to promote student success and provide teachers with the support they need to utilize available technology to deliver their instruction to students.
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Resources Needed	Org. Charts, MOUs, work plans, schedules, performance reports, and broadband coverage plot maps (PSFA, DOIT, OBAE, SEN partners). Support/instruction materials, training plans, request access to available services such as support links (PED).
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	PSFA, DOIT, OBAE, Superintendents, PED, and other OBAE/SEN partners.
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan School Board Member Training and Finance Reporting

Problem Statement	School boards play a crucial role in ensuring student success by making decisions that span various areas, such as resource allocation, curriculum development, school oversight, and addressing community interests and concerns. They have significant influence over policy, goals, and the overall vision of their respective school districts. Senate Bill 137, enacted during the 2024 regular session, is comprised of three main components. First, it mandates the public disclosure of school board members' completion of training requirements. Second, it broadens the scope of school board members required to report campaign finances. Third, it mandates that both school boards and charter school governing bodies webcast and archive all public meetings. LESB staff will collaborate with external stakeholders to evaluate and ensure the effective implementation of the requirements outlined in SB137.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>April-May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reach out to partners (Superintendents, NMSBA, PED, Board Members, and SOS). - Request training reports from PED/assess implementation (VISTAS). - Request training plan, materials, and schedule from NMSBA. - Reach out to SOS to assess implementation of the new campaign finance reporting requirement. - Reach out to superintendents to assess their implementation of transparency requirements. - Attend a sample of school board meetings via webcast. Access archived meetings and gauge level of implementation. <p>June: Compile data, materials, and continue analysis.(collaborate with internal staff for insight), Prepare and finalize presentation for committee members</p> <p>July: Present update on SB137 implementation to LESB members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor implementation process of legislation requirements - Continue to collaborate with stakeholders to identify successes and challenges with implementation. - Add charter schools to focus of monitoring. - Respond and implement any requests from LESB members or staff in monitoring process.

Questions to Address	How are school board member training records being gathered, recorded, and posted?
	What training is being provided to school board members and what is the training schedule?
	How are school superintendents addressing and meeting the requirement to webcast and archive public meetings?
	How is the Secretary of State's office preparing for Senate Bill 137's expanded campaign finance reporting requirements?

Theory of Change Initiative	If the Legislature has current analysis of how SB137 is being implemented, and how each stakeholder is progressing in their respective role, and if the PED is collecting school board member training reporting and posting it as required by the legislation, as well as collecting and post school board training records appropriately and if the districts and schools are successfully implementing the practices outlined by the legislation to provide transparency and NMSBA is adequately providing the needed training in a timely and effective manner and if the SOS is prepared for the additional reporting requirements of SB137, then the legislature can make a proper assessment of progress of SB137's implementation and make data-driven decisions that may be necessary for success, and as a result provide the level of transparency that the public deserves and ensure that schoolboard officials are receiving the necessary level of training to function effectively, and finally provide the level of transparency and reporting demanded by the public and allow for the proper level of oversight over school governance entities.
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Resources Needed	School Board training materials, training schedules, and training plan (NMSBA). Training records and demonstration of public access to this information (PED-VISTAS) Board meeting agendas, webcast access, and archived meeting recordings (superintendents). Update and demonstration of board member campaign finance reporting process, use of data, and public access (SOS).
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	NMSBA, School Board Members, PED, SOS, Superintendents.
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan School Governance

Problem Statement	In the 20 years since moving to a governor-appointed secretary of education, New Mexico has had six secretaries and at least three acting or interim secretaries. And while most of that turnover has occurred during the last five years, those changes have meant New Mexico's schools have dealt with major swings in the policies and structures governing education in the state. Simultaneously, no secretary has developed a long-term, comprehensive strategic plan for New Mexico, even in light of the 2018 ruling in the <i>Martinez/Yazzie</i> consolidated lawsuit calling for such a plan. While there have been initiatives focused on literacy or teacher evaluations or school grades, no secretary has developed a long-term set of goals or benchmarks by which to mark improvement or progress. New Mexico needs a new education governance structure that will allow for the thoughtful development of a long-term strategic plan, created with input from education stakeholders, and implemented by a body that represents legislative, executive, and local constituencies. The structure should be buffered from changes in state leadership, educational fads, and rash decision making. The structure, along with the budgetary and programmatic decisions it makes, should be aligned to and guided by a set of long-term goals and outcomes. New Mexico has invested in strategies to improve education and is beginning to see progress. A new governance system will allow that progress to continue while ushering in a new era of stability and shared leadership.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Form an advisory council to inform makeup of new leadership body. - Convene stakeholders to discuss strengths and weaknesses of current structure. - Study other state models of education governance. - Assess the viability of a new governance structure and study other implications of transitioning to such a structure. - Determine which governance structure best suits New Mexico's needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommend legislation creating new structure and accommodating for other systemic needs, i.e. charter school authorization. - If necessary, recommend structure to develop long-term strategic plan to be developed by a standing commission or body.

Questions to Address	What aspects of the current system are working? Which are not?
	What form should a new governing body take to ensure representation, the ability to develop and implement a long-term plan, and the ability to make important thoughtful determinations about the need adapt or change strategies?
	What resources would a new governing body need to be successful?
	How, if at all, would a new governance structure affect the operations of the Public Education Department?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the state had a new governance structure and a representative leadership body with the ability to develop a long-term strategic plan with clear goals and objectives, and local school boards and governing councils developed local strategic plans aligned to state goals and objectives, and PED and local school districts and charter schools had sufficient resources to meet those goals and objectives, then New Mexico will have the ability to make meaningful long-term progress, evaluate the effectiveness of fiscal and programmatic investments, provide support and technical assistance, all leading to better student outcomes.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	Public Education Department, school district superintendents, charter school leaders, school board and governing council members, educators, parents, students, Higher Education Department, Early Childhood Education and Care Department, Department of Workforce Solutions, New Mexico Children's' Cabinet,
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Resources Needed	NMSBA, School Board Members, PED, SOS, Superintendents.
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Team Project: Solutions for Mathematics

Problem Statement	LESC analysis of Public Education Department (PED) spring 2023 data shows that statewide math proficiency peaks in fifth grade with 34 percent of students testing as proficient, and begins to fall in sixth grade with 31 percent of students testing as proficient, and then continues to decline throughout secondary grades. LESC staff will work with stakeholder partners to identify an effective structure for teacher training and student interventions to increase student proficiency targeted at grades where New Mexico data indicates a drop in achievement. LESC staff will study components of implementing teacher training and student interventions to assess pilot design implications and how these may be designed to improve student achievement. LESC intends to use this research for the purpose of developing sustainable and impactful policy solutions and budget recommendations to improve math
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>Spring 2024: Establish LESC math team and work together to determine plan of action.</p> <p>June 2024: Math team prepares slide deck.</p> <p>July 2024: Present slide deck to LESC on evidence-based policy and program to raise student achievement in math in New Mexico.</p> <p>Fall/Winter 2024: Craft bill or budget proposal and present to LESC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor implementation of math initiatives. - Continue to attend Math and Science Advisory Council (MSAC) meetings. - Continue to meet with the New Mexico Partnership for Math and Science Education (NMPMSE). - Monitor student achievement in mathematics and evaluate impact of math initiatives and pilot teacher training and student interventions.

Questions to Address	How can we leverage evidence-based policy and program to raise student achievement in math in New Mexico?
	What is the best way for the Legislature to structure and fund teacher training and student intervention math pilot programs?
	What student groups could most benefit from additional math supports?
	How can we improve accountability systems to provide more clarity on student growth in math and provide support to struggling schools?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature effectively designs and sufficiently funds evidence-based math teacher training and student intervention pilots and targets supports to students in at-risk student groups at the grades that data indicates a need to intervene and PED effectively guides implementation and needed teacher training and the districts and schools opt to participate and implement pilot programs with fidelity then LESC staff can assess the impact of the pilot program on student achievement and develop sustainable and impactful programmatic and budget recommendations and as a result, the Legislature can make data-driven decisions and have a path forward in math policymaking and finally, increase student achievement and increase teacher efficacy in mathematics education statewide.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<p>In-state: LESC math team, PED, MSAC, NMPMSE, school districts, charter schools, school boards, math/STEM educators, educator prep programs, other education stakeholders.</p> <p>Research/national engagement: National Conference of State Legislatures, Education Commission of the States, Learning Policy Institute, National Center on Education and the Economy, additional research organizations as determined as the work progresses.</p>
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Resources Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnership with LESC math team. - Research on what other states are doing; evidence-based mathematics instruction and instructional materials; educator preparation best practices. - Data needs include, but are not limited to: student assessment data for those participating in pilot program, summative statewide mathematics assessment data for all students for data monitoring, educator preparation program data
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Team Project: School Safety

Problem Statement	There are many factors that go into the concept of school safety. For students to thrive academically, they need a school environment that promotes social, emotional, and physical wellbeing. To develop responsive policy solutions to the safety needs of New Mexico schools, the Legislature must understand the current landscape of student wellbeing, safety infrastructure, and incident response. In the first installment of LESC staff's report on school safety, analysts will examine existing trends in student wellness, incidents involving firearms, school discipline, current and planned expenditures for safety improvements for school facilities, and other contributors to overall student safety.
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	March/April: Finalize work plan and data needs. Gather input from relevant stakeholders. Meet as team to analyze findings and organize report. Complete draft report and submit for edits. June: Present initial findings to Committee.	April/May: This report analyzing the current status of school safety efforts in New Mexico is only the first installment of the study. A second installment detailing possible policy options and understanding school safety as a concept through the lens of the <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> lawsuit, and how investment in school safety initiatives can help the state fulfill its obligation to the groups named in the ruling, will be prepared for November 2024. Following the completion of both sections of the report, LESC can prepare responsive budgetary recommendations.

Questions to Address	How are New Mexico schools currently using tools like community/student partnerships, school safety plans, and communication initiatives to promote school safety?
	How do social-emotional wellness and school discipline practices contribute to school safety?
	How is capital outlay funding being leveraged to improve safety measures in New Mexico schools?
	What are the national and state trends in evidence-based school safety practices, student wellbeing metrics, school discipline, and reported school safety threats?
	What do national and state data tell us about school safety?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature invests in evidence-based school safety practices, and the PED implements and monitors safety plans and funding, and LEAs and community partners create and expand programs and initiatives to support students' mental health, foster an inclusive school culture, and provide culturally and linguistically relevant instruction, as well as invest in safety infrastructure improvements through capital outlay funding, then New Mexico schools will be safe, welcoming environments that ensure students' physical and emotional wellness and provide a solid foundation for improved academic outcomes.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	PED; LEAs; Transform Education NM; Tribal Education Alliance; PSFA; Short and long term care providers
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Resources Needed	PED data for NM-specific analysis; Risk and Resilience Survey data; Input on school safety from stakeholders like TEA and Transform Ed NM; Gun incident data (NM + USA); Capital outlay data; School Safety Plans from selected LEAs.
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan Team Project: Addressing Attendance

Problem Statement	Research has demonstrated student attendance is critical for students' individual academic and social success, and also for overall classroom and school progress. Despite a statutory framework for supporting attendance outlined in the Attendance for Success Act, schools continue to face challenges in addressing attendance issues, evidenced by a chronic absence rate of 40 percent statewide. The state does not have a methodology to ensure that funds allocated to support the Attendance for Success Act successfully reach the schools in greatest need of support. Analysis of student and classroom level data—including demographics, academic performance, community characteristics, and socio-economic backgrounds—may be able predict whether a student is at-risk of becoming chronically absent, and may help the state better allocate resources to address attendance challenges. LESCS staff will study predictive models of student attendance and identify potential mechanisms to target
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	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>April-May 2024: Data partnership with LFC to analyze quantitative and qualitative attendance data; Assessment of data quality.</p> <p>June-August 2024: Stakeholder work with partners; Statutory review; Development of potential funding and predictive models.</p> <p>September 2024: Testing of models.</p> <p>October 2024: Final report and presentation to LESCS summarizing research and findings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a recommendation on a funding mechanism to support school attendance that allows for local flexibility aligned with the Attendance for Success Act. - Testing of predictive models of attendance interventions to understand the depth of attendance challenges and specific local root causes with evidence-based interventions matched to these root causes. - Support LESCS members with possible statutory changes and budget recommendations to align with the recommendations from the research study.

Questions to Address	Do current data gathering systems and practices accurately capture attendance information, identify root causes, and function for cohesion and understanding at both the local and state level?
	How and in what ways do current attendance interventions map to tiers outlined in the Attendance for Success Act; are strategies being used aligned with research-based best practices?
	What is the cost and scale of attendance interventions best mapped to local success; Should, and if so how could, the Attendance for Success Act be modified to drive resources to in locally-tailored ways?
	What is a plausible statewide policy approach to prioritize attendance intervention resources to schools most in need; What role does the Legislature play in attendance interventions and funding?

Theory of Change for Initiative	If the Legislature better leverages attendance data on chronic absence rates and root causes and prioritizes the funding of attendance interventions based on local needs, and the PED disperses supports, funding, and technical assistance aligned with data and root causes, and school districts and schools are able to offer data-informed, aligned attendance interventions tailored to their local context, then local communities will be able to be responsive to attendance challenges and the state will have an aligned strategy to address chronic absenteeism, and as a result the state will prioritize attendance interventions in a thoughtful, data-driven, and locally-informed way, and finally, see improved student engagement, outcomes, and attendance rates.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<p>In-State: School districts and charter schools; Public Education Department.</p> <p>Out-of-State: National and international experts in attendance research (EveryDay Labs, Attendance Works, FutureEd, and similar education organizations).</p>
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Resources Needed	<p>Stakeholder needs: Connection to research organizations and experts on attendance matters.</p> <p>Research needs will include, but may not be limited to: Identification of leading attendance research and predictive models; Review of previous bodies of research identifying predictive factors of attendance challenges; Review of leading research identifying effective and promising attendance interventions.</p> <p>Data needs will include, but may not be limited to: School attendance disaggregated by grade and student demographics; Data about community characteristics; School achievement data disaggregated by grade and student demographics; Survey results related to school engagement.</p>
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LESC 2024 Interim Work Plan
Team Project: Revision of the State Equalization Guarantee

Problem Statement	In its original iteration, the SEG was an innovative and student-centric approach to identifying student needs and allocating funding to meet those needs. As student needs have evolved, so too has the SEG, particularly with the adoption of the At-Risk Index and the modification of the size adjustment components. However, several components, such as the formula's basic program components, have not been modified to reflect the continuously evolving needs of public schools. To comprehensively address the findings of the consolidated <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> education sufficiency lawsuit, LESC staff will collaborate with external stakeholders in assessing and revising the basic program and at-risk components of the SEG, assess whether new components should be embedded to increase the SEG's responsiveness to local needs, and identify opportunities for simplifying the SEG.
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	Short Term	Long Term
Timeline / Plan of Action	<p>June 2024: Annie's class size presentation to the LESC.</p> <p>June 2024: LESC roadmap update to the LESC.</p> <p>July 2024: Marit's special education presentation to the LESC.</p> <p>July 2024: Jessica's career and technical education presentation to the LESC.</p> <p>August 2024: Complete analysis of FII and Title One swap-out in the At-Risk Index.</p> <p>August 2024: CREG revenue estimates for FY26.</p> <p>September 2024: Daniel's SEG and budget presentation to the LESC.</p> <p>September 2024: Tim's Learning Time presentation to the LESC.</p> <p>September 2024: Natasha's homeless and foster student presentation to the LESC.</p> <p>October 2024: Jessica's middle school redesign presentation to the LESC.</p> <p>October 2024: Annie's clinical practice evaluation presentation to the LESC.</p> <p>October 2024: Collaborate with LFC, PED, the Executive, and external stakeholders on finalizing an SEG revision recommendation for inclusion in the LESC, LFC, and Executive recommendations for FY26.</p> <p>November 2024: Present SEG revision bill and FY26 budget recommendation to the LESC.</p> <p>December 2024: CREG revenue estimates.</p>	<p>Monitor the fiscal and programmatic impact of an SEG revision proposal in FY26 and subsequent fiscal years, depending on legislative provisions related to a phase-in of the revision.</p>

Questions to Address	<p>Are existing differentials in the SEG adequately supporting the diverse needs of public school students, are additional differentials needed to support specific programmatic needs, and are there opportunities to simplify the SEG?</p> <p>Does the SEG appropriately support public schools in meeting all existing statutory and regulatory requirements?</p> <p>Does the SEG appropriately balance flexibility with accountability and does it draw on revenue sources that are both sustainable and sufficient for distribution to public schools?</p> <p>Are there opportunities to embed performance-based budgeting in the SEG?</p>
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Theory of Change for Initiative	If the legislature revises its current approach to student-based funding in the State Equalization Guarantee by enhancing the formula's responsiveness and alleviating the complexity of the formula, and the PED effectively implements streamlined processes for generating program units and allocating the resulting funding, and each school district and charter school generates an adequate number of program units for specific programmatic needs, then each school district and charter school will have the fiscal capacity to effectively serve the comprehensive needs of each student, and as a result all students would be provided with a constitutionally sufficient public education, as required in the findings of the consolidated <i>Martinez-Yazzie</i> education sufficiency lawsuit.
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Partners/ Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislative Finance Committee - Public Education Department - New Mexico School Boards Association - New Mexico Association of School Business Officials - School districts and charter schools (Micro, mid-size, large, urban/rural, and tribal communities) - Public Charter Schools of New Mexico - Coalition of Educational Leaders - Department of Finance and Administration
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Resources Needed	<p>FY24 final funded run</p> <p>FY25 preliminary funded run</p> <p>Federal flow-through for FY25</p> <p>Aggregate CTE enrollment by LEA and the particular pathways they are completing</p> <p>LEA calendars for 2024-2025</p> <p>FY26 revenue estimates</p> <p>Fund and cash balances for FY25</p>
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