LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS
55th Legislature, 1st Session, 2021

Bill Number	HM18	**Sponsor**	Figueroa	
Tracking Number	.219955.5	**Committee Referrals**	HEC	
Short Title	Teacher Workforce Task Force			
			Original Date	3/4/2021
Analyst	Canada/Juliani		**Last Updated**	

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of Memorial

House Memorial 18 (HM18) requests the secretaries of the Public Education Department (PED) and the Higher Education Department (HED) convene and co-chair a Teacher Workforce Task Force to study and better understand the needs of Native American, English language learner, low-income and disabled students. The task force's work is to assist in the creation of a diverse teacher workforce that meets these students' needs and develop a comprehensive teacher workforce strategic plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

HM18 does not contain an appropriation.

PED and HED would likely incur minimal costs related to convening the task force and attending meetings and may be able to be absorbed by the two current departmental operating budgets. Additionally, each member of the task force not receiving public money is entitled to per diem and mileage as provided in the Per Diem and Mileage Act.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Consolidated *Martinez-Yazzie* Lawsuit. The judge ruled in the consolidated *Martinez-Yazzie* education sufficiency lawsuit the state must provide sufficient resources, including properly trained teachers and culturally and linguistically relevant instruction, for at-risk students. The court identified a highly effective teacher workforce as the most critical of these resources and an essential component to a student's education. HM18 addresses these issues identified in the court's ruling highlighting the role of a high quality and diverse teacher workforce in providing students of New Mexico a sufficient public education. The memorial creates a diverse task force tasked with developing a comprehensive strategic plan to forge a diverse teacher workforce that meets the needs of the at-risk student groups cited in the lawsuit.

Composition of the Teacher Workforce Task Force. In addition to the secretaries of PED and HED, the 24-member Teacher Workforce Task Force is to be composed of various other educators and stakeholders in education.

Consideration may be given to adding representation from the Early Childhood Education and Care Department to the taskforce, as the role and perspectives of early childhood teachers are critical in any endeavor to understand and improve the state's teacher workforce.

According to analysis from the Indian Affairs Department, HM18's statement that non-task force members have "technical knowledge and expertise" is subjective and may hinder participation from other valuable community members, such as elders, who may not qualify as experts. The Indian Affairs Department (IAD) analysis indicated the memorial should include reference to government-to-government participation and contains no existing language that invites community or parental involvement.

Responsibilities of the Teacher Workforce Task Force. HM18 requests the task force to create subcommittees to include non-task force members with state, tribal, and local technical knowledge and expertise in the education of Native American students English language learners, students with disabilities and student from low-income families. These sub-committees would analyze and evaluate the gaps and barriers facing the state in creating a diverse, qualified and effective teacher workforce that meets the needs of these students, focusing its study on the following issues:
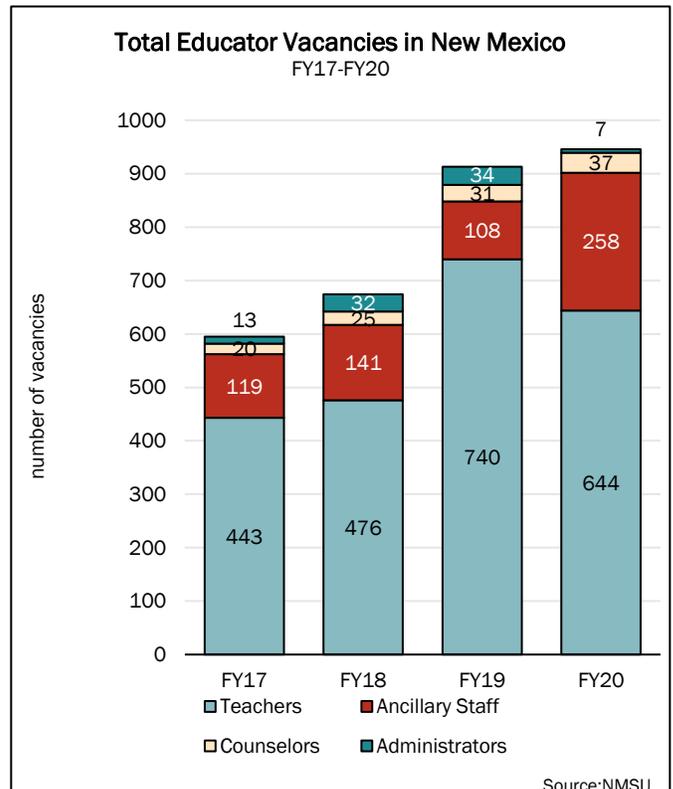
- Current and future needs for teachers, including mapping teacher shortages;
- Teacher pipeline;
- Faculty capacity within departments of education at state post-secondary educational institutions;
- Teacher recruitment and retention;
- Teacher credentials and licensing, including alternative pathways;
- Teacher preparation programs, including alternative pathways;
- Mentorship programs;
- Teacher compensation; and
- Professional development for general education teachers in culturally and linguistically relevant pedagogy and professional development and training specific for Native language, bilingual education and special education teachers.

The task force is to develop a comprehensive teacher workforce strategic plan that includes one- to two-year goals, five- to ten-year goals and short-term and long-term action steps to achieve those goals, identifies whether action is required by the Legislature, PED, HED, and institutions of higher education, and includes funding requirements to fully implement the strategic plan.

HM18 requests the task force submit an interim report by September 1, 2022 to the Governor, the Legislative Education Study Committee, the Legislative Finance Committee, the Board of Regents or governing bodies of the post-secondary educational institutions, the Council of University Presidents, PED, and HED and a final report to these same entities by September 1, 2023, when the task force will expire.

Teacher Pipeline and Professional Preparation. HM18's teacher workforce task force is to study the teacher pipeline and teacher preparation programs in the state for general education and special education teachers, as well as for Native language and Spanish-English bilingual teachers. New Mexico is experiencing a statewide teacher shortage, with 644 vacancies reported in FY20 through New Mexico State University's 2019 Educator Vacancy Report. Demand outpaces the number of teachers prepared each year in the state, and not all teachers who are prepared in New Mexico commit to teaching in the state following graduation. According to the most recent data available, 63 percent of graduates remain in the state to teach following graduation. Teacher preparation programs in top-performing countries approach the challenge of ensuring an ample workforce in a deliberate manner by knowing the number and types of teachers needed to fill vacancies and focusing efforts on preparing teachers to meet current and future need.

Total Educator Vacancies in New Mexico
FY17-FY20

Category	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
Teachers	443	476	740	644
Ancillary Staff	119	141	108	258
Counselors	20	25	31	37
Administrators	13	32	34	7

Source:NMSU

In FY20, a total of 1,287 students were admitted to New Mexico educator preparation programs, 193 students over FY19, and 927 students completed a program, a 24 percent increase over FY19, a marked improvement over the last few years. Graduation rates had declined year-over-year since 2015, and during the 2017-2018 school year, completion rates were down 20 percent from two years prior. Of those who completed a program during the last academic year, 60 percent finished an alternative license program, larger share than in the previous year, when alternative program students were 51 percent of total program completers. According to the 2017-2018 educator accountability report, 37 percent of all enrolled candidates identified as Hispanic, 5 percent identified as Native American, and 51 percent identified as white; comparable data from prior years is not available, but these teacher candidates are slightly more diverse than the current teacher workforce.

Research indicates students from diverse backgrounds perform better on standardized tests, have improved attendance, and are suspended less frequently when they have at least one same-race teacher. Nationally, more than half of students in the United States are racially or ethnically diverse, compared with 80 percent of the teacher workforce identifying as white. New Mexico's teacher workforce has similar discrepancies in racial or ethnic representation. Sixty-two percent of students identify as Hispanic in the state, whereas only 34 percent of the teacher workforce identify as the same. Only 3 percent of the teacher workforce is Native American, whereas 10 percent of New Mexico students are Native American.

It is unclear how well current teacher preparation programs are aligned with teacher licensure requirements and competencies. Teaching candidates continually struggle to pass these exams, and in response PED has removed passage of the licensure exams for an entry requirement to a teacher preparation program. School leaders also report new teachers are not receiving preparation that trains them to perform actual teacher duties. Professors in teacher preparation programs often lack

recent classroom experience, and many largely teach theory. In addition, many teacher preparation programs are lacking in rigor. Top-performing countries prepare their teachers in prestigious research universities that are more selective and rigorous than programs in the United States. These programs require teachers to demonstrate subject mastery and often include practice that spans longer than the one semester of student teaching in teacher preparation programs in the United States. Additionally, most countries do not have approved alternative routes to licensure. In New Mexico, entry requirements into educator preparation programs continue to be lowered, and more students are being taught by alternative licensed teachers.

Statewide 9 percent of teachers are teaching on an alternative license and more than 60 percent of the 2019-2020 educator preparation program graduates were from an alternative licensure program. Although required by statute, it is unclear if all alternative licensed teachers are participating in mentorship programs offered through their school district or if these programs are different than those offered for traditionally prepared students. Alternative licensure programs insist more classroom support is needed for alternative-licensed teachers because they are the teacher of record and completing educator preparation coursework at the same time.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention. HM18 requests the taskforce study teacher recruitment and retention strategies, including teacher residencies, mentorship, induction, and support. The Legislature has made significant investments in financial assistance and incentives to help recruit and retain high-quality teachers. However, enrollment in the state's colleges of education has continued to decline, and the 23 percent turnover rate among teachers was second only to Arizona. Nationally, teachers most often cite inadequate preparation, poor workplace supports and dissatisfaction with the teaching career with voluntarily leaving the teaching profession.

While compensation commensurate with the professionalism and skills required of teachers is critical for retention, many factors contribute to the undesirability of teaching as a profession such as a lack of proper preparation and supports, the emphasis placed on high-stakes testing, and workload. Teacher retention and quality can be improved by offering financial incentives and professional development structured to ensure teachers stay in the profession longer.

The Legislature appropriated funding in FY20 and FY21 for teacher residency models for alternative-licensed teachers to co-teach in the classroom of an expert teacher for an entire year prior to becoming the teacher of record. Traditionally, alternative-licensed teachers already have a bachelor's degree and enter a two-year teacher preparation program where they teach while also earning their teaching license. Residency programs are intended to recruit and retain high-quality candidates with diverse backgrounds by supporting candidates who already have a bachelor's degree to pursue coursework towards a teaching license, while undertaking a full-year apprenticeship in the classroom of a master teacher.

Mentoring and induction activities support new teachers by facilitating their transition from pre-service to practice. Studies have demonstrated that mentoring and induction can have positive effects on retention, teachers practice, and student reading and student math achievement. Twenty-nine states require mentoring and induction programs for new teachers. New Mexico has robust mentorship requirements, but PED has never enforced them. Beginning teachers are required to participate in a mentorship program under a level 2 or level 3 teacher and PED is required to approve annual mentorship plans. Currently, successful completion of a mentorship program is a prerequisite for applying for a level 2 teaching license. In addition, mentorship plans submitted by school districts and charter schools show disparities and different approaches to program implementation across the state.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

HM18 requests the taskforce have one representative from teacher preparation programs at Native American colleges in the state. It is unclear, however, if this representative is to be a faculty member, administrator, or enrolled student. Additionally, the term "Native American colleges" is unclear, but presumably refers to tribal colleges. The sponsor may want to consider using the commonly used, accepted term, "tribal colleges," rather than the more ambiguous "Native American colleges."

SOURCES OF INFORMATION
- LESC Files
- Indian Affairs Department (IAD)

RJ/CC/mb