

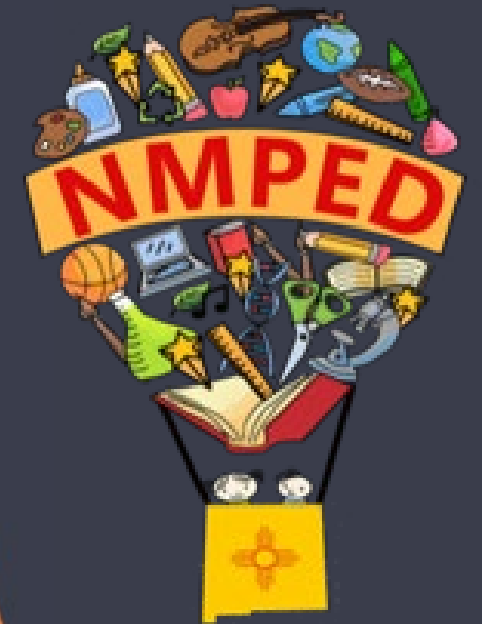
Presentation for the Legislative Education Study Committee

Digital Equity and Devices

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*A Presentation by the
New Mexico Public
Education Department*

Why are devices for students important?

- Research shows that students who do not have home internet or are dependent on a cell phone for access perform lower on a range of metrics. Examples of this deficit can be found in:
 - Student grades
 - Standardized test scores
 - Homework completion



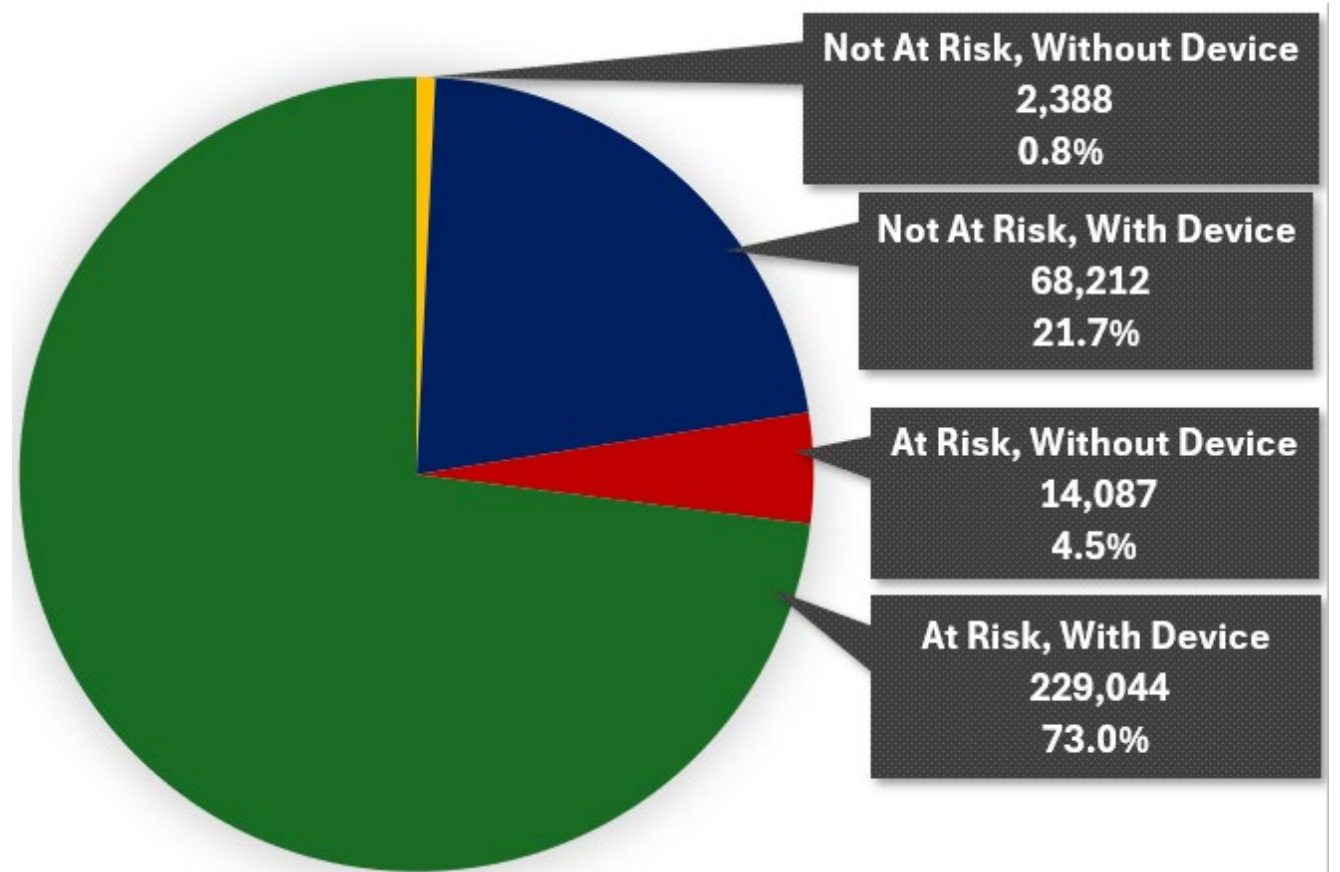
Student access to devices

- The New Mexico Office of Broadband Access and Expansion has launched New Mexico Student Connect to provide internet access to unserved and underserved students.
- Connectivity is half of the equation; students need to have reliable devices.
 - Policies for school issued devices vary from school district to school district
 - Some school districts ask students to share devices if they are in the same household
 - Students lacking a school issued device are more likely to share devices with others in the household

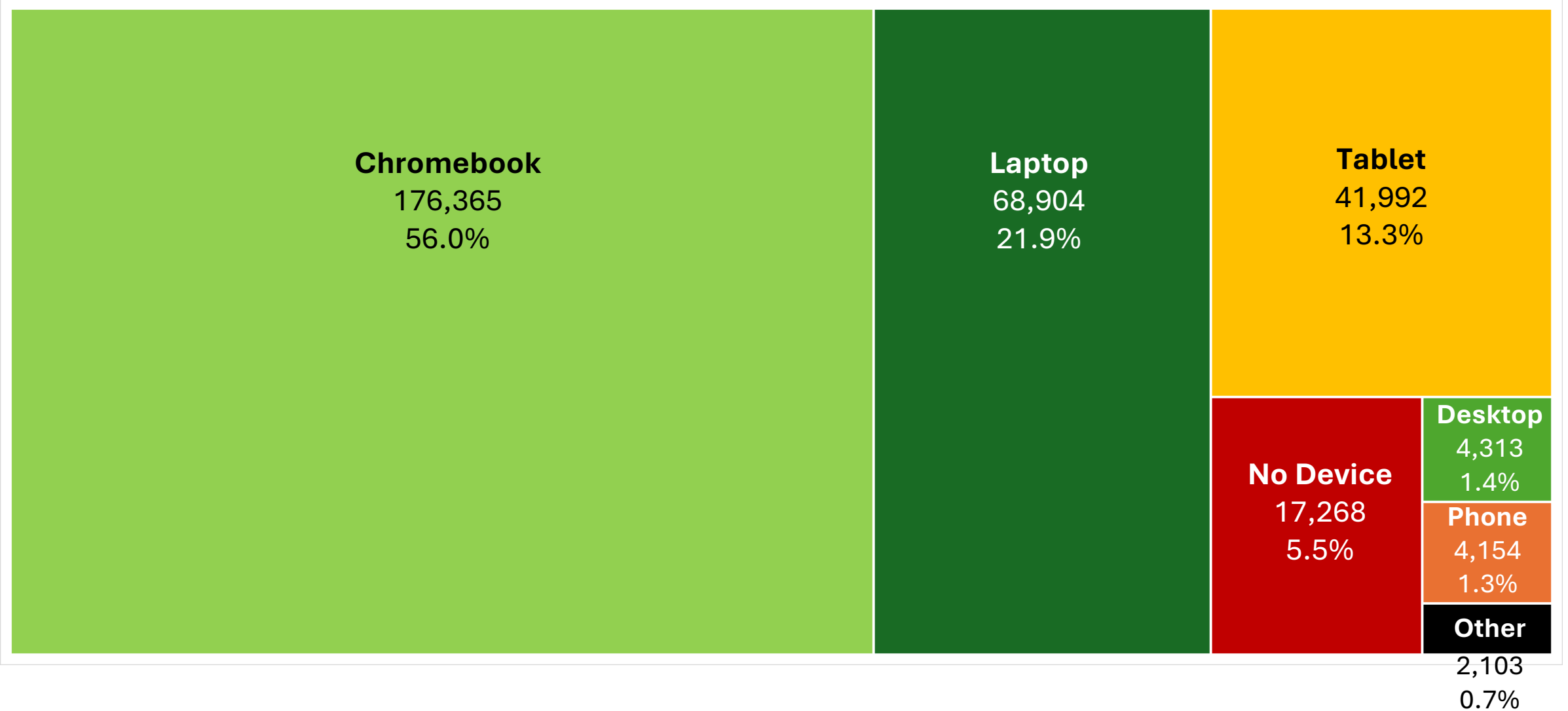


What PED data collection says

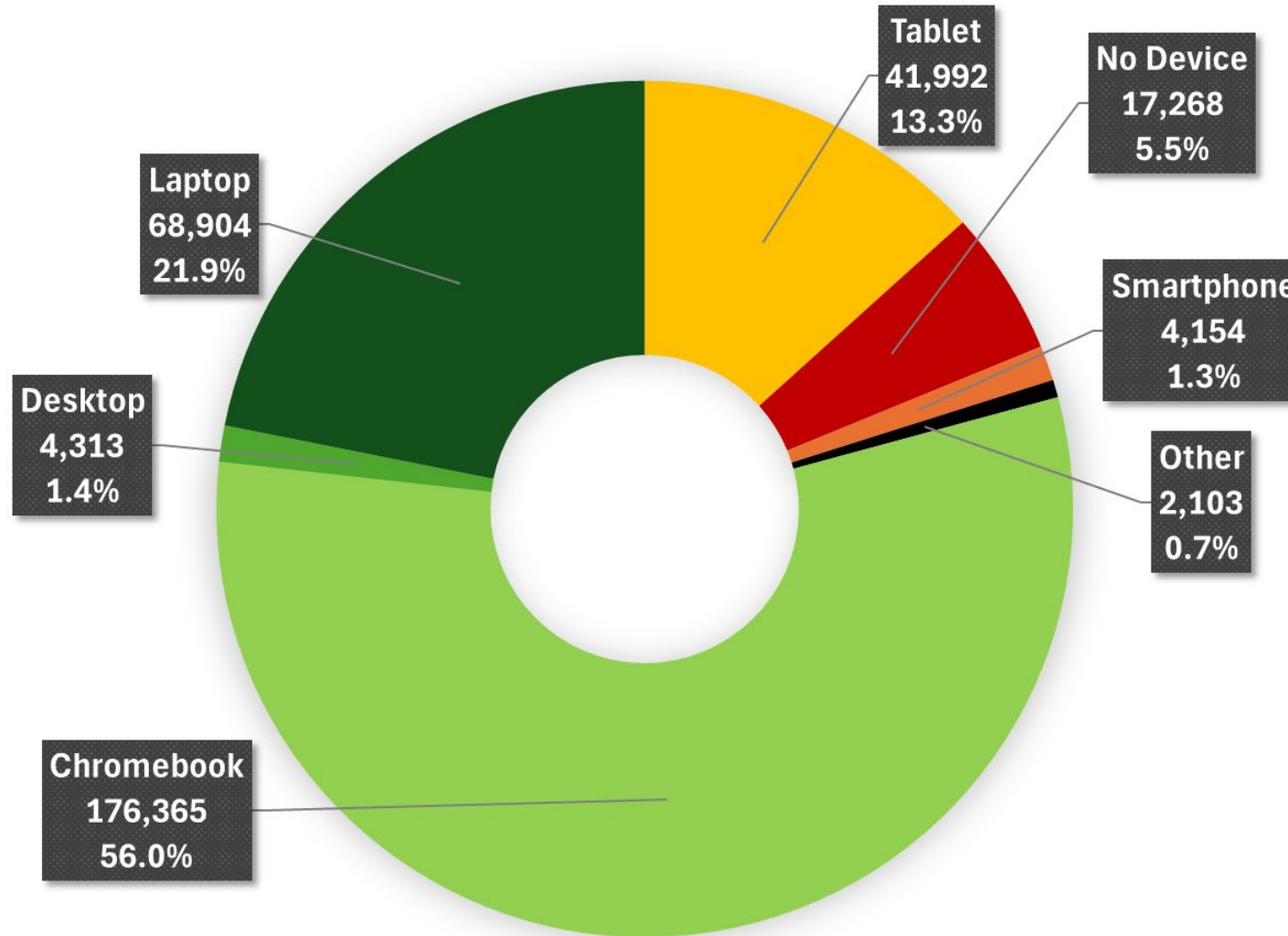
- Only 78 percent of students in NM have a school issued device. Nearly 2,200 students rely on a mobile phone for their primary learning device outside of school.
- Nearly 10 percent of students use their own computer as a primary learning device, often shared with others in the household.
- As of the end of the 2023-2024 school year, more than 17,000 students use their own device. That device is shared with others in the household. School district policies about which grade level of students need a device impact the reporting we get from school districts.



New Mexico digital equity gap data



New Mexico digital equity gap data



Considerations for funding devices

- The Digital Equity in Education Act (2023) requires schools to address how they will refresh devices that are end of life.
- Schools need to replace devices going end of life that were procured when districts had access to ESSER funds.
 - Tech notes need to articulate need and purpose. (local bond election)
 - Leasing
 - School district policies and needs vary as they work to ensure digital equity.



Support for schools and families



- The Public Education Department (PED) has addressed the Martinez-Yazzie tech order to ensure all students have access, especially at-risk students.
- PED funded scholarships for graduate level courses in Educational Technology and Ed U Badges for teachers.

Future considerations

- Artificial intelligence (AI) is going to cause the next digital divide.
- The design of AI in education addresses learner variability and is responsive to students' needs, strengths, and backgrounds.
- AI is already impacting careers in medicine, agriculture, and petroleum exploration



Thank you!

For Questions

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