

Best Practices for Results Focused Government:

Results-Focused Leadership:

- Articulating a results focused strategy,
- Asking for and acting on evidence,
- Maintaining accountability for performance.

Evidence-Related Strategies:

- Developing learning agendas,
- Creating an evaluation policy,
- Using rapid experimentation.

Performance Management:

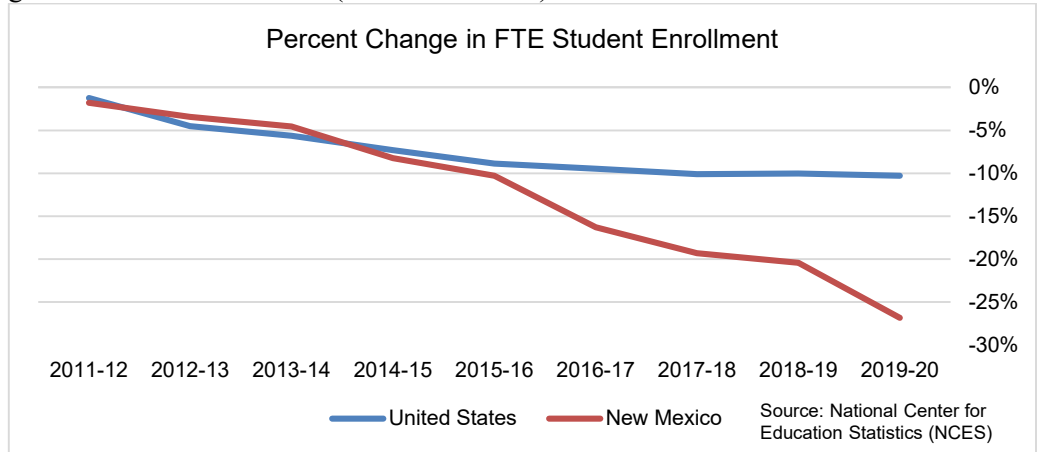
- Using performance information,
- Implementing strategic planning,
- Weaving a performance focus into budgeting, and
- Collaboration.

Using Data:

- Data sharing

Background

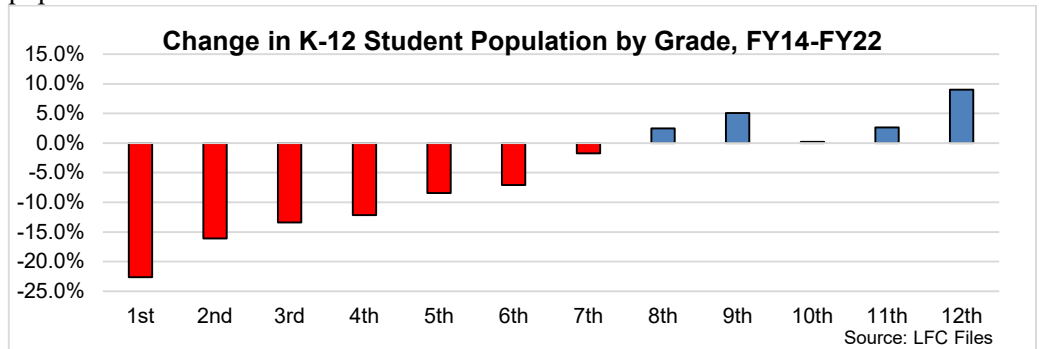
While the rest of the nation faces an acute labor shortage, New Mexico has fewer job openings than available workers despite strong economic conditions. Additionally, New Mexico’s labor force participation rate lags the U.S. average and median income ranks among the lowest in the nation. However, despite the need, New Mexico higher education institutions have faced steeply declining enrollment even as high school graduations have increased (see attachment 1).



Problem Statement

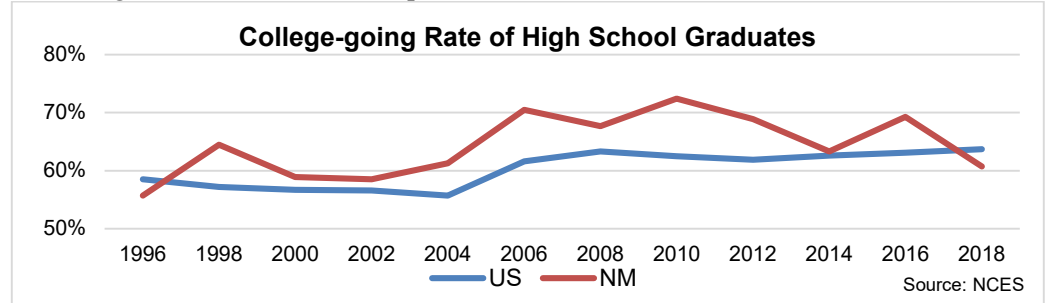
Higher education institutions nationwide have faced declining enrollment over the past decade and the decline in New Mexico is particularly acute; despite a relatively generous financial aid package, the college enrollment rate of New Mexicans has fallen more than twice the rate of the national average. In addition to declining college-going rates, New Mexico’s demographic trends suggest that the number of potential students will fall for the foreseeable future as birth rates decline. Higher education institutions will be challenged to determine what barriers are preventing high school graduates from pursuing higher education, what level of programming is necessary to meet the needs of students, and how to support current students so they can successfully complete their studies.

Enrollment. Already low enrollment will be compounded by low birth rates. Demographic trends suggest New Mexico’s falling birth rates will lead to falling 12th grade enrollment by FY25 (see attachment 2). The reduction in public school participation will further challenge higher education institutions to increase their populations.

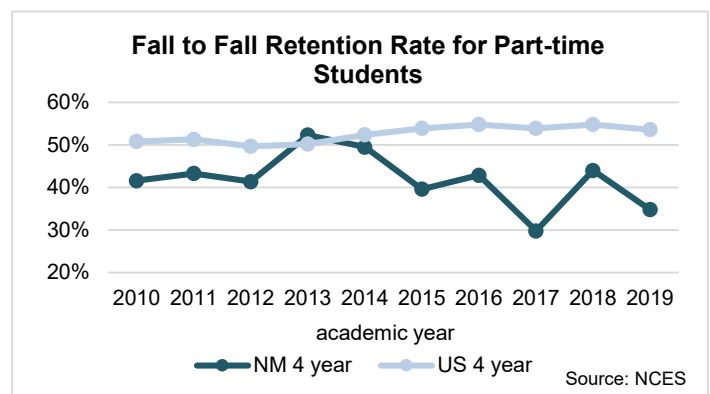
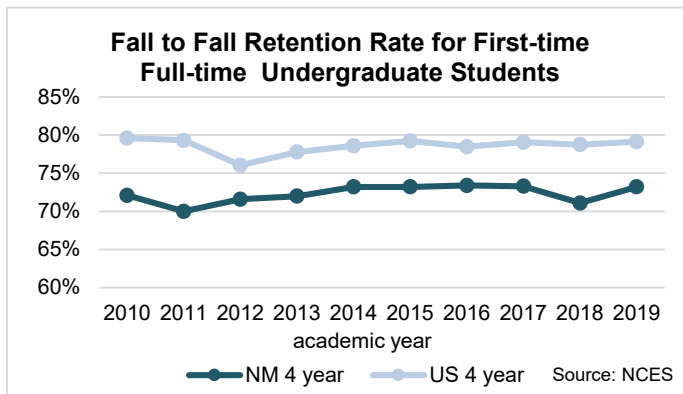


College-going rate. New Mexico’s college-going rate has trended down in recent years and now lags the nation. In 2018, the most recent year for which national data are

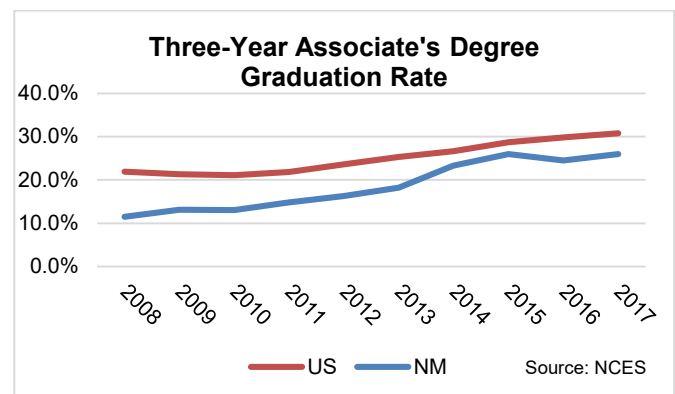
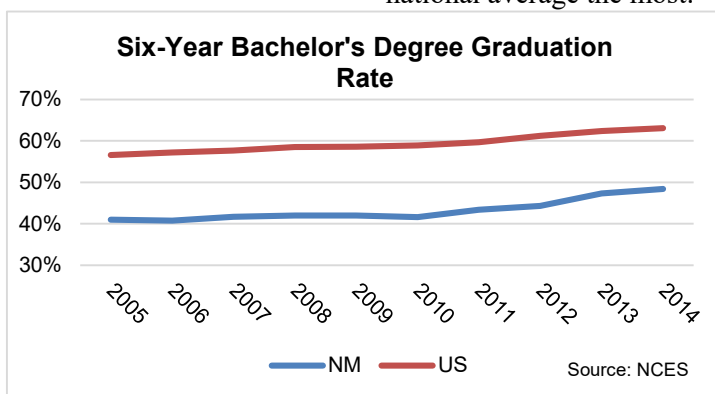
available, New Mexico's college-going rate fell below the national average for the first time since 1998. In 2020, New Mexico's college-going rate fell further to 54 percent according to Public Education Department data.



Retention. Students in New Mexico are more likely to begin college, but less likely to complete. Despite high college-going rates, the proportion of the workforce with a bachelor's degree ranks 39th in the nation pointing to challenges in student retention. Data show persistence of students at 2-year colleges is roughly the same as the U.S. average, but students at 4-year institutions are much less likely to persist. Additionally, part-time students are significantly less likely than full-time students to persist from one semester to the next.



Completion. Degree and certificate awards fell by 19 percent between the 2016-2017 academic year and the 2020-2021 academic year, and there was a 18 percent enrollment decline during this time. While degree production seemed relatively stable given enrollment declines, completion rates within 150 percent of the normal time lagged the nation for both bachelor's and associate's degrees with bachelor's degrees lagging the national average the most.



Enrollment Management Plans

- The Legislature recognized the enrollment challenges facing New Mexico higher education institutions and required all institutions to submit an enrollment management plan or forfeit 1 percent of the new money distributed through the funding formula.
- Guidance on enrollment management plans was produced by the Higher Education Department in consultation with LFC staff and will include: analysis of the current student body; identification of student populations offering the greatest potential for growth; identification of specific recruitment and marketing strategies; performance measures to identify progress, and specific 3- and 5-year enrollment targets.
 - Data such as the number of high school graduates attending various New Mexico HEI's are currently available (see attachment 3). This data can be used as an action plan item to help institutions target recruitment efforts at high schools based on student population and college selection trends.
 - Action plans could also include strategies for recruitment of out-of-state students and how tuition could be set in a way to limit state subsidy and improve HEI finances.
- The enrollment management plans are due to HED and LFC on June 15th.

Suggested Questions

Enrollment.

- Are applications up or down for the coming year?
- What is contributing to enrollment declines at your institutions?
- What programs, if any, are growing?
- What are the major barriers to college enrollment?
- What groups offer the best chance for your institution to boost enrollment?
- What performance measures do you use to track recruitment success?

College-going Rate.

- What high schools provide the majority of your students?
- What are you doing to strengthen links between feeder schools and your institution?

Retention and Completion.

- What measures of student success do you track?
- How does your institution identify students at risk of dropping out or stopping out?
- What interventions does your institution offer to students at risk of dropping out or stopping out?
- How does your institution plan on improving these services?

Next Steps: Discussion of options to right size staffing and building space.