LFC Hearing Brief

Background: Teacher Pipeline

The New Mexico State University SOAR lab reports that Colleges of Education are not meeting the demand for teaching professionals across the state. In FY20, institutions admitted 1,287 students into traditional and alternative licensure educator preparation program (EPP), an increase of 193 students, and 927 students completed their program, an increase of 181 students – reversing a decades-long trend of declining enrollment and completions at New Mexico EPPs.

Traditional programs, however, are graduating fewer students. Appendix 1 provides graduation data for New Mexico State University and the University of New Mexico. The UNM College of Education shows that over the past four years, the number graduates from its program has declined from 348 annually to 237 graduates in the last year. At NMSU College of Education, the same year period showed a decline from 158 graduates down to 136.

The growth described by the SOAR report is primarily in graduates of alternative licensure programs (ALP), which can be offered by a two-year college or a four-year university. The ALP works with professionals who have already earned a bachelor's or master's degree in a non-teacher academic discipline. The programs are designed to work with these professionals, who already work in the classroom, to meet licensure requirements within two years.

More than 60 percent of the new teachers come from alternative licensure programs. According to longer-term data maintained by the LFC, the trend has been widening, where more first-time teachers are coming from ALP than through the traditional four-year programs where students earn a bachelor's degree in education. While alternative licensure programs are less costly and quicker pathways for individuals to become teachers, national trends show these individuals are 25 percent more likely to leave the profession than traditionally trained teachers when controlling for students, schools, and teaching conditions.

The NMSU SOAR Lab also reported on the mismatch in degrees awarded and types of teachers needed. Elementary and special education teachers comprised half of all vacancies.

The total number of teachers in New Mexico has remained relatively flat in the last decade (mirroring trends in student enrollment); however, teacher turnover in New Mexico continues to be higher than national averages. Between 2014 and 2018, about 25 percent of New Mexico teachers left their school district each year. Nationally, two-thirds of teachers leave the profession for a reason other than retirement. New Mexico does not have a consistent system for tracking why teachers are leaving and where they are going.

The Legislature has made substantial investments in building the educator pipeline in recent years, appropriating $25 million in scholarships for teachers, establishing "grow-your-own" teacher recruitment programs, and expanding school funds for mentorship and professional development.

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DATE: September 24, 2021

PURPOSE OF HEARING: Colleges of Education and Educator Preparation

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New Mexico Colleges of Education/Type	Traditional Program	Alternative Licensure Program
Central New Mexico Community College		X
Cooperative Educational Services		X
Eastern New Mexico University	X	X
New Mexico Junior		X
New Mexico Highlands University	X	X
New Mexico State University - Las Cruces	X	X
Northern New Mexico College	X	X
San Juan College-		X
Santa Fe Community		X
University of the Southwest	X	X
Western New Mexico University	X	X
University of New Mexico	X	X

Colit Colleges of Education Deans and Directors
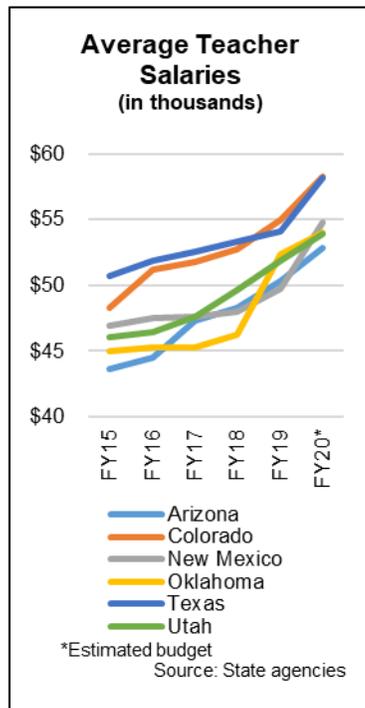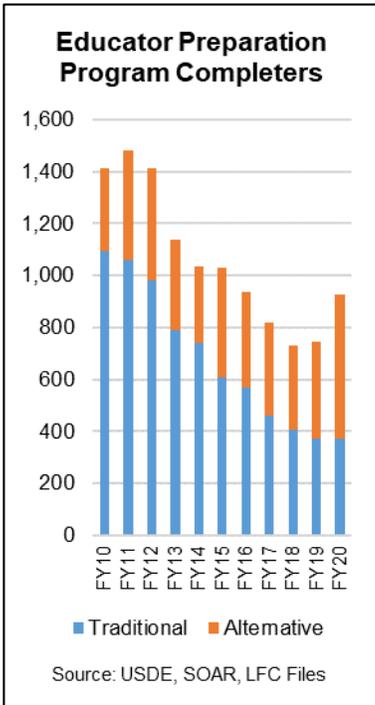
Leadership within the Colleges of Education report several challenges with attracting students to the profession, such as the stringency and cost of the entrance exams, the dampening impact from a perception of a punitive teacher accountability system for practicing teachers, below-market compensation, and weak first-time teacher support systems. More specifically, the Deans have offered an approach to begin to address enrollment and retention challenges of teachers.

Educator Preparation Program Completers

Source: USDE, SOAR, LFC Files

Tackling Enrollment. Rebuilding enrollments to pre-2008 numbers would require, according to the Deans of colleges of Education a multi-pronged approach based in part of funding and administrative rule changes:

1. Articulation between associate degree programs and bachelor's degree programs. Education majors typically do not start licensure programs until the junior year, during which time, some students change majors or drop out.
2. Paid Teacher Residencies/Student Teaching for Initial Licensure Programs that allow students to finish their programs. Generally, students must commit to a non-paid 680-hour experience.
3. Restructuring of the assessments required for Teacher Licensure – specifically core academic skills – testing in first language, with a separate English language test if needed.
4. Mentorship and support for alternatively licensure teacher candidates who are teaching full time in our rural districts. According to Deans, retention of alternative licensure teachers in the classroom increased from 50 percent to 91 percent in one year with focused, intense, mentorship.
5. Redesigning instruction for teacher candidates who are already teaching full time in the classroom, or providing full time jobs within the school for teacher candidates to work as educational assistants or co-teachers.

Average Teacher Salaries (in thousands)

*Estimated budget
Source: State agencies

The Colleges of Nursing used a model to address enrollment, articulation and a simplified curriculum, translatable throughout the state. The model program, called the New Mexico Nursing Education Consortium, was successful in aligning the degree pathways for educations students, whether those students started at a branch campus or at a research university. The program has been successful on ensuring commonality among the programs, and could be a useful model for the colleges of education.

Teacher Evaluation. When purposefully leveraged for professional development planning, teacher evaluations can be effective tools for identifying teacher needs and creating spaces for continuous improvement. Although New Mexico's previous teacher evaluation system, NMTeach, differentiated teacher performance in a significant way and showed improvements in highly effective and exemplary ratings each year, the system met opposition from the teachers' unions and various stakeholder groups. Court findings from the *Martinez* and *Yazzie* education case also noted the NMTeach system might have discouraged teaching in high-need schools or subject areas due to its significant reliance on student test score growth.

School Leadership. School leaders can improve the quality of instruction on a broader level and reduce turnover of school personnel. Strong leaders create a culture of high expectations for students and design systems that support the development of personnel at all levels of experience and expertise. Effectively

designed systems create positive working conditions that can reduce turnover and lead to improvements in staff development, learning environments, and student outcomes.

Appendix 1. NMSU UNM College of Education
Graduates by Academic by Academic Focus

UNM College of Education: Graduates by Discipline

	Academic Year 2016-2017			Academic Year 2017-2018			Academic Year 2018-2019			Academic Year 2019-2020		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
BA Secondary Ed	18	6	24	9	18	27	17	7	24	8	9	17
BS Athletic Training	5	6	11	6	3	9	6	5	11	5	4	9
BS Community Health Education	2	-	2	18	5	23	19	3	22	10	8	18
BS Early Childhood & Multicultural Ed	13	-	13	6	1	7	3	-	3	-	-	-
BS Exercise Science	27	26	53	35	32	67	30	23	53	20	16	36
BS Family and Child Studies	8	-	8	23	1	24	39	-	39	21	2	23
BS Family Studies	15	2	17	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
BS Health Education	29	7	36	9	1	10	1	-	1	1	-	1
BS Human Dev & Family Relation	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BS Nutrition and Dietetics	23	8	31	18	10	28	30	6	36	23	7	30
BS/ED Elementary Education	89	12	101	77	21	98	74	6	80	59	7	66
BS/ED Health Education	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BS/ED Physical Education	4	4	8	2	4	6	2	5	7	7	4	11
BS/ED Secondary Education	5	8	13	4	3	7	4	3	7	4	3	7
BS/ED Special Education	21	3	24	11	2	13	19	6	25	17	2	19
	265	83	**348**	224	101	**325**	244	64	**308**	175	62	**237**
Annual increase/decrease						**(23)**			**(17)**			**(71)**
Annual percentage increase						-6.6%			-5.2%			-23.1%

Source: UNM Office of Institutional Assessment

NMSU College of Education: Graduates by Discipline

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Music education	12	9	6	12	11	17
Early childhood education	17	28	26	13	23	16
Elementary education	64	58	41	45	30	28
Kinesiology	57	70	52	63	68	57
Secondary Education	26	25	21	15	13	14
Special education	12	16	12	7	2	4
Total Graduates (bachelor's degree)	**188**	**206**	**158**	**155**	**147**	**136**
Annual increase		18	(48)	(3)	(8)	(11)
Annual percentage increase		9.6%	-23.3%	-1.9%	-5.2%	-7.5%

Source: NMSU Office of Institutional Assessment