



Center for the
Education and
Study of
Diverse
Populations

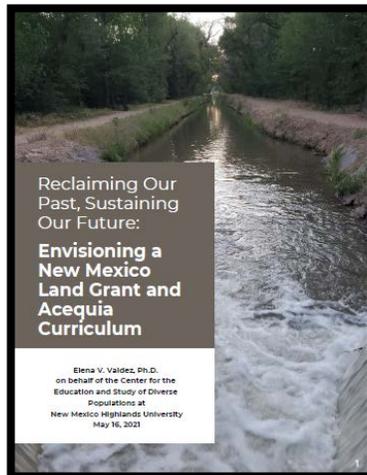


Land Grant Studies Program



Acequia and Land Grant Education Project

NM Land Grant Committee Presentation



Objectives for NM Land Grant Committee

- Provide background relative to the Acequia and Land Grant Education Project
- Emphasize the need for experiential education opportunities (authentic, land-based, place-based, community oriented, culturally and linguistically responsive)
- Garner state and district institutional support to be inclusive of Acequia and Land Grant Education within our PK-12 schools.
 - Value and recognize Acequia and Land Grant Education resources (materials and professional learning within the High Quality Instructional Materials Bureau, RFPs for curriculum, vertical articulation and consideration for assessment and evaluation).



Objectives for NM Land Grant Committee

- Consider how this influences future standards and curricula development in other disciplines.
- Emphasize the implications for both NMPED and HED.



What already exists?

- New Mexico Acequia Association
 - Sembrando Semillas (2006)
 - Acequia Youth Education in NM schools
- UNM Land Grant Studies Program (Presentation at 2:15)



How did this begin?

- HM 31 and SM 31 (Sen. Pete Campos and Rep. Miguel García)
- It began by not having been forgotten.
 - Heritage/legacy
 - Land and water in culture and heritage.
- Need for experiential learning in general!
 - Responsive to needs of communities
 - Need for a shift toward CLR practices
- Understanding the connections between K-12 and higher education.



First Year Goals of Project

- Convene stakeholders to develop and **provide recommendations** to the Public Education Department and Higher Education Department on how to reshape New Mexico's educational system to include a culturally relevant curriculum that embraces the topic of acequias and land grants.
- Create a white paper for the purpose of informing and leveraging conversations.



How did this begin?

- The convening process for the Acequia and Land Grant Education project first began with an **organizing committee** that included representation from northern, central and southern New Mexico.
- From these initial meetings, **four belief statements** were generated and an overall project plan was finalized to guide the pending work.



How did this begin?

- Over the spring of 2021, **six convenings** took place with over 100 participants representing Indigenous, Hispano and Anglo communities connected to the land grant and acequia systems. Input during the convenings came from youth, the community, K-12 educators, and higher education.
- All meetings were hosted through a virtual platform due to the impact of the COVID pandemic.



Project Belief Statements

- We believe that a transformation of our education system is needed to serve our communities by preparing students to be active change agents in our communities in the areas of land, water, and food.
- We believe that an ALGE curriculum will strengthen cultural identity, elevate public consciousness, and lead to public policy that is inclusive of the voices and knowledge of New Mexico's traditional, land-based communities.



The Why...

- New Mexico youth have had to acquire place-based knowledge outside of conventional educational spaces.



One Wrinkle of Our Identity

- Knowledge connected to local communities' relationships to land and water was ignored, if not actively repressed, by individuals and institutions bent on bringing 'progress' to the region. People whose lifeways did not align with the ideal American citizen type were considered ignorant and uncivilized, their dynamic cultures unworthy of attention in traditional school settings.



One Wrinkle of Our Identity

- That people from land-based communities throughout New Mexico have been able to share with multiple generations knowledges that have been vital to survival, their sense of belonging, and their connection to place despite such attitudes speaks to their tremendous resilience and creativity.



Timeliness?

- School districts and charter schools throughout New Mexico are now responsible for developing culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum and pedagogy (Yazzie/Martinez)-- a tall order in some cases, as such an approach has only recently been championed by state government and educational leaders.



Timeliness or timeless?

- The recent legislative request that acequia and land grant education be part of the contemporary effort to provide New Mexico students with more formal multilingual and multicultural learning opportunities is a step in the right direction.



To do it right...

- For a place-based education that is more culturally and linguistically responsive to diverse histories, languages, and cultures, **a more expansive land and water curriculum that includes acequias and land grants is necessary.**
- A comprehensive but flexible land grant and acequia curriculum would encourage critical reflection about the histories and cultures of the US Southwest and assist students in making connections to other peoples, places, and ideas.



To do it right...

- The development of a place-based curriculum that focuses on land and water has the potential to meet many of the diverse social, emotional, and cultural needs of New Mexico students.
 - Such a curriculum could also revitalize our local communities and introduce younger generations to traditional lifeways that have helped sustain people living in the region for centuries.
- It would also present opportunities to engage with people in their communities and the land that surrounds them, while meeting state grade-level standards in various subjects, including math, science, social studies, and language arts.
 - Such a curriculum would be rooted in local histories and relationships to land and water, but also flexible enough for students to make connections with other cultures and languages across the globe.
- It would foster critical conversations about issues such as climate change, sustainability, land stewardship, farming, ranching, hydrology, food sovereignty, civics, social movements, and settler colonialism.



Implications for Higher Education

- Institutions of higher education will play an important role in preparing educators to teach students about land and water issues in New Mexico, particularly since educators should develop critical consciousness about local land-based histories and cultures.
- Teacher education and licensure programs should encourage K-12 educators to take courses in ethnic studies, Black studies, Native studies, Mexican American studies, Southwest studies, etc., so that these educators may not only grow their capacity to recognize previously marginalized epistemologies, but also become better equipped to engage them.
- Educational leadership programs in New Mexico, too, should involve interdisciplinary training that allows individuals to better recognize gaps in knowledge and biases that have become commonplace in the US public education system.



Implications for Higher Education

- We must advocate for the relevancy/insertion of placed-based education in higher the higher education goals for civic engagement, social justice, and action research.



Thank you!

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Here is a link to the white paper!

<https://its.nmhu.edu/includes/onlinedocs/display.html?quicklink=7370>