**Education Report**

for

**LWVNM Action Zoom Meeting
February 18, 2022 at 4 pm**

**Education was the big winner this session**. In addition to the usual allocations that constitute approximately half of New Mexico’s budget, approximately $35 million more will go into Indian Education programs that address the Yazzie Martinez court orders. Across the board increases of 7 percent for all educational personnel were also approved in HB2-General Appropriations Act. Millions more in the $8.5 billion budget for FY23will go to fund the following important bills.

**SB1 Increasing Teacher Salaries** (Sponsored by Sen. Mimi Stewart) sets beginning teacher salaries for Levels 1,2, 3 at $50,000, $60,000, and $70,000 respectively. This increase should help address some of the severe teacher shortages in our schools, which currently have over 1100 teacher vacancies. Impending teacher retirements added to the urgency to address the recruitment crisis. The salary increases will also help with teacher retention.

**SB140 Opportunity Scholarships** will provide free tuition and fees for NM residents without bachelor’s degrees wishing to pursue certificates and degrees in workforce shortage and high demand fields (teaching, health care, public safety, and other areas to be determined). An eligible student who maintains at least 6 credits a semester (fall and spring) with a 2.5 GPA can complete a credit-bearing certificate, associate degree (up to 90 credits), and a bachelor’s degree (up to 160 credits) at any of NM’s public post-secondary institutions. There are no income eligibility requirements and a provision that students can take courses in the summer.

**HB 13 Teacher Residency** **Act** (Sponsors: Reps. Debra Sariñana, Joy Garratt, T. Ryan Lane; Sens, Bill Soules, Mimi Stewart)

New Mexico teacher residency programs at public post-secondary education institutions and tribal colleges that have department-approved teacher preparation programs. The legislation is designed to diversify the teaching profession and fill high-need teaching positions within the state and ensure teaching residents are prepared for licensure and successful teaching. The residency includes at least one full academic year of rigorous department-approved teacher preparation coursework in cohorts, while concurrently including a guided apprenticeship in a classroom of a level two or three teacher. Programs will be monitored by university supervisors, who also coach the teacher supervisor. Stipends of at least $35,000 per resident are required. Stipends of at least $2,000 for the Level 2 or 3 teacher supervisor are also required. Teacher residency coordinators, funded at least $50,000 per year, are also required. Residents commit to serving a minimum of three years at schools in the sponsoring school district. Minimum requirements to be eligible for admission to a teacher residency program are included in the bill. Partners in the program must report annually to the Public Education Department by July 1.

**HB 60 Native American Language Certificate** **Salaries** (Sponsor: Rep Derrick Lente)

The bill requires salary parity for people who hold Native American Language and Culture Certificates of New Mexico tribes or pueblos. While a baccalaureate degree is not required, the minimum annual salary shall be equal to the minimum annual salary for a Level 1 licensed teacher.

**HB 73 Educational Retirees Returning to Work** (Sponsors: Rep. Joy Garratt, Phelps Anderson, T. Ryan Lane)

The bill allows certain retirees to return to work without a suspension of retirement benefits, as long as the retired members have not rendered service to their local units for at least 90 days. They will make contributions to the retiree health care fund and their employers will likewise make contributions during the period of employment.

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