



# NEW MEXICO RISING

*Engaging our communities for excellence in education*

## Background

*During the Fall of 2016, the New Mexico Public Education Department worked with the non-partisan public policy organization New Mexico First to launch one of the largest education listening tours in New Mexico's history—New Mexico Rising. The feedback collected through the listening tour will inform New Mexico's state plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which is our roadmap for ensuring that all of our students are learning at high levels. Many of the foundational building blocks that are required in the new law—high standards, accountability, and quality assessments—are already established.*

*PED is grateful to the hundreds of teachers, parents, and community leaders who gave of their time to provide meaningful and constructive feedback during our listening tour. As we continue to refine our state plan, there are several steps which we can take immediately in response to the feedback we have received. Below are three of the major themes found in the report and how PED is responding to them right away.*

## Listening to our Teachers

### **Feedback:**

Teachers and other stakeholders across the state regularly asked for a reduction in the weight of student growth in their evaluations, while suggesting the state should increase the weight of principal observations. Teachers also asked for greater flexibility in the attendance portion of their evaluations.

### **Immediate Response:**

- PED will support legislation in the 2017 Legislative Session to reduce the maximum weight of student achievement in evaluations from 50% to 40%, while increasing the weight of principal observations.
- PED will also support legislation in the 2017 Legislative Session to increase the number of days exempt in the NMTEACH attendance component from 3 days to 5 days.

## Reducing Time on Student Assessment

### **Feedback:**

Parents, educators and community members expressed a desire for a reduction in time spent on required student assessments.

### **Immediate Response:**

- New Mexico has seen an average testing time reduction of 90 minutes per student per grade with the PARCC exam, and PED is committed to pressing for additional reductions in PARCC testing time while maintaining the high quality of the assessment.
- PED also replaced the early childhood literacy assessment with Istation earlier this year, a new, computer-based interim assessment for Kindergarten through 3rd grade. Many teachers have reported savings of several hours with this assessment, although time varies from classroom to classroom.

## Championing our Educators

### Feedback:

Educators and other stakeholders across the state shared that PED and district leaders should do more to recognize and celebrate the profession, with more opportunities to collaborate with and learn from seasoned professionals outside of their schools and districts and across New Mexico.

### Immediate Response:

- Late last year, PED launched new teacher-leadership opportunities, including the statewide Teacher-Leader Network to facilitate better communication with and amongst teachers, and the New Mexico Dream Team that brings together teachers from across the state to collaborate on classroom literacy tools.
- In the 2017 Legislative Session, PED is continuing to fight for targeted investments for our educators, from teacher debit cards to hard-to-staff stipends to teacher mentorship opportunities.
- PED is planning to host the 2nd Annual New Mexico Teacher Summit in June of 2017 to offer more resources, professional development, and opportunities to collaborate with fellow teachers.

## Looking Ahead

*PED is continuing to review feedback provided through the New Mexico Rising community meetings, online surveys, and workgroups. PED plans to release a draft state plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act later this winter. The plan will be posted for public comment for 30 days prior to final submission to the United States Department of Education. While PED has captured three major themes of feedback here today, other input will be reflected in the upcoming draft plan.*