

Context and Introduction: Historic Revenue Available to Tackle Major Problems

The Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce works with government, business, and community partners to promote and develop a welcoming business environment and thriving, diverse economy in New Mexico. Our goal is to make our city and state a great place to start and grow a business and a safe, exciting place to work and raise a family. Prior to each legislative session, the Chamber’s Board of Directors approves a policy agenda – presented herein – that is consistent with our organization’s mission and work. During each session, our team of lobbyists and policy experts works on behalf of the business community to advocate for this agenda, and the Chamber produces a nightly newsletter – the “Legislative Roundup” – to keep our investors and partners up to speed on the latest activity in the Roundhouse.

The 2023 legislative session will commence under unprecedented circumstances. With revenues projected to rise by a staggering \$3.6 billion (a 42% increase), never before have lawmakers and the Governor had so much money to spend, save, invest, or return to taxpayers. And, driven largely by booming oil production and strong prices, the revenue forecast is bullish for several years to come. The Governor and Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) each plan to raise year-over-year state spending by around \$1 billion (a 12% increase), en route to a record-sized budget of nearly \$9.5 billion. Plenty more will be spent in one-time money, with reserves projected to top 30% of recurring appropriations.

With great resources comes great responsibility. New Mexico’s broader economy remains on shaky ground. The state lost population last year, inflation is still high, small businesses report a slow and precarious pandemic rebound, and workforce shortages plague key industries – from construction and hospitality to health care and education. Violent crime, organized retail theft, and fentanyl trafficking threaten the security and welfare of employers, employees, and families alike. And, new national assessment data shows New Mexico students ranked last among states in reading and math, with children nationwide losing academic ground during the pandemic and its associated school closures.

To improve economic competitiveness, now is the time to significantly cut the gross receipts tax rate, reduce tax pyramiding, and lower personal income tax rates; lead on hydrogen energy development; and fully fund the incentives and initiatives necessary to develop and retain skilled workers, revitalize key economic growth corridors, attract visitors, and recruit new companies. The Chamber will oppose policies making it harder or costlier to do business in New Mexico.

To address crime, the Chamber will work to restore balance to our justice system and bring swifter and more certain justice to criminals. This should include changing the law to keep dangerous defendants behind bars pre-trial; funding multi-agency operations to arrest dangerous offenders who have outstanding warrants; stiffening penalties for organized retail theft and drug trafficking; allocating new funding to recruit/retain police officers and provide them with the latest technology and equipment; and making big investments in affordable housing development, behavioral health, and strategic homelessness interventions like the Gibson Health Hub shelter and service center.

To improve schools and student learning, the Chamber supports increasing students’ time in the classroom; requiring on-the-job residency training for aspiring teachers and school leaders; ... *(continued on next page)*

Table of Contents: The Chamber’s Legislative Agenda

New Mexico’s Budget and Fiscal Future	2	Public Safety, Homelessness & Behavioral Health	6
Economic Growth and Job Creation	2	K-12 and Early Childhood Education	8

... higher pay for principals; new standards and training for school board members, the expanded use of best-in-class literacy curriculum for students, new dropout prevention and re-engagement efforts, and increased funding for early childhood programs designed to prepare students well for kindergarten.

With key challenges on our doorstep that impede broad-based economic growth, and no shortage of money to address them, the Chamber urges lawmakers to focus this session on attacking crime, increasing our economic competitiveness, and improving public education.

New Mexico's State Budget and Fiscal Future

Spending

- **Priorities:** Focus new spending on substantial tax reform and relief for consumers, families, and businesses; economic development initiatives and incentives; state employee salary increases and talent development/recruitment efforts in key workforce areas – especially health care, public safety, and education; substantially higher Medicaid provider and facility reimbursement rates; affordable housing development; extended learning time for public schools; tourism marketing; and capital projects.¹
- **Salary Increases:** Provide salary increases for all state workers, including teachers, as well as substantial targeted raises for hard-to-recruit public safety positions, such as police officers, correctional officers, and prosecutors.²
- **Infrastructure Projects:** Limit the use of severance tax bonds to finance capital projects, in favor of general funds instead; focus capital spending on large-scale infrastructure projects (roads, water, buildings, etc.) that have a sizable economic impact, address a policy problem, and that local governments often cannot afford themselves.³

Saving and Investing

- **Permanent Fund Infusion:** Add up to \$1 billion in surplus revenue to the Severance Tax Permanent Fund.
- **Tax Stabilization Reserve and Early Childhood Endowment Fund:** Preserve the basic structure of the tax stabilization reserve “rainy day” fund and early childhood endowment fund, which collect excess oil/gas revenue and provide a strong fiscal safety net for the state budget.
- **Reserves:** Maintain total budget reserves of between 30% and 35% of recurring spending.

Economic Growth and Job Creation

Taxes and Regulations

- **GRT Rate Reduction:** Reduce New Mexico's gross receipts tax rate by up to one percentage-point; provide the full relief right away (not phased in), with no triggers to remove the reduction based on future revenue levels.

¹ The Governor and LFC are each proposing a 12% increase in recurring spending (roughly \$1 billion, to \$9.4 billion overall), higher than a typical year, but nowhere near the total amount of “new money” available (\$3.6 billion). In each proposal, new spending is heavily tied to teacher and state employee salary increases, public education spending (\$220 million for extended learning alone), and additional Medicaid funding (for provider reimbursement rate increases and federal backfill).

² According to the State Personnel Office, nearly one-quarter of all state government positions are unfilled, with the vacancy rate reaching 30% at the Department of Health, 24% at CYFD, and 22% at the Taxation and Revenue Department. Recruitment of police officers, correctional officers, and well-qualified prosecutors statewide remains a dire problem in the criminal justice system. The Governor is proposing a 4% raise for school personnel and state workers, while the Legislature is proposing a 5% salary increase.

³ According to the LFC, there are currently \$3.5 billion in unspent capital appropriations for more than 4,000 projects statewide.

- **Voter Approval for Local GRT Increases:** Require local governments to seek and earn voter approval before enacting any increase in local GRT rates, which nullify benefits to consumers of state-level rate reductions.⁴
- **GRT Pyramiding:** Reduce gross receipts tax pyramiding across New Mexico’s economy; consider a “buyer’s credit” approach, allowing businesses to claim a credit for a portion of the GRT paid on their business-to-business service transactions against their overall state GRT liability.
- **Tax Rebate Payments:** Use surplus funds to provide a one-time rebate payment to New Mexicans; however, this should not be viewed as tax reform and should not be enacted as a substitute for substantial GRT and PIT relief.
- **Personal Income Tax Relief and Reform:** Create a fairer and more reasonable personal income tax rate structure, such that more of a person’s income is taxed at lower rates, providing significant relief to low-income workers, small businesses, and the middle class.⁵
- **Angel Investment Tax Credit:** In order to attract additional capital for local early-stage companies, expand and make refundable the Angel Investment Tax Credit.
- **No Tax Increases:** Enact no tax increases, recognizing the extraordinary challenges that businesses, workers, and families continue to face, as well as the presence of unprecedented state revenues.⁶
- **Higher Costs on Employers:** Oppose attempts to impose new regulatory mandates and raise operational costs on businesses in New Mexico, whether in the form of new employee leave requirements, higher taxes, increases to various rates, or additional exposure to lawsuits.
- **No Increase in Wage/UI Rates:** Oppose raising the minimum wage (including indexing the minimum wage rate) and raising unemployment insurance rates.⁷
- **Paid Family Medical Leave Requirements:** Oppose the enactment of an onerous paid family medical leave proposal that would create a new tax on businesses and employees each year, increase the overall cost of labor in New Mexico, add significant cost and burden to employers to find replacement workers (at a time of widespread workforce shortages), and lead to significant workplace disruptions across the economy year after year – affecting employers and employees alike.
- **Public Bank:** Oppose any effort to create a public bank in New Mexico.
- **Permitting – Speed and Predictability:** Support legislation requiring state agencies to set and adhere to time limits on permit determinations and approvals for construction projects, as well as incentives for local governments to use third-party reviewers for permit applications and approvals.
- **Rent Control:** Oppose legislation allowing the imposition of rent control at the local level.

⁴ Between 2002 and 2020, combined local-state GRT rates in New Mexico’s major cities have climbed dramatically (from about the 6-6.5% range to near or over 8%), driven by local governments increasing the local GRT rate.

⁵ Currently, most income is taxed at the second-highest tax rate. For example, for married tax filers, just \$8,000 is taxed at the lowest tax rate (1.7%), another \$8,000 is taxed at the next-highest rate (3.2%), and another \$8,000 is taxed at the next-highest rate (4.7%). After that, \$291,000 worth of income is taxed at a rate of 4.9% - a rate that is only 0.2 percentage points higher than the previous bracket and the second-highest in NM. Consider more/simpler tax brackets, with more income being taxed at lower rates.

⁶ This should include no increase to the corporate income tax rate, the preservation of single sales factor apportionment for manufacturers, and a preservation of the current capital gains tax deduction. There should also be no increase to personal income tax rates, which would make it harder to attract and retain professionals and skilled workers in key industries, hurt the middle class, and specifically raise costs on small businesses.

⁷ New Mexico has undergone a 60% increase in its minimum wage rate over the past few years, with the latest increase – to \$12/hour – occurring just weeks ago, at the start of 2023.

- **Job Training and Expansion:** Appropriate \$14 million total for the Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP).
- **Relocation, Growth, and Competitiveness:** Seek an appropriation of \$35 million to maintain a robust closing fund for economic development projects (LEDA), in alignment with the Governor’s recommendation.
- **“New Mexico True” Advertising:** Increase funding to the State’s Tourism Department for “New Mexico True” advertising to attract visitors to the state.
- **Economic Development Marketing:** Support the Economic Development Dept’s request for \$3 million to market the state’s economic opportunities to target industries and attract more foreign direct investment and trade.
- **Metropolitan Redevelopment Investment:** Support legislation that would generate as much as a 20-fold increase in the amount of tax revenue captured and allocated to projects for Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas, which could include infrastructure, catalytic public-private redevelopment projects, housing development, and enhanced urban services like security, maintenance, and events. The legislation, which would allow local jurisdictions to collect up to 75% of the incremental city, county, and state property AND gross receipts tax revenues for an entire MRA for 20 years, would benefit not just Albuquerque’s downtown area, but nearly 30 communities across the state.
- **Opportunity Enterprise Revolving Fund:** Support funding for the recently-created Opportunity Enterprise Revolving Fund, which allows local communities to fund and construct more commercial building space and allows the state to provide low-interest loans to private sector partners for commercial space development.
- **Energy Efficient Redevelopment:** Support legislation that would improve New Mexico businesses’ access to federal tax incentives for energy efficient redevelopment.

Energy

- **Hydrogen Energy Projects:** Support legislation encouraging public-private partnerships and establishing grant and loan programs to assist with the ongoing development and production of hydrogen energy in New Mexico.
- **Oil and Gas Production:** Oppose the imposition of onerous regulations (including a ban or moratorium on hydraulic fracturing), additional taxes, or significant new fees on oil and gas production, upon which New Mexico’s budget and economic outlook are heavily dependent.
- **Environment Amendment:** Oppose a Constitutional amendment relating to a person’s right to clean air, water, and land; this has always been – and remains – an important policy priority, but enacting a new Constitutional right on this subject would likely lead to endless and costly lawsuits that would impact the state’s fiscal and economic health and hamper wise policymaking on energy and environment matters.
- **No Movement toward a Public Utility or Municipal Aggregation:** Oppose legislation designed to explore or enact the creation of a public power utility in New Mexico or authorize municipal aggregation.

Infrastructure and Development

- **Highways and Roads:** Appropriate nearly \$200 million in funding for transportation projects, per the LFC rec.
- **Central Infrastructure Office:** Support the LFC’s \$15 million proposal to create a centralized, properly staffed state office to rigorously prioritize public infrastructure projects and help guide them to completion.
- **Broadband Expansion:** Support an increase in funding to extend high-speed broadband coverage statewide.

Key Capital Projects: Secure appropriations for economic development projects in Albuquerque, including the Albuquerque Rail Trail (\$15 million)⁸, Balloon Fiesta Park improvements (\$15 million), the North Domingo Baca Aquatic Center (\$18 million), Rail Yards redevelopment (\$15 million), Sawmill and Old Town area road and pathway improvements (\$12 million), the installation of a USS Albuquerque exhibit in a park (\$2 million), Isotopes Stadium improvements (\$2 million), Paseo del Norte expansion between Unser and Universe (\$8.5 million), and the Mesa del Sol regional recreational complex (\$10 million).

Higher Education and Workforce Development

Workforce Training and Upskilling: Support an increase of more than \$8 million to CNM for enhanced workforce training programs (alongside industry partners) and direct financial assistance to help people learn new skills and move into new, higher-paying careers.

Workforce Development Facilities: Support a \$13.9 million capital request to complete the construction of a new CNM skilled trades facility in Albuquerque, as well as an \$11 million CNM request to build a new state-of-the-art automotive, diesel, and electric vehicle training facility in Rio Rancho, in partnership with Rio Rancho Public Schools and the local automotive industry.

Health Care Workforce Expansion: Support several initiatives – including statutory changes and appropriations – designed to grow New Mexico’s health care workforce and make our state a more welcoming, hospitable, and financially viable place to practice medicine.⁹

- Significantly expand funding for the health care worker loan repayment program; increase the time commitment to practice in New Mexico (for those who receive loan repayment) from two to three years; increase the maximum amount of loan repayment that can be awarded per year; and broaden the pool of eligible doctors who can participate (beyond just primary care).¹⁰
- Increase Medicaid provider reimbursement rates – by as much as \$80 million – and ensure MCOs pass these increases along to providers; raise health care facility reimbursement rates as well.
- Require new providers to be credentialed and enrolled in insurance billing systems in a timely manner.
- Adopt reasonable changes to the Medical Malpractice Act to prevent further erosion of the health care workforce and reduce the Act’s impact on the recruitment and retention of health professionals – especially doctors, including: (a) moving independently-owned outpatient facilities under the \$750,000 cap; (b) addressing venue shopping; (c) capping annual increases in the medical malpractice cap; and (d) reforming how lifetime medical expenses are paid out of the Patient Compensation Fund (pay actual costs, pay over the life of the patient, and require periodic re-assessments of need).
- Oppose attempts to push private health insurers out of the health care system, in favor of costly and additional government involvement and control at the state level.
- Join a majority of U.S. states in signing onto the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact for physicians, which offers an expedited pathway to licensure for qualified physicians practicing in multiple states.
- Expand on past work to recognize military medical experience in civilian health care licensure.

⁸ The Rail Trail will be a 7-mile loop, connecting key destinations and amenities in the greater Downtown area, including the Rail Yards, Convention Center, Sawmill District, Bio Park, bosque trail, and cultural centers.

⁹ Currently, New Mexico is short over 340 primary care docs, 120 psychiatrists, nearly 60 OB-GYNs, and over 6,000 nurses/NPs.

¹⁰ In FY 23, the Legislature appropriated just \$1.6 million for health care professional loan repayment. Over 600 health care professionals applied for the program, and only 46 awards were able to be made. Max awards are \$25,000 per year, and recipients must currently make a 2-year commitment. The Governor proposes a \$28 million appropriation to the program for the coming year.

- Oppose additional health coverage mandates that lead to higher health insurance costs, higher out-of-pocket costs for individuals, and various other unintended consequences; any additional mandates should be qualified by cost-effective analysis.
- Support an up-to-\$10 million expansion of nursing programs statewide, including a \$1.4M expansion of CNM's nursing program, creating an additional 384 seats (33% increase) at CNM alone.
- Support UNM requests related to building our health care workforce, including \$1.5M for an Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, \$960K in renewal funding for the BA/MD program, and the expansion of medical education residencies and the P.A./NP programs.
- Support more than \$7M in capital requests for research equipment and to upgrade the interprofessional health simulation center at the UNM Health Sciences Center.

➤ **Entrepreneurship:** Create a “Venture Studio” at CNM Ingenuity, which will help entrepreneurs build, attract capital for, and launch successful companies, and open an Office of Entrepreneurship at NM EDD.

➤ **Lottery and Opportunity Scholarships:** Ensure adequate funding is in place for the Lottery and Opportunity scholarships for the coming year.

➤ **Technology Enhancement Fund:** Grow the Technology Enhancement Fund, which provides matching funds to state research universities to support innovative applied research that creates new products and production processes in the fields of agriculture, biotechnology, biomedicine, energy, materials science, microelectronics, water resources, aerospace, telecommunications, manufacturing science, and similar research areas. Grants are available to state research universities that conduct collaborative research with corporate and nonprofit orgs.

➤ **University of New Mexico Athletics:** In addition to supporting capital upgrades to UNM athletic facilities, support an increase in recurring funding to the UNM Athletics Department – of more than \$2 million annually – to provide additional financial support to student-athletes not on full-ride scholarships and to provide robust, ongoing academic support to every student-athlete.

Public Safety, Homelessness, and Behavioral Health

Pre-Trial Release and Justice System Processes

➤ **Rebuttable Presumption of Pre-Trial Detention:** Change New Mexico law to presume that a person arrested for violent or other serious crimes is a danger to the public and should be held in jail prior to his/her trial, unless the defendant can convince the judge in the case that he/she would not, in fact, pose a threat to public safety if released. Covered crimes should include, at a minimum, serious violent offenses; felonies involving the use of a firearm; felonies involving great bodily harm; and felonies committed by repeat offenders or those on court-ordered supervision. Additionally, support reasonable improvements to the assessment tool used by judges to provide guidance on pre-trial release/detention decisions; the tool consistently underestimates the dangerousness of criminal defendants.¹¹

➤ **Violation of Pre-Trial Release Conditions:** Support legislation requiring the judicial system to deal more stringently with those who commit new criminal offenses or ignore court orders while on pre-trial release.

¹¹ Despite the Bernalillo County D.A.'s judicious, selective approach to making pre-trial detention motions (just 16% of adult felony defendants), only 50% of these motions are granted by judges. Additionally, the risk assessment tool used by judges recommends release in most cases and fails to account for a person's arrest record and the nature of the underlying charges against him/her.

- **Grand Jury Flexibility:** Allow district attorneys and the attorney general to convene grand juries, as a means of more efficiently launching criminal cases in New Mexico – especially in the Albuquerque metro area.¹²
- **Pre-Trial Interviews of Child Victims:** Amend state law to no longer subject child victims to often hostile pre-trial interviews by defense attorneys, in cases where the victim has completed a forensic/safehouse interview.¹³
- **Child Safety Oversight:** Support the creation of a unit in the Attorney General’s office to review the State’s child welfare decisions, relating to children taken into state custody and returned to – or placed in – unsafe homes.

Policing, Technology, and Criminal Penalties

- **Crime-Gun Intelligence Center:** Support the Attorney General’s request for funding to establish a state-level Crime-Gun Intelligence Center, which will use technology to match spent bullet casings to the guns that fired them and connect these firearms to criminal incidents, perpetrators, and networks across the state.¹⁴
- **Warrant Backlog:** Appropriate \$20 million to fund the pursuit and prosecution of individuals in New Mexico who are wanted on felony warrants; half of the allocation should be used to pay overtime for local, state, and federal police and prosecutors in the Albuquerque Metro Area, specifically.¹⁵
- **Retail Theft:** Pass legislation cracking down on repeat and organized retail thieves, allowing their offenses to be assessed in the aggregate and charged as felony criminal activity; additionally, support state funding for local law enforcement operations targeting retail theft.
- **Claims by Perpetrators of Violent Felonies:** Make it clear in state law that, if the perpetrator of a violent felony crime kills someone during the commission of that act, he/she is not entitled to a self-defense claim against the deceased victim and is not eligible to be charged with a lesser crime, like manslaughter.
- **Crime Data Platform:** Support a \$2 million request from the Bernalillo County District Attorney to implement the Quaro crime data platform, which has been developed in partnership between the D.A., RS21, and local businesses and will help prosecutors and police identify our most violent offenders and their criminal networks.
- **Fentanyl:** Support legislation increasing penalties for those who traffic fentanyl in New Mexico, and support appropriations designed to raise awareness of the dangers of fentanyl to young people, in particular.

Additional Officers and Equipment/Facilities

- **Officer Recruitment and Retention:** Support the Governor’s plan to spend up to \$100 million on the recruitment and retention of police officers statewide.
- **Data Sharing:** Continue to fund the implementation of data-sharing improvements and requirements within the criminal justice system (as well as the integration of health-related data).
- **Local Public Safety Capital Investments:** Support local law enforcement agency funding requests for the Southwest Mesa Public Safety Center (\$18 million), an area-command facility near UNM (\$4 million), security upgrades on the UNM campus (\$5 million), a first responder training facility at Coronado Park (\$20 million),

¹² Using preliminary hearings only to initiate cases is inefficient and costly. The number one reason preliminary hearings fail to launch is non-appearance by the defendant, and 84% of preliminary hearings overall do not result in a completed hearing. There are approximately 4,000 felony cases waiting to be launched in Bernalillo County; grand juries are needed to launch them.

¹³ According to the New Mexico Attorney General, victims are often required to repeat what happened to them no fewer than six times in multiple different settings, often under hostile questioning. This can be particularly traumatic for children.

¹⁴ 60-70% of gun crimes are committed by just 0.5% of the population; perpetrators are commonly networked (source: NM AG).

¹⁵ There are more than 5,000 active felony warrants in Bernalillo County and 62,000 misdemeanor warrants.

expansion of the APD academy, additional policing technology for both APD and BCSO, APD police vehicles (\$5 million), a new BCSO helicopter and hangar (\$6.3 million), a new APD helicopter (\$6.2 million), BCSO vehicles (\$500,000), and new technology at APD and the Real Time Crime Center (\$2.8 million).

- **State Public Safety Capital Investments:** Support state funding requests for critical improvements to correctional facilities (\$30 million), improvements to statewide public safety radio communications (\$25 million), and law enforcement vehicles (\$10 million).

Housing, Homelessness, and Behavioral Health

- **Rental Assistance and Home Ownership Help:** Support substantial investments in rental assistance and down payment assistance statewide to help vulnerable populations remain in – or secure – stable housing.
- **Affordable Housing Development:** Support an increase in state funding for the renovation and construction of affordable housing, including incentives to local governments to prioritize this work.¹⁶
- **Gibson Health Hub:** Support the City’s \$20 million capital request to construct/upgrade the medical respite, sobering center, and first responder drop-off area at the Gibson Health Hub, which is expected to provide shelter and co-located services for more than 200 individuals/family members by the end of this year.¹⁷
- **Mobile Homelessness Response Teams:** Fund the creation of mobile response teams at the Department of Health to provide immediate and direct access to resources for those experiencing homelessness.
- **Behavioral Health Services:** Support funding to expand community-based and school-based behavioral health services for children, increase the availability of behavioral health services for children who are in state custody, and raise Medicaid and non-Medicaid behavioral health reimbursement rates.

K-12 and Early Childhood Education

Student Learning and Support

- **Extended Learning Time:** Support a mandatory increase in the number of hours children must be in the classroom in New Mexico, from 990 hours to 1140 hours per year, while providing flexibility to districts and charter schools on how those hours should be allocated across the school year and financial incentives to extend the school calendar by adding school days.
- **Financial Literacy Course Requirement:** Join 32 other states in requiring New Mexico high schoolers to take a course in financial literacy in order to graduate.
- **Academic Performance Assessments:** Support legislation encouraging the State not to change its standardized state assessments with regularity, in order to better track academic progress over time; preserve the use of a summative year-end assessment to capture student and school performance and growth, even if changes are made that allow interim statewide assessments to be given during the school year.
- **Truancy/Dropout Prevention:** Support the PED’s request for \$17 million in funding to implement various interventions designed to prevent truancy and encourage/enforce stronger school attendance statewide.

¹⁶ The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County are making a joint request for \$50 million in affordable housing development funding and have announced plans to merge the city’s and county’s housing authorities.

¹⁷ The City itself has already invested \$30 million in the Gibson Health Hub renovation project and indicates that, at full build-out, it will contain 250 shelter beds, an engagement center, first responder drop-off, medical respite, a sobering center, and trauma recovery center.

- **Dropout Recovery:** Support legislation requiring districts to report the names of “unaccounted for” students to the State and provide charter and traditional schools the opportunity to be designated a “dropout recovery school,” allowing them to recruit dropouts back to school, enroll these students year-round, and receive same-year funding to keep them in school and guide them to graduation.
- **Transparency on Federal Funding Expenditures:** Require regular and public reporting of how school districts, charter schools, and the State continue to spend the federal COVID relief money they have received.

Leadership: Teacher, Principal, and School Board Training and Development

- **School Leader Compensation:** Increase the minimum salaries of principals statewide by raising the “responsibility factor” that is designed to quantify the increase in hours worked, responsibilities, and difficulty associated with being a school leader.
- **Residencies for School Leaders and Teachers:** Continue to move New Mexico in the direction of requiring and delivering rigorous on-the-job training – in the form of full-time residencies – for all aspiring teachers and school leaders. Support efforts to require the national accreditation of preparation programs and the alignment of curriculum to current research on best practices for instruction and leadership.
- **Professionalization of School Boards:** Enact several changes designed to improve the professionalism and quality of school boards, including things like (a) requiring all school board candidates to report campaign finance information; (b) requiring school board members to resign if they run for another political office; (c) strengthening nepotism penalties; (d) increasing the required amount of training school board members must receive and broadening the topics covered in that training to include budgeting, raising student achievement, effective governance practices, and legal issues; and (e) require webcasting and archiving of all board meetings.
- **High-quality Reading Curriculum:** Provide special state funding to districts and schools that choose to adopt research-aligned, high-quality reading curriculum in elementary schools and appropriate \$16 million to extend Structured Literacy training (LETRS) to 4th and 5th grade teachers and hire additional regional literacy coaches.
- **Community Educators for CTE:** Allow individuals who are certified in a particular trade or skill to teach a “career and technical education” course in that field in New Mexico’s public schools.
- **CTE Infrastructure Investment:** Support the PED’s plan to invest up to \$60 million in the state’s career technical education infrastructure to give students valuable hands-on experience and workforce training.
- **High-Need Teacher Recruitment:** Increase funding for the Teacher Preparation Affordability Fund, which provides scholarships to increase the number of teachers in designated high-need teacher positions statewide.

Ongoing Early Childhood Investment

- **Early Childhood Education and Care:** Support significant expansion of funding for Pre-K, designed to increase the number of three-year-olds, in particular, enrolled in educational programming prior to kindergarten, and support an increase in funding for high-quality child care centers, which help to improve labor force participation, provide critical support for low-income families, and provide a positive developmental environment for children.¹⁸

¹⁸ The LFC proposes a more significant increase in Pre-K funding (\$109 million) than the Governor’s recommendation (\$20 million), while the Governor proposes a more significant increase in child care subsidies (\$112 million) funding than the LFC (\$42 million).