



NEW MEXICO
HIGHER EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT



Fostering Student Success from Cradle to Career

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Early Childhood, Higher Education Departments Aim
to Recruit Bilingual and Multicultural Educators**

*\$7 Million Partnership to Build Capacity for Early Childhood Education at NM
Colleges & Universities*

SANTA FE, NM – The New Mexico Higher Education and Early Childhood and Care Departments are working together to increase the number of bilingual and Indigenous language educators at early childhood programs across the state.

The new state budget includes \$7 million to build capacity at New Mexico public colleges and universities to train, recruit, and support early childhood educators from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.

“The teacher education programs at our public colleges and universities prepare the majority of New Mexico’s educators to enter and advance in their careers, and by dedicating this funding, we are addressing systemic opportunity gaps and making equity in education a priority in our state,” Higher Education Secretary Stephanie Rodriguez said. “By supporting Indigenous early childhood professionals, our state can also promote the integration of education, language, and culture as identified and defined by Tribal communities.”

The partnership is the first of its kind between early childhood and higher education to create a pathway of talent to support New Mexico’s cradle-to-career system of education. The funds can be used to set up endowments, hire additional staff, add courses focused on multicultural early childhood education, and implement teacher recruitment strategies to increase diversity.

“New Mexico is a diverse state with a rich cultural and linguistic heritage, and ECECD is committed to ensuring that New Mexico’s early childhood programs and services reflect and reinforce these strengths,” Early Childhood Education and Care Department Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky said. “Through this new investment, we hope to expand the talent pool of



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bilingual and Indigenous early childhood educators to meet the needs of our state’s multicultural and multilingual communities. We especially look forward to working in partnership and close consultation with New Mexico’s Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations as we seek to actively support their efforts to integrate language and culture into the education of their youngest learners.”

Both agencies offer financial assistance to cover the cost of accelerated credentials and degrees in early childhood education. ECECD offers scholarships to students enrolling in New Mexico’s early childhood education degree or certification programs. HED provides funding to New Mexico public colleges and universities for Grow Your Own Teachers and Teacher Education Affordability scholarships, which pay up to \$6,000 per year toward the cost of tuition, books, and fees. The agency also administers the Teacher Loan Repayment and Teacher Loan for Service programs, which offer up to 100% loan repayment or forgiveness. Those interested can learn more by visiting www.ececdscholarship.org and www.hed.state.nm.us.

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