



Stop Suspensions and Eliminate Expulsions of Young Children

Support SB 283: Keep our youngest children in school and other learning environments

It is critical that young children have quality opportunities to learn, but too often they are suspended or expelled, even as early as when they are in child care or PreK programs. Young children who have special needs or are Native American and African American are removed from educational settings at much higher rates than white children. Children who are suspended or expelled are more likely to have worse academic performance, disconnect from school, and drop out, according to many research studies.

SB 283, sponsored by Senator Pope, would prohibit expulsion and eliminate most out-of-school suspensions for children from six weeks old to age eight. This bill, led by the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) and Public Education Department (PED), would also provide transparency about the extent of out-of-school suspensions of young children across the state, among different ethnicities, races, and abilities of children, and among English language learners.

Disparities in Expulsion and Suspension

Students in child care and preschool programs are **3x more likely** to experience expulsion or suspension than K-12 students ¹

Native American preschoolers are suspended **1.5x greater** than their share of the population ²

Black preschoolers are **2.5x more likely** to receive one or more suspensions than white students and **2x more likely** to be expelled ³

Preschoolers served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are expelled **2.5x greater** than their share of total preschool population ⁴

When young students are suspended or expelled from school, they are **several times more likely** to experience disciplinary action later in their academic career; drop out or fail out of high school; report feeling disconnected from school; report feeling disconnected from school; and be incarcerated later in life. ⁵

SB 283 will benefit New Mexico children and students

When expulsions or suspensions deny young children access to resources and opportunities for learning and development, it can cause: ⁶

- Poor performance in school (current and future)
- Increased likelihood of future suspensions and expulsions
- Increased family stress
- Negative views of learning and teachers
- Unsafe care environments
- Disparate health outcomes

Supporting Alternative Approaches to Challenging Child Behaviors

The U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) offers extensive research showing the powerful impact of shifting toward evidence-based, preventative practices to address challenging behaviors. ECECD and PED will support implementation of these approaches with additional resources and technical assistance to support educators in schools and early childhood programs with alternative solutions to suspension or expulsion. Examples of these alternatives are:

- **Infant Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Consultation*** - The consultation process involves assisting staff and caregivers to develop attitudes and skills that will help them function more effectively. With new perspective, skills, and strategies, educators can address and solve current problems and future concerns that might arise in supporting the social and emotional health of young children.

- **Trauma-Informed Professional Development*** - Providing trauma-informed and trauma-responsive practices in the professional development system for early childhood professionals serving children six weeks through five years of age.
- **Social and Emotional Learning and Safety (SEALS) +** - Social and Emotional Learning and Safety is an integral part of education and human development. SEALS is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions. (CASEL)

* Included in ECECD FY24 executive budget recommendation

+ Included in PED FY24 executive budget recommendation

NM PED Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Resources:

- [NM PED SEL Framework Document - webnew.ped.state.nm.us](http://webnew.ped.state.nm.us)
- [NM PED SEL Framework and School Self Assessment Rubric - webnew.ped.state.nm.us](http://webnew.ped.state.nm.us)
- [Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning \(CASEL\) - casel.org](http://casel.org)

Sources:

1. [Breaking The Chains 2 The Preschool To Prison Pipeline Epidemic - equaljusticesociety.org](http://equaljusticesociety.org)
2. [New Data Reveal 250 Preschoolers Suspended Expelled Every Day - americanprogress.org](http://americanprogress.org)
3. [Challengingbehavior.org](http://challengingbehavior.org)
4. [Ocrdata.ed.gov](http://ocrdata.ed.gov)
5. [Americanprogress.org](http://americanprogress.org)
6. [Understanding and Eliminating Expulsion in Early Childhood Programs and Reducing Suspension hhs.gov and Expulsion Practices in Early Childhood Settings acf.hhs.gov](http://hhs.gov)



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