

Public Education Department Rule Making



New Graduation requirements create opportunity for students

HB 171, Modernizing Graduation Requirements, has the potential to transform our high schools if educators have the freedom to do their most inspired work with young people.

Educators and Students want engaging experiences

A 2023 - 2024 evaluation of 47 schools participating in Innovation Zones, a state-funded initiative that supports high schools in transforming educational experiences, reflects the following:

- **2,449** students participated in 2,477 internships during the 2023 - 2024 school year, marking a **307%** increase from the previous year
- **70%** of those internships were paid
- **86%** of participating schools had implemented internships
- **45%** had implemented community capstones
- **70%** had finished or were updating a graduate profile

Future Focused Education's findings:

Over the past two years, through Instituto del Puente, Future Focused Education has convened hundreds of community members and educators to hear from young people about their hopes for the future. These conversations have led to policies that reinforce three common needs:

- Learning that is relevant and focused on meaning and purpose
- Meaningful mentorship to help young people contribute to their communities
- Care and concern for young people and their well-being

In addition, there is statewide pent up demand from educators asking for immediate support:

- For the 2024 - 2025 school year, there were over 200 applicants competing for 100 spots in Future Focused Education's Community of Learning paid cohorts that support educators with developing their performance assessment practices, such as capstone projects or Project-Based Learning
- 43 schools, or 20% of all high schools in New Mexico, participate in Educator Community of Learning groups with Future Focused Education

Recommendations:

NMPED Rulemaking for HB 171 should require NMPED to develop a teaching, learning, and assessment framework through administrative guidance documents (manuals, etc.) that delivers on the promise of the new requirements. This framework should include a definition of culturally responsive and sustaining assessment that is codesigned with communities. To accomplish the goals of this definition, NMPED must provide explicit permission and support for local communities to utilize capstone projects, and a clear plan for capacity building support for equitable implementation of culturally responsive and sustaining assessment, statewide.

This fall, we convened students, teachers, administrators, school board members, and community members. Here's what they had to say about Public Education Department Rule Making in schools:

"HB 171 offers the opportunity for more applied learning experiences to take place in our schools -- we know this kind of learning matters to and for our state's young people."

"In order to transform schools, there needs to be a clear anchor between equity and assessment practices. As long as the assessment system remains tied to the status quo, small efforts will be stuck in the transition."

"It could create more flexibility and dynamism, which is needed to meet the needs of a rapidly changing world (including better/closer alignment to workforce and community needs)."