



Behavioral Health Funding for Schools: The State of New Mexico is poised to spend \$100 million on behavioral health reforms in the 2025 legislative session. Future Focused Education applauds and supports the State's effort. However, specific references to young people and public schools are absent from the proposed legislation. We recommend the following:

- Increase the appropriation from \$1.0 million to \$2.0 million in the "Specials" section of House Bill 2. *"2,000,000 for behavioral health career development programs including youth mental health first aid training and behavioral health internships."*
- Include funding for Behavioral Health Infrastructure and Capacity Building within the Senate Bills 1, 2, and 3.
- Include Behavioral Health in the At Risk factor within the funding formula as a strategy to engage vulnerable students.

Sustainable Funding for Paid Internships (HB 528): The legislation has been introduced by Representative Cristina Parajón. It appropriates \$10 million to the Department of Workforce Solutions to create a paid internship fund to be matched by employers. The initiative focuses on providing an ongoing source of funding for schools and employers who have created the necessary conditions for a successful program.

Artificial Intelligence Work Group (HM 2): Introduced by Representatives Gurrola, Garratt, and Baca HM 2 was unanimously passed by the House Education Committee and is headed to the floor for final passage. The memorial initiates a study of education data systems now and in the future. The memorial borrows from the research Future Focused Education has conducted over the past year regarding the fast evolving nature of "student data" and data sovereignty for New Mexico Tribal communities.

Innovation Zones: The continuation of funding currently included in all three budgets (LFC/LESC/EXEC) provides a strong foundation for New Mexico high schools to continue building capacity for the integration of proven approaches like graduate profiles, capstone projects and courses, high-quality Career Technical Education through college and career pathways, work-based learning, and personalized supports.

Future Focused Education supports the LESC's recommendation to provide a \$15M per year appropriation over three years to continue these critical supports to high schools across New Mexico.

