

**Evaluation of Community & Stakeholder Input in
New Mexico Public Education Department Martinez/Yazzie Revised Plan**
Monday, November 10th, 2025

Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation to analyze to what extent the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) Martinez/Yazzie Revised Plan addresses the development and implementation of a meaningful and consistent process to obtaining community and stakeholder input on the NMPED's and school districts' efforts to meet the needs of at-risk students. Additionally, this evaluation will seek to identify to what extent community and stakeholders are provided an active role in shaping education decisions that are student-centered and culturally responsive. This evaluation will primarily concern itself with Goal 4.3a, found in the aforementioned plan.

Literature Review

Across the United States, it is observed that four primary contemporary challenges afflict education policy today; these include (1) standardized curriculum and technology access, (2) a strategic connection between K-12 and higher education, (3) workforce preparation, and (most important for this evaluation) (4) redefining quality education for diverse student populations (ie, students with disabilities, students living in poverty, and students whose first language is not English) (Rinfret et. al, 2021, p. 250-253). Ranked #50 in education in the nation (U.S. News and World Report, n.d.), New Mexico K-12 education has been historically marked by a lack of accountability mechanisms, targeted support and interventions, and systemic and transformative change (Aragon, 2024). Education is often believed to be a tool for social mobility (Rinfret et. al, 2021, p. 299); In relevant research, it is suggested that there is a growing trend of “student voice” movements that center student collaboration in education policy change - this reflects a belief that if students are to one day participate in a democratic society, they must be given the opportunity to experience democracy in their education by being active collaborators in change (Holquist, 2019, p. 22-23).

Additionally, as a result of similar beliefs, Khadija (2022), claims that in education students and parents should be viewed as “primary stakeholders,” teachers and educational and non-educational staff as “internal stakeholders,” government organizations as “vertical stakeholders,” and all other affected actors with a vested interest in schooling as “horizontal stakeholders” (see *Table 1*)(p. 428). Examples in the literature suggest that in education change, students should be considered participants in the process, rather than simple beneficiaries through formal structures that promote student involvement (particularly in school boards)(Bacon & Bloom, 200, p. 1; Hardesty, 2020, p. 8-9). Others, such as Wilhelm et. al (2021), claim that such involvement of students, particularly through a participatory action research model, is important as it simulates and sustains institutional change. From a 2025 report, produced by Transform Education New Mexico (2025), it was learned that youth across the state of New Mexico share similar beliefs; youth have demanded greater involvement in school boards, participatory budgeting practices, and involvement in co-creating student-centered goals (p. 18). While a transformative approach to redefining quality education for diverse student populations, these authors recognize that these approaches demand significant time and resources for training and facilitation (Wilhelm et. al, 2021). Additionally, these

approaches, specifically “student voice efforts” may illustrate to promote homogeneous views rather than diverse ones (Holquist, 2019, p. 281).

<u>Stakeholder Level</u>	<u>Actors</u>
Primary Stakeholders	Students and parents
Internal Stakeholders	Teachers and educational and non-educational staff
Vertical Stakeholders	Government organizations
Horizontal Stakeholders	All other actors with vested interests

Table 1. Stakeholders in Schooling. Adapted from Khadija (2021).

Evaluation Criteria

The criteria for this evaluation is predicated upon an adaptation of nine components and related elements identified from the Plaintiffs’ Joint Non-Compliance Motion and Request for Remedial Action Plan (2024)(see *Table 2*). Components of the Martinez/Yazzie Revised Action Plan (2025) will be evaluated in consideration to what extent they meet these components and elements, in the context of the development and implementation of a meaningful and consistent process to obtaining community and stakeholder input on the NMPED’s and school districts’ efforts to meet the needs of at-risk students. Additional considerations in evaluation will include how materials approach these components, elements, and focus (the development and implementation of a meaningful and consistent process to obtain community and stakeholder input) through an equity lens - assessing the plans approach, policies, programs, and accountability measures.

<u>Nine Components (Adapted)</u>				
[C1] Multicultural and multilingual framework.	[C2] Transparent, cohesive and accountable system.	[C3] Culturally & linguistically responsive curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	[C4] System for recruiting, training, and retaining high-quality teachers.	[C5] Sufficient access and support to technology.
[C6] Adequately staffed system and services.	[C7] Equitable funding system.	[C8] Accountability and enforcement for expenditures	[C9] A Public Education Department (PED) with sufficient capacity.	
<u>Related Elements (Adapted)</u>				
[E1] (Specific)	[E2] (Relevant)	[E3] (Achievable)	[E4] (Measurable)	

Specific actions are listed.	Identification of actor(s) responsible for implementation.	Analysis is included if additional funding will be needed.	Objective success measurements are included.
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Table 2. Action Plan Required Components and Elements. Adapted from Plaintiffs’ Joint Non-Compliance Motion and Request for Remedial Action Plan (2024).

Evaluation

As previously stated, this evaluation is concerned with analyzing Goal 4.3a of the Martinez/Yazzie Revised Action Plan (2025); Goal 4.3a is represented in *Table 3*. From this evaluation, five main conclusions were made; When it comes to the meaningful engagement of community and stakeholders in education transformation, the plan (1) does state which activities will be used to collect input, (2) does mention a vague triennial community review initiative, (3) does not elaborate upon measurable milestones for success (number of listening session, focus groups, or regions served), (4) does not fully specify which actors will be responsible with the execution of data collection efforts, and (5) does not refer to additional funding, if needed, to meet these objectives.

Goal 4.3. Accountability systems reliably assess student outcomes by using culturally relevant metrics, and these systems ensure the assessments drive improvements.

Year 1: Immediate actions through June 30, 2026	Year 2: July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027	Year 3: July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2028
<p>Community-Based Metrics</p> <p>4.3a. Identify additional metrics for student success that more comprehensively address student outcomes through a lens of equity and cultural diversity by facilitating listening sessions and focus groups with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students and families representing historically underserved communities • tribal leaders • educators and school leaders • civil rights and community advocacy groups • workforce, higher education, and early learning partners <p>Responsible: PED, School Districts, Charter Schools, HED, DWS, Legislature, Education Stakeholders, Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations, Civil Rights and Community Advocacy Groups</p> <p>Student Groups Served: Students with Disabilities, English Learners, Native American Students, and Economically Disadvantaged Students</p>	<p>Community-Based Metrics</p> <p>4.3a. Based on community input, and in pilot school districts and charter schools, collect new data such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school climate and belonging surveys • access and participation measures • opportunity-to-learn indicators • postsecondary outcomes • cultural engagement measures <p>Responsible: PED, School Districts, Charter Schools, Legislature, Education Stakeholders, Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations</p> <p>Student Groups Served: Students with Disabilities, English Learners, Native American Students, and Economically Disadvantaged Students</p>	<p>Community-Based Metrics</p> <p>4.3a. Revise the New Mexico consolidated state plan with the US Department of Education to account for new community-based metrics, and expand the data collection pilot statewide. Establish triennial community reviews of the accountability framework.</p> <p>Responsible: PED, School Districts, Charter Schools; Civil Rights and Community Advocacy Groups; Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations</p> <p>Student Groups Served: Students with Disabilities, English Learners, Native American Students, and Economically Disadvantaged</p>

New Mexico Public Education Department. (2025). Martinez/Yazzie Revised Plan. https://web.ped.nm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/NM-Martinez-Yazzie-Action-Plan_11.3.25.pdf

Table 3. Goal 4.3a from the Martinez/Yazzie Revised Action Plan. Sourced from the New Mexico Public Education Department Martinez/Yazzie Revised Plan (2025).

<u>Evaluation of Goals through Related Elements 1 (E1) and 2 (E2)</u>		
<u>Sub-Goals</u>	<u>E1</u>	<u>E2</u>
Year 1: Immediate actions through June 30, 2026	Participants for listening and focus groups are partially-defined; “workforce, higher education, and early learning partners” remains unclear. Research methodology (listening sessions and focus groups) are listed, yet specific instruments are unclear. Lacks specific goals for how many listening sessions or regions will be prioritized.	Actors responsible are partially-defined; “Civil Rights and Community Advocacy Groups” remains unclear. Strong focus on cultural relevance and diversity, but little direct connection to link engagement to student outcome assessment metrics. Unclear which agencies or actors will be responsible for facilitating such engagement activities.
Year 2: July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027	Clearly defines activities intended to be piloted. Does not specify which districts will be considered “pilot school districts and charter schools,” nor how many districts or schools will be participating.	Relevant investigation into opportunity-to-learn indicators. Unclear which agencies or actors will be responsible for conducting opportunity-to-learn investigation.
Year 3: July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2028	Clearly specifies the aim to revise the New Mexico consolidated state plan.	Does not specify which actors will be responsible for data collection efforts and reporting and lacks any reference to specify if data collection will be continuous. However, it does institutionalize community-based metrics.
<u>Evaluation of Goals through Related Elements 3 (E3) and 4 (E4)</u>		
<u>Sub-Goals</u>	<u>E3</u>	<u>E4</u>
Year 1: Immediate actions through June 30, 2026	No additional funding included.	Engagement activities can be measured, yet, there are

		defined success indicators or collection benchmarks.
Year 2: July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027	No additional funding included.	Introduces quantifiable data categories, yet, lacks performance targets to compare (for success)
Year 3: July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2028	No additional funding included.	Provides a time-bound, long-term reporting mechanism. Derives responsibility for objective success measuring from community metrics, yet, unclear which actor will conduct evaluation.

Table 4. Evaluation of Goal 4.3a.

Discussion and Recommendations

As discussed by Rinfret et. al (2021), redefining quality education for diverse students is a challenge many states are faced with (p. 253). Considering the unique context of New Mexico education and the need to redefine quality schooling to meet a sufficient and uniform education for diverse student groups, the Martinez/Yazzie Revised Plan (2025) (1) succeeds at defining detailed activities for obtaining inputs from community members and stakeholders, yet, (2) fails to elaborate on measurements to track progress and success for obtaining community and stakeholder input, (3) fails to elaborate on which actors will be responsible for such data collection and analysis, (4) does not make reference to additional funding needed, if any, to conduct such an analysis, and (most fundamentally) (5) severely undervalues students and community as stakeholders and participants of transformative education change.

The failures or deficiencies listed herein pose prominent concerns and questions: (1) How many community engagement sessions will be conducted?; (2) Who will be responsible for collecting such input during engagement sessions? What mechanism or structure will support responsible actors to interact collaboratively?; (3) Will funding be needed to conduct such engagement sessions meaningfully? Will triennial community reviewers (if community and stakeholders) be compensated for their participation?; (4) How will community and stakeholders meaningfully participate to evaluate the conclusions of these metrics? Will community and stakeholders be given the opportunity during Year 1 and Year 2 to review conclusions made from the data collected? How will community and stakeholders be ensured as a sustainable and continuous process? These questions must be answered to sufficiently provide metrics that are culturally relevant.

At its current state, this plan reflects previous perspectives that have sought the consultation of community and stakeholders to improve school efficiency, rather than seeking their participation to improve the wellbeing and outcomes of students (Khadija, 2022, p. 428-429; Nthontho, 2017). To improve Goal 4.3a, few recommendations have been provided (see Table 5). Outside of the few recommendations provided in Table 5, general recommendations for improvement include (1) providing further specificity (“How many

engagement sessions will be held? What measurable metrics will indicate progress on Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 metrics?”), (2) provide relevant details (“Which actors will be involved in and responsible for collaborating in the collection of input?”), and (3) ensure that funding is attached to this objective (community practice suggests that triennial community reviewers should, at least, be financially compensated for their time and effort).

<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Relevant Source</u>
[1] Provide further detail on “Education Stakeholders.” Consider students and parents as primary stakeholders.	Khadija, 2022, p. 428; Nthontho, 2017.
[2] Identify formal, sustainable structures needed to increase primary stakeholder engagement, rather than temporary consulting bodies that gather triennially. Mandate forward that school boards act to increase the input from students. Promote a participatory-action approach to this objective, as such an approach has evidenced not only improved the schooling environment but also health outcomes and sustainable institutional change for diverse students.	Hardesty, 2020, p. 8-9; Nthontho, 2017; Transform Education New Mexico, 2025, p. 18; Khadija, 2022, p. 428-429; Wilhelm et. al, 2021.

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