

## MEMO

To: All Participants of the 2006 higher education town hall:  
*Today's Students, Tomorrow's Workforce*

From: Garrey Carruthers and Mike DeWitte, Co-Chairs Implementation Team

CC: Heather Balas, NM First

Date: June 7, 2007

**Re: Outcomes from 2007 legislative session regarding higher education**

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As many of you are aware the implementation team started work shortly after the statewide higher education town hall. As a result of those efforts, the team developed specific legislative priorities for the 2007 regular session. Below are the key legislative outcomes and a table detailing the team's efforts.

During the 2007 Regular Session New Mexico lawmakers passed three of the five legislative priorities advanced by the implementation team. These three mark success for all who participated in last year's statewide town hall. Each item was advanced by your implementation team as well as a number of other organizations, volunteers, and policymakers.

- Under the High School Redesign Act (SB 561), sponsored by Senator Cynthia Nava, high school graduation requirements will align with college entrance/placement exams.
- The College Affordability Endowment Fund will benefit from a \$48 million dollar expansion. As a result, students, including those at New Mexico tribal colleges, will have the benefit of increased financial aid for college. The money for the College Affordability Act was included as part of the House and Senate general appropriations bills.
- The Cyber Academy Act (SB209/HB201), sponsored by Senator Nava and Representative Rick Miera, establishes statewide eLearning programs available to all of the state's public school districts. HB002 provided \$7.6 million dollars to support the Cyber Academy Act and other goals of IDEAL-NM (Innovative Digital Education and Learning in New Mexico). IDEAL-NM provides K-12, Higher Education, and Government Agencies with an upgraded eLearning delivery mechanism, and will establish sustainable statewide eLearning support services. These services make possible the Cyber Academy and many beneficial eLearning programs for the students and employees in New Mexico.

The chart on the next page details the five legislative priorities that evolved from TH34 consensus recommendations.

Proposed Legislative Initiative	Description	Key Supporters	Proposed Legislation	Outcomes
<p><b>Align high school graduation requirements with college placement exams.</b></p>	<p>When New Mexico students complete high school, one would expect that their graduation requirements match up with the entrance expectations of New Mexico colleges. That is not the case, as town hall participants repeatedly pointed out. Currently New Mexico experiences 49% remediation of students entering colleges.</p> <p>To address this issue, the Town Hall 34 Implementation Team supported the recommendation of the HED/PED Alignment Task Force to eliminate the NM High School Competency Exam, which is not standards-based and is normed at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Instead, the Implementation Team recommended that funds be allocated for a new or proprietary exam or extending the use of the New Mexico Standards Based Assessment (NMSBA). The selected exam will serve both to meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind and to assess college readiness. It will also provide the information necessary to identify the students in need of remediation while in high school. <b>The bill passed.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HED/PED Alignment Task Force</li> <li>• ACI</li> <li>• NM Business Roundtable for Educational Excellence (NMBREE)</li> </ul>	<p><b>SB211/HB68</b> High School Reform Act Sponsored by Senator Cynthia Nava and Representative Rick Miera</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SB211 Passed, signed by Governor Richardson</li> </ul>
<p><b>Provide more funding for the College Affordability Act.</b></p>	<p>The town hall participants supported increased financial aid for students.</p> <p>The College Affordability Act was established in 2005 to encourage New Mexico students with financial need, who do not qualify for other state grants or scholarships, to attend and complete educational programs at a New Mexico public college or university. In 2006, the Act was funded in the amount of \$49 million toward an endowment goal of \$250 million. At its current level, the fund provides up to \$1,000 per semester, enabling a minimum of 1,000 needy students to receive the award. However, approximately 11,500 New Mexicans are eligible. The Town Hall 34 Implementation Team encouraged the legislature to allocate additional dollars to the existing College Affordability Act in the amount of \$50 million. <b>Funds of \$48M were approved.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACI</li> <li>• HED</li> <li>• NMBREE</li> </ul>	<p><b>SB2/HB2</b> General Appropriations Act of 2007 Sponsored by Senator John Arthur Smith and Representative Kiki Saavedra</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HB2 Passed, signed by Governor Richardson</li> </ul>

Proposed Legislative Initiative	Description	Key Supporters	Proposed Legislation	Outcomes
Fund education technology through IDEAL-NM	<p>Town hall participants strongly supported increased use of technology in education as well as professional development for teachers.</p> <p>As a result, the implementation team supported the IDEAL-NM initiative to create a statewide eLearning support program for students and employees in New Mexico. The bill called for the creation of Cyber Academy services for middle and high school students and bring rural schools access to eLearning courses. The bill also supported new methods for dual credit delivery to help address academic alignment between high school and higher education. It also provided for professional development for teachers to minimize expensive travel requirements. <b>The bill passed.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PED</li> <li>• HED</li> <li>• The NM Office of the Chief Information Officer</li> <li>• The Laptop Learning Initiative</li> <li>• NMBREE</li> </ul>	<p><b>SB209/HB201</b> Cyber Academy Act Sponsored by Senator Cynthia Nava and Representative Rick Miera</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SB209/HB201 Passed, signed by Governor Richardson</li> </ul>
Fund a public awareness campaign on the value of college.	<p>This multi-faceted campaign would have created a sense of urgency about completing high school and entering college – be that a university, community college, or trade school. Town Hall participants believed that such a campaign will help parents and students realize the practical benefits of college.</p> <p>The implementation team recommended funding for a public awareness campaign, run through the state Higher Education Department, which would have targeted people of all ages about continuing their education. It would likely have included television, radio, movie theater, and printed promotions. A \$3 million appropriation was sought from the legislature. <b>It did not pass.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HED</li> <li>• College Success Network</li> <li>• GEAR UP</li> <li>• ENLACE</li> <li>• NM Student Loans</li> <li>• NM MESA</li> </ul>	<p><b>SB 579</b> Promote the Value of College Sponsored by Senator Cynthia Nava</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passed the Senate Education Committee</li> <li>• Tabled in the Senate Finance Committee</li> </ul>
Fund a study to project future job growth in NM so students can make informed choices.	<p>Town hall participants recognized that New Mexico must provide better information to prospective employers on specific worker availability and to job seekers, students and educators on career opportunities.</p> <p>To address this problem the implementation team recommended developing a workforce forecast model, which would have matched the projected future demand for workers with the expected number of job seekers from educational programs and other sources. The project would have built on existing forecast model data and incorporated the WorkKeys skill assessment system. <b>It did not pass.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NM Office of Workforce Training And Development</li> <li>• NMBREE</li> <li>• HED</li> </ul>	<p>Do not believe that this is the referenced bill. Check with Lois Johnson.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our section of this bill did not move past the Senate Education Committee</li> </ul>