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ECECD Executive Budget Recommendation Builds on Early Successes of Department

SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham’s executive budget recommendation for the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) in Fiscal Year 2023 includes \$195 million in general fund spending and \$30 million from the Early Childhood Trust Fund to build upon the administration’s successes in establishing a world-class prenatal-to-age-five system of programs and services available to all New Mexicans. This funding is vital to the department’s key strategic priorities to grow investments, advance a diverse, well-compensated, and credentialed workforce; increase quality and access; achieve equity; and enhance authentic collaboration.

“New Mexico leads the nation in innovation and investment in early education and care,” said Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham. “This budget supports a range of programs and services that continue to build on the amazing progress the new Early Childhood Education and Care department has already made in its first 18 months, supporting the diverse educational, developmental, health, and nutritional needs of young children in every corner of our state.”

“New Mexican families deserve a high quality, holistic, and aligned system of early childhood programs and services,” said ECECD Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky. “This budget will help us deliver for New Mexico families, ensuring that they have the supports, programs, and resources they need to thrive.”

The executive budget recommendation has targeted strategic investments toward a comprehensive early childhood system in New Mexico, most of which are identified in ECECD’s Four-Year Finance Plan 2023-2026, published in November 2021. The proposed budget would allocate an additional \$3.3 million from the general fund over the current spending level, including increased support for PreK, child care assistance, and early intervention services.

Since ECECD’s inception in July 2020, the department has made significant investments across the state’s early childhood system to boost PreK enrollment, broaden home visiting services, expand child care assistance, increase enrollment in the wage supplement and early childhood scholarship programs, and connect with families through its award-winning Moments Together public education campaign.

To continue to build on the successful delivery of the department's programs, the executive budget recommendation includes funding for the following initiatives, with their expected outcomes:

- \$5.1 million for New Mexico PreK will enhance and expand opportunities for approximately 735 preschool age children and ensure they enter kindergarten ready to succeed
- \$2 million will increase access to evidence-based, Medicaid funded home visiting services for 800 New Mexico families that will enhance birth outcomes, improve parenting practices, and strengthen their connections to community resources
- \$1.5 million will expand access to nutritious meals for thousands of New Mexico students through the expansion of the summer and afterschool nutrition program and \$300,000 will support implementation of NM Grown in 56 preschools and increase by 3,456 the number of children exposed to healthy foods and promote positive change in parent behavior
- \$1.475 million will build on the partnership between ECECD and the state's 23 sovereign nations and ensure support for Tribal leadership in expanding culturally and linguistically relevant prenatal to five early childhood programs in their communities and \$100,000 will support one full-time equivalent (FTE) employee that will support sovereign nations in applying for early childhood grants and build capacity around grants management and development
- \$1 million will provide pay parity for 100 community based PreK teachers
- \$1 million for Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation will support the social and emotional development of thousands of babies, infants and toddlers and the educators who care for and educate them
- \$766,700 for Regional Literacy Coaches will enhance early literacy teaching practices in 443 New Mexico PreK classrooms, ensuring that 7,000 PreK students are kindergarten ready
- \$64,073 for a Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act (CARA) navigator who will help connect families with evidence-based early childhood services, \$300,000 for data services to improve data linkages that will inform policies and practices, and \$200,000 will support trauma responsive training for 1,000 home visitors and early intervention staff, enhancing their effectiveness in serving CARA families.

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The New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) launched in 2020, one of only four cabinet level agencies nationwide that consolidated all early childhood agencies under one roof. ECECD's mission is to optimize the health, development, education, and well being of babies, toddlers, and preschoolers through a family-driven, equitable, community-based system of programs and services. Learn more about how ECECD supports children, families, and the early childhood professionals that serve our communities at nmececd.org. On Facebook and Twitter as [@NewMexicoECECD](https://www.facebook.com/NewMexicoECECD).