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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Early Childhood Education and Care Department Secretary Presents FY23 Budget Request to Legislative Finance Committee**

*Proposed budget seeks to expand access to programs and services, increase quality supports, and strengthen partnerships across New Mexico*

SANTA FE — Today, the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) presented a budget request for approximately \$201.7 million from general funds and Early Childhood Trust funds for Fiscal Year 2023 during testimony before the Legislative Finance Committee. The FY23 budget will continue advancing ECECD’s efforts to build a world class prenatal to age five system of programs and services by investing in the agency’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.

“Over the last year, ECECD has stabilized the child care industry, supported the early childhood workforce, expanded and enhanced home visiting and early intervention services, delivered nutritious meals to thousands of children, built collaborative relationships with Indigenous communities, and made important strides towards creating a cradle-to-career education system in partnership with our sister agencies,” said ECECD Cabinet Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky. “But more work remains to be done. We need sustained, strategic, and significant investments to scale our programs to reach all families and young children and assure that our services, wherever offered, are culturally and linguistically responsive, trauma responsive, and are successfully stimulating children’s development, and are partnering with families.”

Initiatives supported by the ECECD FY23 budget include:

- Continued expansion of Early PreK and full-day PreK, working towards Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham’s goal of universal PreK. The budget also calls for an additional \$4 million toward the PreK parity program to ensure that teachers working in the private sector with comparable credentials and experience as their public education counterparts receive comparable salaries
- Creation of a Tribal Investment Fund to strengthen educational supports, build government-to-government relationships, and foster mutual trust, understanding, and partnerships that respect tribal sovereignty
- Partnering with state agencies to support the Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act (CARA) efforts to ensure our most vulnerable families and their babies, enhanced literacy supports in PreK to ensure all students enter Kindergarten with the skills they need to succeed, and expanded participation in the Farm to School initiative and At-Risk meal program.
- Increased access to home visiting and infant early childhood mental health consultation

“We continue to seek funding to strengthen our early childhood programming for the community,” said Pueblo of Nambe Governor Phillip A. Perez. “We have a new Early Childhood Learning Center where we teach about the traditions of Nambe and the Tewa language – this Tribal Investment Fund will do more than just teach our children, it will preserve our people.”

"Secretary Groginsky has spent time engaging teachers, parents, and providers from our communities," said Matthew Henderson, Executive Director of the OLÉ Education Fund. "Her budget request reflects our need to provide professional, livable wages to teachers; funding for advanced professional development; and support for culturally appropriate and multilingual education."

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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](http://nmececd.org). On Facebook and Twitter as [@NewMexicoECECD](https://twitter.com/NewMexicoECECD).*