

EDUCATORS RISING NEW MEXICO TASKFORCE

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Educators Rising New Mexico, established nearly a decade ago to address the state's teacher shortage in key fields, is set to expand its **Grow Your Own (GYO) teacher preparation strategy**. With support from PDK International and collaborative relationships with the New Mexico Public Education Department, partnering higher education institutions, and local districts, Educators Rising New Mexico fosters and sustains educators in bilingual multicultural education programs, motivating them to persist in teaching within **Bilingual Multicultural Education Programs (BMEPs)**.

BMEPs are designed to support students to become bilingual and biliterate in English and a second language, including Spanish or a Native American language and to meet state academic content standards. The success of these initiatives hinges on GYO teacher preparation, a strategy necessitating collaboration among school districts, institutions of higher education, the New Mexico Public Education Department, and the state's existing bi-multilingual and Indigenous language communities.

In this collection of papers (linked below), made possible as part of an 18-month planning grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and through the work of the New Mexico Educators Rising Taskforce, the necessity of this work in New Mexico is highlighted and recommendations are provided for establishing pathways for bi-multilingual and Indigenous students to become teachers in their own communities.

Cultivating Educators of New Mexico: A Grow Your Own (GYO) Strategy

The [first paper](#) in the series outlines the necessity for bilingual education initiatives and focuses on creating comprehensive bilingual pathways to teaching.

- Over 1,000 students have successfully participated in the program.
- Expansion aims to better accommodate bi-multilingual learners, aligning with the state's linguistic and cultural diversity.
- New Mexico, despite struggles, is a national model for bilingual education.
- Recent legal rulings emphasize the obligation to offer culturally and linguistically relevant education.
- EdRising New Mexico is nurturing a generation of bilingual teachers to positively impact the educational landscape in New Mexico.

Building from Within: Considerations for Establishing a Pathway for Indigenous Educators

The [second paper](#) highlights the work preserving Jemez language and culture in New Mexico.

- “Grow Your Own” immersion model for fluent Jemez-speaking educators is helping students connect with the culture and language.
- Success has been rooted in:
 - Flexible external agencies needed.
 - Removal of institutional practices to affirm student cultures through Indigenous education in New Mexico.
 - Development of policies aligning with community values.
- Indigenous teachers and support from the community has resulted in the development of critical networks, collaboration, and strong relationships with stakeholders.



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Key Recommendations:

1. Affirm the value of bilingual education and bilingual teachers in New Mexico.
2. Restructure the Educators Rising model to better support bi-multilingual and Indigenous learners.
3. Engage all stakeholders and communities to understand how to allocate funding prioritizing bilingual education.
4. Align state and regional policies and priorities to better support bilingual GYO pathways.
5. Create dual-credit courses that align to Bilingual Educators Rising programming.

Teachers in the Field: Testimonios of New Mexican Multilingual Educators

The [third paper](#) narrates experiences of three bilingual educators associated with Educators Rising, highlighting the pivotal role that well-trained bilingual educators can play in the classroom and in the community.

Key Quotes from Bilingual Educators		
<p>Dr. Berlinda Begay: Bilingual Multicultural Education Coordinator Intercultural & Community Outreach Consolidated Schools</p>	<p>Maria Gomez: Hatch Valley Bilingual Educator Rising Lead Teacher</p>	<p>Dr. Elisabeth Valenzuela: Assistant Professor of Bilingual/ TESOL Education and Co-Advisor of Educators Rising Collegiate Chapter Rio Rancho New Mexico Highlands University</p>
<p>At my previous school, Rock Point, students excelled academically because their classes included their language and cultural identity. It was embedded into the curriculum. It took a year to become adjusted to the environment at my prep school, but once I learned survival skills, my academic challenges became easier. It took me and my resilience to ensure that I would not sink. I continued to remind myself that I would not be broken. I found ways to implement my Navajo prayers and smudging by using an iron, burning cedar and going out in the early mornings to make my prayers.</p>	<p>As an English language learner, I had my struggles. When I was in kindergarten, I clearly remember I had a teacher who would get mad at me for speaking to my classmates in Spanish. However, I didn't do it intentionally; it was hard for me to communicate with others in English. Not being fluent in English made me feel insecure about myself. I was afraid to speak up in class and I would second-guess myself. I remember I was afraid to ask to go to the restroom because I didn't know how to say it in English. It was terrifying! No child should experience that kind of trauma.</p>	<p>My schooling experience resembles that of many bilingual students, whose bilingualism is not valued or acknowledged and often is seen, framed, and evaluated through a deficit perspective. Throughout my elementary and middle school years, I was constantly reminded that my reading level was not at grade level — this is the reason why I was placed in the Title 1 reading program until sixth grade. What my teachers and the school system never acknowledged or understood is how I leveraged my bilingualism, cultural ways of knowing, and literacy practices to learn what was taught in school.</p>

New Mexican Students are New Mexico's Next Teachers – Pathways and Supports for Bilingual and Native Youth

The **fourth and final papers** provide a [2 year](#) and [4 year](#) guide for youth in the state who are interested in pursuing bilingual education careers.

- Outlines pathways in multiple languages for pursuing a career as a bilingual educator in New Mexico.
- Guides youth on educational programs, supports, funding, and licensure.

