PASS HB 371 - Instructional Support Student Loan Repayment
Sponsors: Representatives Thomson, Jaramillo, Cates, Trujillo, Ferrary

FACTS

Behavioral health, mental health, and social services are key components of a basic sufficient education.

New Mexico has a dire shortage of instructional support providers (ISPs) who deliver these critical services. A 2022 statewide assessment of available social services for students commissioned by the PED revealed how great the need is.[1]


Out of the school districts and charter schools surveyed:

- 29% lack a school counselor;
- 84% lack a mental health therapist;
- 61% have one or fewer full-time social workers, and 39% do not employ a social worker at all;
- 81% do not employ a psychologist, and none employ a psychiatrist; and
- 60% lack providers within 1-hour drive of the district.

HB 371 will help recruit ISPs to public schools and retain those already there. The bill will:

- Amend the Teacher Loan Repayment Act to expand program eligibility to ISPs.
- Provide ISPs with up to $6,000 per year towards their student loans, like teachers.
- Require ISPs who receive loan repayments to work in a public school for 2-years.
- Prioritize eligibility to those ISPs working in high-need areas, like teachers.

Students who receive these services in school experience increased stability, improved attendance, stronger engagement with learning, reduced disciplinary problems, and increased academic success and graduation rates.

Transform Education NM is a coalition of education, tribal and community leaders advancing a new vision for our public education system in New Mexico. For more information, visit transformededucationnm.org.