New Mexico Cyber Academy Plan

Executive Sponsors:

New Mexico Public Education Department
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New Mexico Higher Education Department
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September 14, 2007
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Vision

The vision of the New Mexico Cyber Academy, in partnership with the NM Public Education Department and NM Higher Education Department, telecommunications networks, and other state agencies is to provide equitable access to educational opportunities for all New Mexico students.

Introduction

In 2005, Governor Bill Richardson announced the comprehensive Making Schools Work initiative that combines strategies to align education from Pre-K through 20, increase rigor and relevance in curriculum, boost the number of highly qualified teachers, create 21st century classrooms, and close the achievement gap. The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED), the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED), other partners, and the Making Schools Work initiative will provide educational leadership, technical assistance, and quality assurance to improve student performance and close the achievement gap through a statewide eLearning system.

This planning document outlines processes to implement three goals derived from Making Schools Work and legislation. The three goals are:

1. to implement a statewide eLearning system
2. to create a state-led Cyber Academy
3. to create a statewide eLearning service center

During the 2007 Legislative session, Senate Bill 209, the Statewide Cyber Academy Act passed establishing the New Mexico Cyber Academy. In addition to providing the scaffolding for the New Mexico Cyber Academy, the legislation also designated the NMPED with the responsibility to carry out the rules and provisions of the Statewide Cyber Academy Act. This planning document provides the basis under which the New Mexico Cyber Academy will be initiated, operated and governed in compliance with the Statewide Cyber Academy Act and the Distance Education Rule.

The NMPED will establish the New Mexico Cyber Academy to facilitate the state’s goals for Making Schools Work and offer a statewide service that gives all New Mexico students access to courses taught by highly qualified teachers. All students including those enrolled in public school district programs, state supported public, charter, homebound, and nonpublic schools, juvenile detention facilities, and long-term care and
rehabilitation centers are eligible to enroll in eLearning course(s) (Statewide Cyber Academy Act, 2007, SB 209).

The first priority will be delivery of eLearning courses for credit to secondary students. Enrollment priority will be given to students who have the greatest need because of geographic location or circumstances where a school district may have difficulty delivering essential course instruction due to financial restraints or lack of highly qualified teachers. Priority will go to Regional Education Cooperatives 3, 8, and 9 (Statewide Cyber Academy Act, 2007, SB 209). Some students may have a need for coursework to graduation and/or wish to take higher level or advanced course work. The New Mexico Cyber Academy will increase student course choices.

Via eLearning courses, the New Mexico Cyber Academy will offer professional development to teachers, instructional support personnel, school administrators, and other school related staff.

This planning document will undergo changes and expand as the New Mexico Cyber Academy matures.
Integrated Program Context and Structure

In 2007, the New Mexico legislature appropriated $7.5M to implement “Innovative Digital Education and Learning- New Mexico” (IDEAL-NM) and the Cyber Academy Act. The three main goals listed in the introduction are listed below with related sub-goals.

1. To implement a statewide eLearning system by:
   a. Initiating a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a learning management system (LMS) for use by K-12, higher education, and state agencies.
   c. Establishing statewide learning management system/Web Conference hosting center(s) with Service Level Agreements between colleges, universities, school districts, and state agencies.

2. To create a state-led Cyber Academy to:
   a. Utilize the statewide learning system and web conferencing systems to deliver quality eLearning courses to K-12 students (initially focused on grades 9-12 & rural schools) and to deliver teacher and staff professional development.
   b. Build a statewide eLearning model with long-term sustainability and scaleable to a large number of learners (students). The model will be developed in partnership with local schools, emphasizing collaboration rather than competition.
   c. Build New Mexico’s own eLearning capacity and skills based on national best practices. This includes developing quality eLearning courses for which NM will hold intellectual property rights. This also includes developing quality teachers who are licensed to teach in New Mexico. (primary strategy)
   d. Engage vendor partners for online courses, teachers, and unique turn-key solutions for specialized needs. (secondary strategy)
   e. Develop statewide Cyber Academy services using minimal staffing as part of the statewide eLearning Service Center.
   f. Align with requirements of 2007 Cyber Academy Act.
   g. Open at the projected timeline of fall, 2008.

3. To create a statewide eLearning service center to include:
   a. Help Desk services with technical support for use of statewide learning management system (LMS) and web conferencing systems. Also oversee hosting service contracts, and front-line Cyber Academy support.
   b. Web-based portal with targeted online services related to eLearning courses/programs for K-12, higher education, and state agencies.
c. Administration for the statewide Cyber Academy (grades 9-12) including hiring teachers, working with local schools, and participation in program assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>FY08 Request</th>
<th>HB2</th>
<th>Gen Fund</th>
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<tr>
<td>eLearning Program Start-Up</td>
<td>$8,502</td>
<td>$6,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Non-Recurring)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment, Software, Materials</td>
<td>$8,206</td>
<td>$6,208</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Contractual Services (IV&amp;V @ 3%)</td>
<td>$296</td>
<td>$192</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$8,502</td>
<td>$6,400</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NM Cyber Academy Start Up (PED Recurring)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Program Administration</td>
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<td>Professional Development</td>
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<td>Program/Course Evaluation</td>
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<td>$20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RECs (3,8,9)</td>
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<td>$120</td>
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<td>Other Prof/Curr Development</td>
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<td>Service Center Start-Up (HED Recurring)</td>
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<td>Higher Ed/Govt DE Director</td>
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<td>Helpdesk Support Staff (3)</td>
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<td>IT Services, Maintenance Costs</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>$2,247</td>
<td>$1,170</td>
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<td>Year 1 TOTAL</td>
<td>$10,749</td>
<td>$7,570</td>
<td>$7,569</td>
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</table>

Table 1. Integrated Program Implementation and Operations Budget in $K (PED Budget component highlighted yellow)

The program will initially focus on the establishment of a statewide Cyber Academy that will allow all public middle and high schools to acquire eLearning courses for their students, with initial consideration for rural districts. The Cyber Academy will grow in scale to be a statewide program by leveraging existing examples nationwide, as well as the experience of a number of existing localized eLearning initiatives already operating in the state. These examples include multi-district collaborations in various areas of the state, the Rio Rancho Cyber Academy and Albuquerque Public Schools distance education program. Later phases will roll out eLearning services focused on higher education, workforce development, and state agencies that provide professional development. Higher education and state agencies will have an immediate opportunity
to take advantage of the enterprise eLearning tools and technical support provided through IDEAL-NM.

**Figure 1.** Cyber Academy Implementation – Projected Timeline

Program Structure: Figure 2. shows the organizational structure of the statewide eLearning Service Center implemented through the Innovative Digital Education and Learning in New Mexico (IDEAL-NM) initiative. The Executive Director provides overall leadership and should be positioned to support eLearning initiatives in higher education, public education, and state agencies. The Executive Director will coordinate a variety of resources aligned from various sources to support eLearning initiatives. The NM Learning Network Advisory Board will provide input to the Executive Director of the eLearning Services Center, the NM Higher Education Secretary and the NM Public Education Secretary. The Advisory Board will be made up of representatives from all the major eLearning stakeholder groups in New Mexico. This includes eLearning professionals and educational leaders from education, government agencies, and industry.
As an outcome of the IDEAL-NM project, the Service Center will operate under the New Mexico Learning Network Executive Director. The Service Center will provide students with a support phone number and one-stop for multi-level tiered help desk services. The timeline and strategy for the New Mexico Cyber Academy (refer to Figure 1.) are:

**Establish facility, August 2007:** The Rio Rancho Cyber Academy (RRCA) in the Rio Rancho school district was selected as the Service Center location. A facilities agreement between the Rio Rancho school district and PED will be solidified for occupancy.

**Executive Staffing, September 2007:** Staffing the New Mexico Learning Network Executive Director, eLearning Services Director, and New Mexico Cyber Academy Director positions will be completed by mid October 2007.

**Helpdesk Staffing, November 2007:** Helpdesk staffing will be the responsibility of the New Mexico Learning Network Executive Director. The expectation is that helpdesk staff will be hired by mid November 2007 and before helpdesk software can be procured. Helpdesk staff will assist in the evaluation of helpdesk software options.
Functioning Helpdesk, December 2007: The New Mexico Learning Network Executive Director will be responsible for helpdesk software. It is expected that helpdesk software will be procured, helpdesk staff trained, and operational by the end of December 2007, to support the delivery of Spring ‘08 eCourses.

Regional Educational Cooperatives: The Regional Education Cooperatives REC 3, REC 8, and REC 9, are in the process of entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the New Mexico Cyber Academy which will define their scope of work. Each REC is to receive $40K (as specified in the program budget section above) to provide first level (phone and online) support for training and technical training. Each REC will be assigned districts to support and they will work closely with the NM Service Center.

Technology Delivery: A statewide procurement and implementation of LMS and Web Conferencing software will be provided as a deliverable from the IDEAL-NM project. From one to three data centers (Institutions of higher learning) will be established to serve as hosting sites for the software technology infrastructure. The institutions already have some form of eLearning and are well equipped to support the state with this technology. In exchange for their support as a hosting site, the institutions will be able to utilize the state licensing for their own use. These savings will be used to support hosting services.

The IDEAL-NM project strategy to deliver technology and provide one point of accessibility is:

a) **LMS Software Procurement, October, 2007.** Beginning July 1, 2007, the project manager will finalize the LMS RFP, establish an evaluation committee, and through a state RFP process, procure a statewide LMS by October 15, 2007.

b) **Web Conferencing Software Procurement, December, 2007.** Beginning October, 2007, the project manager will finalize the Web Conferencing RFP, establish an evaluation committee, and through a state RFP process, procure a statewide Web Conferencing system by December 25, 2007.

c) **Enhance New Mexico Cyber Academy Web Portal, February, 2008.** Beginning September, 2007 the New Mexico Learning Network will contract with the University of New Mexico to enhance the current New Mexico Cyber Academy Web Portal from which there will be a one-stop-shop for enrolling in eCourses. Expectations for February 2008 are to improve visual design, navigation, and site searching, with further development of information pages, and allow for linking to New Mexico Cyber Academy programs, schedules, and information. Students will be able to contact their appropriate counselor for help
with registration for courses. Improvements to content provider functionality will include improving course/program upload, maintenance capability and extending this capability to K-12 and government agencies. Although the portal will allow for limited functionality for registration and enrollment for advisors, additional “how to” documents, useful links, and documentation will be made available to teachers and students.

d) Implement LMS and Web Conferencing Software at Data Center(s), June 2008. Beginning January 2008, an implementation plan will be established. At minimum, one institution of higher education will be selected to install a statewide instance of LMS and Web Conferencing software to support the state. We project a six-month effort to allow enough time for hardware procurement, software installation and testing. Our goal is one fully functional data center by June 2, 2008. Until we acquire the LMS software solution, we cannot determine a configuration of one data center or multiple data centers (post-secondary institutions) to support the state.

Records Management

Student records will be provided to the local school districts by the New Mexico Cyber Academy. The New Mexico Cyber Academy will flow grades through the local districts and districts will provide the credit and transcript to the student/family.

Providing Qualified Teachers and Instructional Support Personnel:

a) The NMPED will contract teacher services via Memorandum of Understanding with the host district and determine a district to facilitate employment.
b) The New Mexico Public Education Department will license all teachers providing K-12 services.
c) All teachers providing K-12 services will be highly qualified in their subject area according to the federal requirements of the No Child Left Behind Law.
d) All teachers will possess skills and proper temperament for online teaching and learning.
e) K-12 teachers will be required to participate in professional development to be eligible to teach at the New Mexico Cyber Academy.
f) All Instructional Support personnel will have a minimum of a 2-year Associates Degree.
g) All Instructional Support personnel will be required to receive training to support eLearning.
Professional Development

New Mexico Cyber Academy Teachers and Instructional Support personnel will receive training in a “train-the-trainer” environment. Many school districts are equipped with teachers who are involved with eCourse offerings. However, all teachers applying to become a New Mexico Cyber Academy teacher will be trained according to the standards and expectations of the New Mexico Cyber Academy. As the pool of qualified teachers increases, the train-the-trainer program will expand.

The RETA program and New Mexico Colleges and Universities already have experience with developing and/or providing professional development for eLearning. The REC’s will train and support the K-12 teachers and Instructional Support staff.

The professional development curriculum for the first cohort of thirty two New Mexico Cyber Academy teachers, with seven designated as teacher trainers will consist of 44 hours of training as specified below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Description</th>
<th>Number of Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-day face-to-face orientation</td>
<td>14 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-week eCourse (Facilitation of eLearning)</td>
<td>24 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued participation in professional development in an online environment</td>
<td>6 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher Preparation

1. Develop skills to demonstrate academic preparation.
   a. Determine if the teacher meets the state professional teaching standards or has academic credentials in the field in which they are teaching.
   b. Provide evidence that they have credentials in the field of study to be taught.
   c. Develop an understanding of the content of the subject to be taught and understand how to teach the content to students.
   d. Update academic knowledge and skills
   e. Develop an awareness of the academic entities providing curricula and program oversight.

2. Develop knowledge to demonstrate prerequisite technology skills.
   a. Locate and adapt content with appropriate software to enhance student interactivity.
b. Use Internet browsers, e-mail applications and define online etiquette. Explore acceptable use policies and define their appropriate use with students.

c. Use different means of communicating online and define best practice for each method of communication.

d. Troubleshoot typical, software and hardware problems.

e. List appropriate publications and opportunities to stay current with emerging technologies

3. Demonstrate skills within an eCourse.
   a. Experience a variety of functioning eCourses
   b. Experience eLearning from the perspective of a student; experience how learning strategies adapted for multiple paths to mastery of course objectives are delivered in an eCourse.
   c. Modify and add content and assessment within an eLearning module.
   d. Incorporate subject-specific and developmentally appropriate software and digital products in an eLearning module where appropriate.
   e. Utilize synchronous and asynchronous tools within an eCourse.
   f. State minimum technology requirements for an eCourse and describe different sources of technical help.

Knowledge and Delivery

1. Develop knowledge to address the value of components of the introductory portion of an eCourse.
   a) Define the critical components of a course syllabus.
   b) Determine how to communicate with all individuals providing support to eCourses.
   c) Experience research that defines the impact of instructor-student, student-content and student-student introductions on the degree of engagement and to the process of community building; determine ways to structure introductions.
   d) Define personal and professional expectations for written and verbal communications

2. Demonstrate ability to locate or create, place and use introductory materials in an eCourse
   a) Recognize elements of an eCourse that require navigation instructions and define ways to present navigational instruction; add navigational materials.
   b) Create or locate and add introduction of self and course structure and components in an appropriate location.
   c) Create and add a mechanism for students to introduce themselves.
e) Create and add your expectations of student conduct in written and verbal communications.
f) Define and add institutional technical support information
g) Locate and evaluate the consistency of course requirements and course objectives.

3. Develop knowledge of best practice in terms of adapting and presenting content in an eCourse.
   a) Evaluate content in terms of how it reflects multicultural education and whether it is accurate, current and free of bias.
   b) Experience ways to structure learning in terms of concepts and skills that students will retain over time.
   c) Evaluate content in terms of readability levels, written language assignments and mathematical requirements that are appropriate for the course objectives, student need and method of delivery.
   d) Evaluate current research and practice on teaching strategies.
   e) Evaluate content presented on the web in terms of usability and accessibility.

4. Develop knowledge of best practice in terms of defining and evaluating assessment strategies.
   a) Experience different assessment strategies that are designed to support different types of learning objectives and reflect validity of content.
   b) Experience methods of constructing formative and summative assessments for use in the online environment.

5. Demonstrate knowledge of best practices in providing grading information.
   a) Experience methods of constructing grading policies and rubrics that appeal to presentation and ease of use in an online environment.
   b) Experience methods of maintaining assessment and grading feedback in course delivery systems within the framework of reporting grades.
   c) Evaluate assessment methods in terms of the ability to provide frequent and timely feedback on student work and progress.
Federal No Child Left Behind Act, The Indian Education Act, Individuals with Disabilities Act, Bilingual Education and New Mexico State Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards

**No Child Left Behind Federal Compliance:** The NM Cyber Academy will comply with the core goals of NCLB. These are:

- Increase Accountability for Student Performance: States, districts and schools that improve achievement will be rewarded. Failure will be sanctioned. Parents will know how well their child is learning, and that schools are held accountable for their effectiveness with annual state reading and math assessments in grades 3-8.

- Focus on What Works: Federal dollars will be spent on effective, research based programs and practices. Funds will be targeted to improve schools and enhance teacher quality.

- Reduce Bureaucracy and Increase Flexibility: Additional flexibility will be provided to states and school districts, and flexible funding will be increased at the local level. The New Mexico Cyber Academy will reduce the difficulty that non-traditional students access high quality public education resources.

- Empower Parents: Parents will have more information about the quality of their Childs school. Students in persistently low-performing schools will be given choices.

**The Indian Education Act**

The NM Cyber Academy will follow provisions of the Indian Education Act and the staff will work to recruit and increase the number of Native American students enrolled in the NM Cyber Academy.

**Bilingual Education**

English Language Learners will be provided necessary assistance to study in the NM Cyber Academy. Decisions about level of assistance will be determined by the local district and state mandated tests.

**Special Education**
The Public Education Department will provide oversight for special education services and recommendations through the Individual Education Plan process. Student IEP’s will be administered by the local school district and the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team. Accommodations for students enrolling in supplemental eLearning courses will be made according to the student IEP. Assistive technology to provide access to students with exceptional needs is purchased by the local district.

New Mexico Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards

New Mexico Cyber Academy will assure that all students are instructed by highly qualified teachers using standards based instructional methods. Evidence of standards based instruction will be demonstrated through lesson plans and administrative evaluative tools. All eCourses will be aligned with the NM Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards.

Curriculum Development and Course Delivery Methods

The NM Cyber Academy will develop high quality courses delivered by highly qualified teachers. By developing our own courses, the state and districts will avoid yearly fees of online course providers. This approach also ensures that NM Content Standards with Benchmarks are met and that the specific learning needs of NM students are addressed.

New Mexico educational leadership explored relationships with other state-run online programs to develop and share content, resources, and best practices. Insight from these partnerships will continue to help guide the evolution of the New Mexico Cyber Academy.

Universities and colleges from around the state are developing courses for high school students and also facilitating the professional development of online teachers. Many of these higher education institutions have online programs offered to their students. Additionally, teaching certification programs from across the state are starting to develop the skills necessary for future public school teachers in online course delivery.

In addition to the state developed and vendor provided courses, Local Education Agencies will have the opportunity to develop district specific courses through access to the learning management system. These courses could eventually be submitted to the New Mexico Cyber Academy for adoption into the statewide schedule of courses. Annually, in January, K-12 course curricula can be submitted to and reviewed by a NMPED eLearning cross-functional curricula review committee. The cross-functional review committee will oversee course descriptions, curricula, end-of-course assessments, and other curriculum support. The cross-functional committee will include
all stakeholders and will align the work with the established New Mexico Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards. Included in the curriculum development process will be considerations of P-20 alignment, requirements of state and federal law, dual credit opportunities, Advanced Placement courses, and other far reaching opportunities for students.

Statewide course delivery demands a common technology platform to ensure compatibility and accessibility. As the use of computers and the Internet has grown in education so has the demand for software that makes it much easier for teachers to develop integrated online courses and for students to access these courses. Often this software is called a learning management system (LMS). The software typically combines same time conferencing systems, synchronous and asynchronous online chat, group meeting spaces, assignment submission and grading tools, student quiz, surveys and evaluation tools, an electronic grade book, content repository, content delivery, calendars, homepages, and collaboration tools.

A variety of communication modes and tools are offered to the users through a LMS. For example, students and teachers would potentially have access to capabilities for e-mail, data transfer, discussion groups, and synchronous video and audio support for collaborative work. This technological infrastructure has great potential for the development of unique learning transactions and modes like collaborative learning among students in distant locations and implementation of the apprenticeship model by involving students and experts in network-supported group work.

One of the critical deliverables in the first phase of the IDEAL-NM project is to implement an adaptable and interactive LMS for the state of New Mexico. This statewide LMS platform will be used to develop new courses and to integrate existing online courses to the New Mexico Cyber Academy. A statewide Web Conferencing solution to assist eCourse delivery methods, is also an IDEAL-NM project deliverable.

The three eLearning course delivery methods follow:

1. Synchronous eLearning requires the teacher and learner to be available at the same time, although they may be in different locations. This eLearning method is the most similar to face-to-face instruction and can be the most expensive delivery model. The instructional delivery is considered real time and live. Video and web conferencing, as well as teleconferencing are common tools used in synchronous eLearning environments. This delivery method allows for immediate response to questions and is ideal for conferences, special class presentations and tutoring.

2. Asynchronous eLearning does not require “same time” interaction. The students and teacher can access the class at any time and as many times as desired.
There is no live component and interaction can occur at any time, any place, and any pace. Common tools used in asynchronous eLearning include discussion boards, email, video and interactive learning objects. Independent Study or Correspondence courses can also be effective for training and professional development.

Typical courses will be paced asynchronous eLearning environments. Students and teachers will start and finish the course at the same time. Students will be required to do a week’s worth of work in a week’s time. Students will be required to log-in or “attend” class at least four days a week in order to meet attendance requirements. The courses will be designed to maximize teacher-to-students and student-to-student interaction. Student to teacher ratios will initially follow state guidelines set for face-to-face instruction with a typical class having 30 students.

3. Another potential opportunity for online learning is through a blended approach. In a blended approach, students have a combination of face-to-face and online classes. Students have opportunities for enrichment in a traditional classroom setting and teachers have online content available when they need to be away from class. Students in a blended course are able to meet face-to-face with their teacher as well as participate in online instruction. The blended classroom would allow face-to-face instruction and lab work while homework, handouts, assignments, discussions and quizzes are available online.

A blended approach may be ideal for mentoring new or struggling teachers. Content and materials are available online and mentor teachers could provide assistance and feedback at a distance. A blended approach also allows for a transition time for those students and teachers that have not developed the skills required for an online class. New and younger students might be introduced to eLearning through a blended approach as they transition to more asynchronous eLearning environments.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type of Course</th>
<th>Type of Technology Used</th>
<th>Barrier: Location</th>
<th>Barrier: Schedule</th>
<th>Description of Instructional Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional or Web enhanced Course (Synchronous)</td>
<td>Classroom + Web</td>
<td>HIGH Barrier</td>
<td>HIGH Barrier</td>
<td>Student must attend all class sessions conducted in a physical classroom, face to face (f2f) with subject expert. The course may be enhanced with web-based content or tools (e.g. learning management system).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blended Course</td>
<td>Web + Classroom</td>
<td>MED Barrier</td>
<td>MED Barrier</td>
<td>Student is required to attend numerous f2f class sessions; however, typically 30% or more of f2f class sessions are replaced with online sessions that may be synchronous or asynchronous. The class session is typically at a central campus, school, or training center. Sometimes called “flex learning”, this is a rapidly growing format nationally, and places demands on eLearning infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITV (Video Conference)</td>
<td>ITV Interactive TV</td>
<td>LOW Barrier</td>
<td>HIGH Barrier</td>
<td>Student is required to attend classes at a designated video conferencing room on specific dates/times to interact with subject expert and other students. These rooms are typically scheduled by each local school, college, university, or agency. While distance barrier is reduced, the instruction is still not designed to be accessed at home or any other generic internet connected location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Course (Web-based Synchronous)</td>
<td>Web</td>
<td>LOW Barrier</td>
<td>MED Barrier</td>
<td>Student is required to access internet at specific dates/times to interact with subject expert and other students. Web conferencing or text chat tools are typically used. Students can generally participate from any physical location where they can obtain an internet connection. Ability to access courses from any internet location has “some” minimization to schedule barrier due to travel time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Course (Web-based Asynchronous) (Instructor Led)</td>
<td>Web</td>
<td>LOW Barrier</td>
<td>LOW Barrier</td>
<td>On a weekly basis (typical timeframe), student works with classmates and subject expert together toward learning objectives. Web tools used include email, group discussion boards, and video-on-demand services. There may be a local instructional supervisor (e.g. teacher without subject expertise, parent, teaching assistant) working in partnership with subject expert.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Course (Web-based Asynchronous) (Self paced)</td>
<td>Web</td>
<td>LOW Barrier</td>
<td>LOW Barrier</td>
<td>Student interacts with course at their own pace. Typically very little (if any) interaction with other students in course or subject expert. There may (or may not) be a local instructional supervisor to monitor progress and provide guidance. NOTE: These “any pace” courses are typically cheaper per student and are normally best suited to students who can master course content without facilitation of subject matter expert; however, these courses are not necessarily appropriate for other students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 – How Various Course/Workshop Formats Address Barriers of Location & Schedule
LOW barriers provide greater access to educational opportunities.
Program Evaluation: New Mexico Cyber Academy Structure

The Cyber Academy will conduct an annual evaluation and provide an annual report to the New Mexico Public Education Department, the New Mexico Higher Education Department and the New Mexico Legislature in October for the previous school year. The evaluation report will include a detailed report of expenditures; a description of services provided, including the number and location of local eLearning sites, public, charter, and non-public schools and eLearning students served; the courses offered; the credits generated by local eLearning sites. Teacher effectiveness and student assessment and performance will also be included in the annual report.

Additionally, the NM Cyber Academy and course offerings will be evaluated by “The Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation “(CITA) online accreditation process for eLearning.

Program Evaluation: Teacher Effectiveness

Evaluation of eCourses and of teachers will be conducted regularly. Draft documents on best practices were developed by a statewide committee of instructional professionals for establishing standards for online teaching and learning. An example of the draft standards:

1. Learning Objectives and Learning Strategies for teachers.
   a. Recognize when learning objectives address content mastery, critical thinking skills, and core learning skills
   b. Ability to use different instructional designs and learning theories that reflect an understanding of student needs and the importance of the student perspective.
   c. Demonstrate knowledge of effective strategies and techniques that actively engage students in the learning process (e.g. team problem-solving, in-class writing, analysis, synthesis and evaluation instead of passive lectures) while promoting the achievement of learning objectives.
   d. Adapt learning strategies and differentiated instruction for varied ways to learn and multiple levels of mastery of the curriculum, based on student needs, learning styles and preferences.

2. Provide Instructional Materials prepared by qualified persons competent in their fields, to achieve announced objectives and learning outcomes. Teachers will:
a. Demonstrate knowledge and respond appropriately to the cultural background and learning needs English Language Learners.

b. Structure learning in terms of concepts and skills that students will retain over time.

c. Demonstrate growth in evaluating teaching resources to benefit from current research and practice.

d. Demonstrate understanding of aspects of technology that impact accessibility and usability.

3. Teachers develop and deliver assessment strategies that meet learning objectives and assess learning progress by measuring student achievement of learning objectives. Teachers will:

a. Demonstrate knowledge of authentic assessment strategies that measure student understanding and mastery of the New Mexico Standards with Benchmarks, align to the New Mexico Standards-Based Assessment, and address diverse visual, auditory and hands-on learning.

b. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of clearly stated course grading policy and assessments delivered through formative and summative assessments (standard end-of-course exams, short cycle assessments and the NM Standards Based Assessment system). Such understanding will guide instruction for continuous improvement, inform grading rubrics, and promote student learning, improvement, and academic success.

c. Administer a standard and agreed upon end-of-year exam to ensure consistency of content instruction, equity in earned credits, and high expectations for academic achievement that align with the New Mexico Standards and Benchmarks.

d. Demonstrate understanding of the different methods and purposes of providing grading information within the course environment and within the framework of regulations for reporting student grades.

e. Demonstrate understanding of the importance of providing frequent and timely feedback on student work and progress.

f. Provide course feedback and progress to the student by coordinating assignment grading, quizzes, and test grades. Correspondence through a controlled and secure email environment will provide opportunity for the students and teacher to communicate
g. Ensure student assessments are linked to learning objectives and are included within the course syllabi.

4. Course Orientation and Introduction to facilitating the introduction of the course and its members. Teachers and Instructional Support staff will:

   a. Understand importance of guiding or contractual documents such as an overview, syllabus, etc.

   b. Establish equitable means of communication within and outside of the course for the instructor and other individuals providing support.

   c. Demonstrate the ability to produce a clearly stated and engaging introduction to the course, to self, and to the structure of the student learning.

   d. Understand the importance of requiring student introductions as a means of encouraging a greater degree of engagement and commitment to the learning community; and will have sufficient understanding of the student population to be able to suggest what to include in an introduction.

   e. Demonstrate the ability to define expectations for etiquette, rules of conduct.

   f. Provide orientation for students to prepare them to be successful with their eCourse and eLearning experience. As a pre-screening tool the student may take a pre-enrollment assessment to determine potential for success in an eCourses. Rules, recommendations for Internet safety, and policy for personal conduct will be included as part of the orientation.

5. Participation, Interaction and Collaboration require Teacher and Instructional Support staff to:

   a. Demonstrate an understanding of how to build and maintain a community of learners by creating a relationship of trust and belonging that will support interaction.

   b. Understand the importance of providing opportunities for students to discuss original ideas and reflections of content issues to the process of developing community.

   c. Demonstrate effective facilitation skills including the establishment of consistent and reliable expectations, and support of independence and creativity.
d. Promote learning through collaboration and demonstrate how to construct online instruction groups that are goal-oriented, focused, project-based and inquiry-oriented.

e. Understand the importance of being present, active and engaged with the students during their eCourse experience.

f. Understand the importance of modeling effective communication skills and maintaining records of applicable communications with students.

g. Ensure that teacher-to-student contact/visits are conducted at least once per week.

h. Provide ongoing student centered instructional assistance such as prompt return of assignments, replying to student email and phone calls.

6. Use of frequent and effective strategies for critical evaluation of best practices in pedagogy, delivery and management. Teachers and Instructional Support staff will:

a. Demonstrate understanding that student success (e.g. grade, level, level of participation, mastery of content, completion percentage) is an important measure of teaching and course success.

b. Demonstrate understanding that ideally planning instruction would be founded on an assessment of each student's background and content knowledge.

7. Ensure security of student academic work, grades, earned credit, assessments, evaluations, student records, and all information protected under the Federal Equal Rights Protection Act (FERPA). Teachers and Instructional Support staff will:

a. Understand the guidelines of personal information protection under FERPA.

b. Maintain and monitor student academic work, grades, earned credit, assessments, evaluations, student records, etc. only within the secure learning management system.

c. Any course numbering and information currently collected by the NM PED Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS) will be compatible with the NM Cyber Academy system.
Program Evaluation: Student Achievement

Instructional support personnel at the local school district in a proctored environment will conduct administration of assessments of student learning. Teachers will provide online grading. The grading system will follow the standardized grading system developed by the NM Public Education Department. Performance indicators will be collected in November 2007 and April 2008. Provisions for collecting and disseminating annual data will originate from the PED Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS) database. A performance indicator solicitation to the student/parent community was considered however, sufficient data currently exists from within STARS.

The following are measurable outcomes to be reported by the Cyber Academy on students enrolled at the Cyber Academy. These outcomes align with closing the achievement gap, creating a 21st century learning environment, preparing students to be productive citizens, and meeting legislative mandates:

a. Number of students taking advanced coursework such as AP and dual credit courses
b. Completion of AP courses offered at the Cyber Academy
c. Retention and attendance rates for high school students
d. Percentage of successful high school students in credit recovery courses
e. The breadth and depth of the curriculum (number and types of courses) available to all NM high school students to include the number and type of dual credit courses
f. Number of participating public, charter, and non-public schools and public/non-public post-secondary Institutions
g. Courses taken and grades earned
h. High school graduation rates for students in public, charter, and non-public schools that were enrolled at the Cyber Academy
i. Survey of public/non-public post-secondary Institutions that Cyber Academy students
j. Completion rate (percentage of students completing courses within a set period of time)

Enrollment Policies and Procedures

Public school students in New Mexico are funded through the State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) by the NM legislature. Local school districts receive funding based on the number of full time students that attend their schools. For the purposes of this document these students are considered as state funded students. The funding the school district receives pays for operational costs associated with providing the educational environment for the learner. These costs typically include administrative support, supplies, books, equipment, support staff, and teacher salaries.
One of the founding principles of the New Mexico Cyber Academy is to support local school districts and NOT compete for students or funding. Students that attend New Mexico Cyber Academy courses will remain students of the local school districts. With the New Mexico Cyber Academy model the state will provide the content and LMS to the school district at no extra cost to the district. The only cost the school district will incur will be the cost for their share of the teacher salary, which is directly related to the number of students taking the class. More detail is provided in the Cost and Funding Model section of this document.

The district is also responsible for online support of the student that includes a local contact person. The main purpose of this individual is to provide a face-to-face contact for both the eLearner and the teacher.

Each district in the state has unique programs and challenges and therefore various models will be necessary to support eLearners. When working with students and families to determine whether the New Mexico Cyber Academy is a good fit, school districts need to assure that the student has appropriate access to an Internet connected computer. For some school districts this may be as simple as providing access to a school library computer and for other it may mean providing the student with a take home laptop. This will be a local decision.

Students enrolled in one or more courses of the New Mexico Cyber Academy remain enrolled in the local school district. All costs and responsibilities for the education of the student also remain with the local school district. Maintaining transcripts, student information, testing, STARS data and support are the responsibilities of the district.

The New Mexico Cyber Academy supports the local school district by providing courses that may not be readily available in the school district for a variety of reasons such as:

- a. Resources to learner vs. learner to resources
- b. Offering courses not otherwise available in the district
- c. Meeting needs of specific student groups such as high risk students, suspended students, ill students, AP, gifted, and others
- d. Reducing scheduling conflicts created by one time course offerings
- e. Offering courses for credit recovery
- f. Growing student populations and limited space
- g. New courses to attract new students to the district
- h. A highly qualified teacher is not available locally

For a State Funded Student the steps identified below should be followed.
1. School works with student and family towards meeting graduation requirements

2. School reviews course options available to students in their district

3. School registers students in the courses available to the New Mexico Cyber Academy according to registration requirements

4. New Mexico Cyber Academy enrolls student in class

5. Local Education Agency (LEA) receives State Equalization Guarantee.

6. It is estimated that the LEA will pay the New Mexico Cyber Academy $256 per student/class

Students that are not registered to attend a public school for at least half the school day are considered State Non-funded Students. These students do not generate funds for the LEA from the state. These students are typically private or home schooled students. There are costs to the school district to support these students. Since the district does not receive funding for these students the expenses are passed on to the student or family. The district is responsible to provide for learner support.

The cost for a State Non-funded Student in the New Mexico Cyber Academy would be approximately $350 per class per semester. The LEA would collect the fee and would be required to pay the New Mexico Cyber Academy $256 for teacher salary recovery which is the same for any student. The remainder of the fee covers the LEA costs to support the student. If the State Non-funded Student takes three or more courses in the semester, either through the New Mexico Cyber Academy, the LEA or in combination, they become a State Funded Student. There is no cost to the family for any of the classes for State-funded students. The LEA would then receive funding from the state.

If a State Non-funded Student is interested in taking a New Mexico Cyber Academy course they would take the following steps to enroll:

1. Parent contacts LEA.

2. LEA reviews all courses available in the New Mexico Cyber Academy.

3. LEA registers student in the New Mexico Cyber Academy.

4. New Mexico Cyber Academy enrolls student in class.

5. It is estimated that the parent will pay the LEA $350 per student/class (up to 3-courses, then the student becomes State Funded).
6. It is estimated that the LEA will pay the New Mexico Cyber Academy $256 per student/class.

Enrollment Estimates

To deliver high quality and cost-effective courses for students, the New Mexico Cyber Academy will develop New Mexico owned courses taught by highly qualified and NM certified teachers. The development of courses will be based on statutory requirements outlined in the Statewide Cyber Academy Act and a statewide research-based needs assessment survey.

The New Mexico: 2007 Needs Assessment Results presented by North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) showed need for a wide range of courses to support school districts. The development of high quality courses takes time. To meet the demand, the New Mexico Cyber Academy will make use of predeveloped, aligned, eLearning courses.

It is estimated that approximately 2400 students will enroll eLearning courses during the initial 2007-2008 school year. In this time frame, students will be able to take vendor eCourses, New Mexico Cyber Academy pilot courses, and dual credit courses offered through pilot programs.

A contract has been established with eLearning Course providers to deliver eCourses for high school students. Open enrollment through this contract will be available to allow students to enroll in courses offered through this contract any time throughout the semester. During this initial program period, the contract provides total delivery of course content, an instructor, hosting & support. The cost to the district is $250 per course per student per semester for core courses and electives. Credit recovery courses are also available at a cost of $150 per course/student/ semester. These are discounted rates offered to the districts through a contract where the New Mexico Learning Network (New Mexico Learning Network) is partially covering costs not passed on to the districts. Because there is such a wide variety of eCourses available across the curriculum, we expect a healthy number of enrollments.

Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) funded an additional 500 licenses on their Learning Management System (LMS) specifically designated for New Mexico Cyber Academy’s use. The goal is to develop and host NM History and first semester Algebra I on the APS system for spring and summer 2008.
A. Fall Semester 2007
   1. 700 enrollments through a vendor pilot contract
   2. Professional development courses for educators. APS currently has:
      a) Teaching English Language Learners
      b) Abuse Detection and is developing several other courses
   3. 120 estimated enrollments through the dual credit courses.

B. Spring & Summer Semesters 2008
   1. 400 enrollments through APS
   2. 900 enrollments through contract
   3. Web-Conferencing and Collaboration tools
   4. 60 estimated enrollments through the dual credit courses.
Cost & Funding Model

The cost and funding model was based on statewide averages of the State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) and teachers salaries. The intent of the New Mexico Cyber Academy is to keep the cost as reasonable as possible and within the SEG provided by the state. Some modification of the cost structure may be necessary as actual costs are established.

The Student Generated Funding table below was developed to identify how much money per course per semester that each student generates. This table is based on averages provided by the PED for the 2006/2007 school year. It is based on a typical high school model of a six period a day schedule. The basic calculation will remain the same with the exception of the Unit Value which will change each year.

The state unit value is $3,645.37. It is understood that based on the student membership the unit value would vary. The state average was used in this calculation. The Unit Value is multiplied by the Average Cost Factor of 1.9 which equals a SEG of $6,926.96. On average each student generates about $6,926 SEG per year for the local school district.

Dividing the SEG of $6,926.96 by six, the number of classes a typical high school student takes in a school day gives the amount of revenue generated by a student per year-long class, which is about $1,154.49. Dividing $1,154.49 in half give the amount of revenue a school district receives per semester for each class. See Table 3.

Therefore, the average student generates about $577 for the school district.
Table 3. Student Generated Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Generated Revenue:</th>
<th></th>
<th>= SEG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Unit Value X</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>$6,926.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,645.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generated Revenue:</th>
<th>Number of Classes a Student takes</th>
<th>Revenue Generated per class from a Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEG</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$1,154.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6,926.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Revenue per Class:</th>
<th></th>
<th>Student Generated Revenue per class per Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Generated Revenue per Class per Year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$577.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6,926.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The money that is generated by the students has to cover the operational costs for the district to support that student. Included in the operational costs are teacher salaries. The New Mexico Cyber Academy needed to understand how much it cost to teach one student per course per semester. In order to accomplish this, the statewide average teacher salary was used. The salary cost includes benefits.

According to PED the average teachers’ salary with benefits was $59,077.00 in 2007. The typical high school teacher teaches five classes each day. Dividing the teacher salary by five determines the average salary cost per class, which is about $11,815.40. Dividing the annual salary cost per class by two establishes the cost per semester. Therefore, on average it costs the LEA about $5,907.70 to pay a teacher to teach one class each semester with benefits. If the average salary cost per semester is divided by 30 students, a cost per student can be identified. On average the salary cost of a teacher is about $196 per student each semester. See Table 4.
**Table 4. Estimated Teacher Salary Cost**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers Salary Cost:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Teacher Salary</td>
<td>$59,077.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$11,815.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary Cost per Class</th>
<th>Semesters</th>
<th>Teacher Salary Cost per Semester Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$11,815.40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$5,907.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary per Semester</th>
<th>Number of Students per Class</th>
<th>Salary Cost per Student per Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$5,907.70</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>$196.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Besides the cost recovery for the teacher the New Mexico Cyber Academy would also have other expenses that would need to be covered. Those costs include but are not limited to clerical support, registration for courses, teacher evaluation, course development and accounting. A $60 fee would be necessary to cover the additional overhead.

**School Revenue Balance**

The estimated cost to the LEA would be $256 per student semester class to pay for the teacher and overhead. The LEA generates about $577 per student semester class from the state. This leaves the school district with about $321 per semester to support the student. See Table 5.

The table below indicates that 56% of student generated funding stays with the LEA and 44% pays for the teacher salary. If a student takes all six classes online, the cost to the district would be approximately $3,072.00. The LEA would retain $3,854.00 for the school structure. The retained funds would cover costs of the physical facility for teachers, building costs associated with providing the infrastructure and general operational expenses.
Table 5. Estimated District Cost Recovery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Generated Revenue per Class per Semester</th>
<th>Total Teacher Salary Cost Recovery per Student per Semester</th>
<th>Student Revenue less Teacher Cost Recovery per Class per Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$577.25</td>
<td>$256.00</td>
<td>$321.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumptions are included in the calculations of both the salary costs and the student generated funding models. The intent is to establish baseline costs for the New Mexico Cyber Academy.

Teacher Stipend Pay

The Director of the New Mexico Cyber Academy will contract with teachers via MOU with the host district for eCourses. It is the responsibility of the Director to provide professional development and evaluation of the teachers in the New Mexico Cyber Academy. In other cyber academies across the country, teachers typically teach one or two eCourses. K-12 teachers in New Mexico will be highly qualified according to the Federal No Child Left Behind law and certified to teach in New Mexico including retired or out-of-state licensees.

Document Reference Links

Reference documents can be viewed on the New Mexico Learning Network website http://www.nmln.net/site/reports.php

Other references included:

1. NACOL Survey
2. New Mexico Learning Network Implementation Meeting
3. Statewide Cyber Academy Act and House Bill 2
4. Distance Education Rule 6.30.8
5. New Mexico Learning Network Best Practices:
   - Professional Development for Instructor
   - Professional Development for Designer
New Mexico Learning Network Service Center Contact Information

The New Mexico Cyber Academy encourages questions about eLearning, course enrollment, and program administration and application requirements.

Please contact the New Mexico Learning Network Service Center for further information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Name</th>
<th>Address &amp; Phone Number</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico Cyber Academy</td>
<td>New Mexico Learning Network Service Center</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@nmln.net">info@nmln.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>421 Quantum Road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(In Progress)</td>
<td>Rio Rancho, NM 87124</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is online learning open to all New Mexico K-12 students?
   Yes, the eLearning opportunity is open to all NM students enrolled in their local district. Opportunities exist for the non-public, charter, and home schooled students as well.

2. Can a student participate in eLearning courses beyond being a full-time student?
   Yes, students may enroll to take extra courses beyond their course load with the approval of the local district.

3. What are the reporting requirements for the student?
   The reporting requirements for the student are the same as all New Mexico students and would be provided by the local district as it does currently to the state.

4. Do teachers of eCourses need to be licensed in New Mexico?
   Yes, teachers are required to have a current teaching license.

5. Is there a limit on the number of students enrolling in a single course?
   There will be a capacity limitation of enrollees at the initial roll out. The expansion of the program will be implemented as the state grows capacity and the necessary support for courses allows growth.

6. Can an eLearning provider (School District) limit enrollment?
   Yes, the local school district has complete control of all enrollments.

7. How many courses can a student take?
   The local district has the option of enrolling a student for as many courses that are necessary to provide what each individual student needs.

8. What school is responsible for comprehensive student enrollment when a student registers for eLearning classes outside of their enrolling (local) school?
   Students must enroll from the local district (see District Education Rule)
9. Are there deadlines for student application to eLearning and notifications to students and resident districts?

Deadlines will be created by the local district and any New Mexico Cyber Academy announcements will be available on the New Mexico Cyber Academy home page. Flexibility exists with asynchronous courses which allows for students to start and end courses within a year (start to finish date).

10. How does the student get access to necessary technology for eLearning?

The local district is responsible for notification of district or community computer laboratory hours, or any further technology support to allow for local eLearning capacity.
Glossary of Terms

Asynchronous: Does not require “same time” interaction. The students and teacher can access the class at any time. There is no live component to the instruction.

Best Practices: "The adoption of work practices which, when effectively linked together, can be expected to lead to sustainable world-class outcomes in quality, customer satisfaction, flexibility, timeliness, innovation and cost-competitiveness." (See Inglis, Ling, & Joosten (1999) pp. 157-173, 196)

CMS - Course Management System (also see LMS and CLMS): Typically web-based software allowing instructors to manage materials distribution, assignments, communications and other aspects of instruction for their courses. Examples are Angel, Blackboard, Desire2Learn. (See also LMS and LCMS)

Counselors: Specialists in learning who help individual students with academic or personal problems that interfere with learning. In North American institutions the term "advisor" is more commonly used. Quite often course instructors are required to provide advising.

Curriculum Model: The structure in which a program of study is offered. Distance education courses of study are divided into either a subject-matter-oriented curriculum model or a competency-oriented model. The distinction is an important consideration for design, delivery, and assessment.

Development Team: Group of individuals, numbering from two to more than 20, who work together to design, develop, and facilitate/teach a distance education course. (See Moore & Kearsley (1996) p. 104)

Distance Education / Distance Learning / Distributed Learning: A system and a process that connects learners and instructors who are in different locations. Distance learning has historically involved correspondence courses, video, or satellite broadcasts. With the connectivity of the Internet and a new generation of software applications, distance learning has evolved into a new model, which provides higher quality and more flexibility and which is more appropriately called “distributed learning.”

eCourse: Encompasses several other related terms including online courses, web-based courses and ITV-courses. eCourse refers to a course conducted in an eLearning environment and instructed by an teacher where the learner and teacher are not
physically in the same location and may be interacting asynchronously or synchronously online. “eCourse” is a term used extensively in the current plan.

**eLearning**: Encompasses several other related terms including distance education, distance learning, online learning, web-based courses, ITV-courses, virtual learning, eCourses, ITV, open learning etc. eLearning refers to learning opportunities where the learner and instructor are not physically in the same location and may be interacting asynchronously or synchronously online. eLearning typically helps bridge both geographic and schedule barriers for the learner. “eLearning” is a term used extensively in the current plan.

**teacher**: Instructor highly qualified in both eLearning methodologies and course subject area. Instructor is physically separated from their students and the local Instructional Supervisors, but typically have frequent interaction with both.

**Email (Electronic mail)**: The exchange of electronic messages and computer files between computers that are connected to the Internet or some other computer network.

**f2f (face to face)**: being physically in the same place for a meeting, class, or training.

**Instructional Support Personnel**: A Person/people who aide in facilitating eLearning activities under the supervision/leadership of an teacher who conducts an eCourse.

**Highly qualified teacher**: Often referred to in terms of levels of knowledge, experience and skill set in response to *No Child Left Behind*.

**Instructor-led training (ILT)**: Training in which learners are taught by an actual person: an instructor, teacher or faculty member. Instructor-led training can occur synchronously or asynchronously.

**LCMS**: Learning Content Management System. Multi-user enterprise software that allows organizations to author, store, assemble, personalize, and maintain learning content in the form of reusable learning objects. (See CMS)

**LMS**: learning management system. Enterprise software used to manage learning activities through the ability to catalog, register, deliver, and track learners and learning. (see CMS)

**Learning**: A process that "builds on or modifies understanding, capacities, abilities, attitudes and propensities in the individual." (See Inglis, Ling, & Joosten (1999) pp. 104-105) There are different theories about learning, the most important being Humanistic, Behavioristic, Cognitive and social learning, each supports a different approach to teaching and therefore to distance education.
Open Enrollment: The ability to enroll in a course or program of study at any time. Contrasted with the typical term-based enrollment and lock-step cohort programs of traditional schools, "open enrollment" is frequently requested by adult learners. Correspondence courses are traditionally offered as "open enrollment" delivery systems, although logistical issues and faculty concerns (especially workload) often block its implementation.

Open Enrollment: an option to attend a school outside the student’s regular attendance zone. Usually put into rule, policy, or law by a school district, education agency, or state legislature. (Alternate definition)

Pedagogy: A term associated with teaching; specifically teaching children, but currently often used interchangeably with andragogy (teaching of adults).

Quality Assurance (QA): "The totality of the arrangements by which an organization discharges its responsibility for the quality of the teaching it offers, satisfying itself that the mechanisms for quality control are effective and promote improvement." (See Inglis, Ling, & Joosten (1999) pp. 161, 200 and Moore & Kearsley (1996) 182-184)

Self Study: Education in which the learner is on their own, studying without interaction with others. Sometimes used to refer to asynchronous modes of delivery. CBT has been the most common form of self-paced learning, but web-based asynchronous systems are catching up quickly. (See self-paced learning)

Staff Development: Various, usually formal, training or activities, funded by employers to enhance the attitudes, knowledge and skills of current employees. (See professional development & workforce development)

Synchronous: A type of two-way communication that occurs with virtually no time delay, allowing participants to respond in real time. Also, a system in which regularly occurring events in timed intervals are kept in step using some form of electronic clocking mechanism. Synchronous capabilities add a living, breathing dimension to online learning. Generally includes tools supported by standards-based data, audio, and videoconferencing — like whiteboard, application-sharing, and question-and-answer. (See also Asynchronous)

Video Conferencing: In the context of web-delivered learning, refers to "Talking" head, small size video over IP networks. Generally requires additional hardware for implementation. Typically implemented as an optional feature, due to its significant bandwidth requirements.
MEMORANDUM of UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Parties in this document:

Party #1: The New Mexico Learning Network
Party #2: Regional Training and Support Center(s) to support the operation of the New Mexico Cyber Academy Referenced in this document as REC and New Mexico Cyber Academy respectively.

1. Regional Education Cooperative #3
2. Regional Education Cooperative #8
3. Regional Education Cooperative #9
4. North West location (TBD)

I. Purpose: This MOU documents the expectations and responsibilities of the parties. New Mexico Learning Network will provide funding to RTSCs to support the operations of the New Mexico Cyber Academy.

II. Background: New Mexico Learning Network is an organization (project) funded through the NM Higher Education Department (HED). New Mexico Learning Network has been chosen to work with HED and the NM Public Education Department (PED) to implement Governor Richardson’s IDEAL-NM initiative (ref: http://www.governor.state.nm.us/press/2006/oct/102706_01.pdf). This initiative has broad eLearning service goals; however, a key initial focus will be the creation of a statewide New Mexico Cyber Academy (New Mexico Cyber Academy) that will allow all New Mexico schools the ability to offer their students quality online course options as part of their educational experience. The Governor has set the goal that within 6 years all students graduating from a New Mexico high school will have taken at least one online course. Rather than being a separate school that competes with brick-and-mortar schools for students the New Mexico Cyber Academy will offer, through local public schools, online courses taught by New Mexico teachers highly qualified in their subject area and in online methods. New Mexico Cyber Academy is initially targeting online options for all NM high school students;
however, there will be a special focus on rural districts. To help provide services to schools in rural districts RTSCs will help develop and support the New Mexico Cyber Academy model.

III. **Scope of MOU:** Listed be is the expectations for New Mexico Cyber Academy and RTSCs

**New Mexico Cyber Academy Responsibilities:**

a. New Mexico Cyber Academy will budget funds to be transferred to the RTSCs to provide training and support services to their designated region to support the operation of the New Mexico Cyber Academy. Annual funding of $30,000 to each RTSC has been budgeted.
b. New Mexico Cyber Academy will facilitate best practices communities which will be made up of educators and staff from the central New Mexico Cyber Academy, RTSCs, and local school liaisons involved in supporting the New Mexico Cyber Academy model.
c. New Mexico Cyber Academy will provide training materials and workshop templates for RTSCs.
d. New Mexico Cyber Academy will provide through a central Help Desk a process for reporting, tracking, and escalating technical and administrative problems. RTSC’s will have a defined process for helpdesk escalation.
e. New Mexico Cyber Academy will evaluate the effectiveness of RTSCs annually at the beginning of each fiscal year. This evaluation is a key determinate for ongoing resource allocation.

**RTSC Responsibilities:**

a. RTSC will identify a primary and alternate liaison(s) to New Mexico Cyber Academy. The liaison should be the person most directly involved in implementing the training and support services described below. The top administrator (i.e. Director) for the RTSC should also be identified.
b. The primary RTSC liaison will participate in New Mexico Cyber Academy meetings, workshop design teams, and train-the-trainer sessions. Most of the work will be done online or via ITV, but f2f sessions may be required up to 3 times per year.
c. RTSC will offer periodic training sessions for the schools in their area based on New Mexico Learning Network materials and workshop templates. It is expected that at least there will be two different workshops offered by the RTSC. One workshop will train teachers in local schools which have be identified to act as the local eLearning Instructional Supervisors (i.e. Facilitator, not the eLearning Teacher) for the online classes. The other workshop will be for academic advisors and administrators on how to best utilize New Mexico Cyber Academy course options for the benefit of their students.
d. RTSC will help develop and then use a New Mexico Cyber Academy process for reporting, tracking, and escalating technical and administrative problems.
e. RTSC will evaluate the effectiveness of New Mexico Cyber Academy on an ongoing basis. Besides providing ongoing input about what works and what doesn’t, the RTSC will prepare a more formal evaluation report at least annually (June).

IV. **Effective Date and Period for MOU:** This MOU will become effective anytime the signature blocks are signed after March 30, 2007. This MOU will remain in force unless terminated by either party with 30 calendar days notice. This MOU can be terminated with or without cause after the 30 day notice is given.
V. **Signatures:** The following signatures indicate acceptance of the responsibilities and expectations described in this MOU.

**New Mexico Learning Network Signature:**

New Mexico Learning Network Representative Signature

New Mexico Learning Network Representative Name (printed)

New Mexico Learning Network Representative Title

**RTSC Signature:**

RTSC Representative Signature

RTSC Representative Name (printed)

RTSC Representative Title