FAMILY TOOLS
Module 1
Improving Communication
Improving Communication

“Entre dicho y hecho hay mucho trecho.”
“There’s a great distance between saying and doing.”
-Spanish Dicho

Overview

The National PTA (2004) states, “When parents and educators communicate effectively, positive relationships develop, problems are more easily solved and students make greater progress.”

This module addresses the challenges of effective school-family-community communication. As parents, families and teachers work through this module, all are invited to consider their understanding of school programs and policies, student progress, how to respond effectively to student problems and how to improve communication with schools and teachers.

Research Link

Communication is evident when educators and families “…communicate about school programs and student progress in varied, clear and productive ways. Create two-way communication channels from school to home and from home to school, so that families can easily keep in touch with teachers, administrators, counselors and other families” (Epstein, 1995).

Research indicates that it is the quality of teacher/parent interaction that contributes most to student achievement. The researchers recommend using the following strategies to improve family school communication:

Make It Positive: Teachers communicate with parents most often when the child misbehaves.
Ask teachers to share positive achievements and your child’s progress regularly.
Ask how you can be responsive to the strengths and needs of your child.

Make It Practical: Ask and look for resources to understand the curriculum and New Mexico Content Standards. Be specific when communicating concerns with teachers. Ask for specific suggestions about what you can do to help your child in challenging areas. Talk with your child about the New Mexico Content Standards and how they are tested.

Make It Personal: Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, parents can request information regarding teacher qualifications. Check the school web site for information about staff, programs and initiatives. Communicate in person, via e-mail, notes, and phone calls with any questions, concerns or praises. Ask for information about your child’s individual test scores, assessment data and samples of work.
Practices to Improve Communication with Teachers


- Introduce yourself to your child’s teachers early in the school year. Find out what the overall learning expectations are, how much homework to expect and how you can reinforce the lessons being taught.

- If you cannot make a parent-teacher conference, reschedule for another date that fits your schedule. You can also ask the teacher to meet you in a more convenient place.

- Check in with your child’s teacher on a regular basis. You do not need to wait until you have a concern. You can call just to discuss your child’s progress or to request that progress reports be sent home.

- When you do not understand a memo, school policy or program, ask your child’s teacher to explain it.

- Fill out surveys sent out by the school. Your ideas and input are important to creating a better school environment for your child.

- Visit the school web site regularly to find out more about the school, events and staff.

New Mexico Teacher Competencies

Getting better at what we do requires extra effort and help. For teachers, this means participating in professional development that helps them reach a new level of teaching. Improving teacher quality through professional development improves learning for all of our children.

New Mexico teachers are required to meet nine teacher competencies. The New Mexico 3-Tiered Licensure System provides the framework for documenting teacher qualifications. The No Child Left Behind Federal Act requires that teachers who teach the core academic subjects and special education must be “highly qualified” as defined by the New Mexico Public Education Department.

The competency areas for Level III (Master Teacher) relevant to communication are listed below.

- Teachers develop a two-way system of communication with students and families about student progress.

- Teachers foster the development of respect for individual, cultural, linguistic, disability and religious differences.

- Teachers demonstrate knowledge of specific school, family and community resources that can support learning.
# Parent/Family Communication Reflection

Use this checklist to rate the school in school-home-community communication and think about specific questions and actions you can take to improve communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Specific questions to ask at school</th>
<th>Actions to take to improve communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I receive communication from the school in a variety of ways such as newsletters, e-mail, home visits, phone calls, etc.</td>
<td>☐️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received or requested clear information about school policies and procedures, discipline procedures, assessment tools and school goals.</td>
<td>☐️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive information from the school in a format and language that I understand.</td>
<td>☐️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel parent-teacher communication is planned to fit into my schedule and meets my language needs.</td>
<td>☐️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I share information about my child’s strengths, learning preferences, concerns, attitudes and what motivates my child.</td>
<td>☐️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received or requested information about the curriculum plans, the New Mexico Content Standards, student expectations and how I can help.</td>
<td>☐️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
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</table>
### Resource 1

**Worth a Click**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Name</th>
<th>URL</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicating with Your Child</td>
<td><a href="http://www.uft.org/parent/communicate/">http://www.uft.org/parent/communicate/</a></td>
<td>Helping your child develop good study skills is one of the most important ways parents can support children’s emotional and psychological growth during the school years. This site is from the United Federation of Teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating with Your Child’s Teacher</td>
<td><a href="http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/5000/5283.html">http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/5000/5283.html</a></td>
<td>Ohio State University offers tips for parents on how to communicate with your child’s teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Trust</td>
<td>www2.edtrust.org</td>
<td>This web site offers user-friendly information on the <em>No Child Left Behind Act</em> and other fact sheets and resources. Special sections on state and local policy, national policy, professional development, parents, and community, make this web site a great resource for everyone involved in education. Be sure to check out the “Tools for Parents and Community Members.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping Children Succeed in School</td>
<td><a href="http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/succeed/09-communication.html">http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/succeed/09-communication.html</a></td>
<td>An article for parents on parent/teacher communication is available in English and Spanish on this site. Helpful links to other articles and tips for parents are also included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Broadcasting System (PBS) – Establishing Strong Family/School Communication</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pbs.org/wholechild/parents/f-s.html">http://www.pbs.org/wholechild/parents/f-s.html</a></td>
<td>This article addresses strong Family/School communication with links to other helpful resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance ALLIANCE for Parents Centers</td>
<td><a href="http://www.taalliance.org">www.taalliance.org</a></td>
<td>This site offers families of children with disabilities information and guidance on how to talk to teachers, staff and schools about their children’s special needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Learning First Alliance</td>
<td><a href="http://www.learningfirst.org">www.learningfirst.org</a></td>
<td>The site is stocked with “practical guides” for communicating with the community about schools, the <em>No Child Left Behind Act</em> and other issues. The “Resources for Parents” section allows families easy access to information about a variety of education issues and practices. There are also downloadable tips and guides to help families become more involved in their children’s education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Kids Can Do</td>
<td><a href="http://www.whatkidscando.org">www.whatkidscando.org</a></td>
<td>This site is inspirational in reminding us what can happen when we listen to children. It offers resources for talking to children about college, conducting teen-adult forums and engaging students as allies in improving schools.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Resource 2

### Communication Ideas for Parents

These actions will help you communicate with your child’s teachers and school staff. Choose those that you think you can do and then revisit this list in about one month to check on your progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCE YOURSELF</strong></td>
<td>Introduce yourself to your child’s teacher as early as possible in the year. Let the teacher know that you are a supportive parent and want to be involved in your child’s learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DON’T BE A STRANGER</strong></td>
<td>Parents send a message of support when they take the time to visit the school. Make an effort to have regular contact with school personnel. Make arrangements with the classroom teacher to occasionally visit the classroom, have lunch with your child or volunteer at the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOUCH BASE</strong></td>
<td>Talk with your child each day about what goes on at school. Learn the language of the classroom and use it to question your child about his/her day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONFERENCES</strong></td>
<td>Attend parent-teacher conferences. Ask for a meeting if you have concerns or questions at other times of the year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHARE INFORMATION</strong></td>
<td>Help your child’s teacher by informing him or her of the learning styles and strategies that you use at home that work with your child. Also share the language and culture of your home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QUESTION PRIVATELY</strong></td>
<td>It is important that students view parents and teachers as a collaborative team. Questions or concerns should be handled privately between the parent and teacher. It is important to let your child know that you are communicating with the teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASK FOR E-MAIL VISITS</strong></td>
<td>Sometimes your schedule and the schools don’t match up. E-mail is an efficient way to communicate with school personnel. Check with your local library for Internet access if you do not have a home computer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KEEP PERSPECTIVE</strong></td>
<td>Parents sometimes have difficulty separating school concerns and issues from the emotional attachment they have for their child. Remember that the school is your partner, and by working together positively, you can help your child succeed to his or her fullest potential.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Talking with Your Child

Talking with children involves the exchange of words, ideas and feelings. Communication leads to warm relationships, cooperation and a positive sense of self. It is important that we pay attention to what we say and how we say it to children. We communicate with looks, actions, silence, as well as with words. Remember to think before you speak.

Communicate Acceptance

Accepting a child just as he/she is, makes it easier to communicate with him/her. The child who feels accepted will be more likely to feel good about him/herself and share feelings and problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of saying:</th>
<th>Say:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“You are acting like a baby, there is nothing to be afraid of.”</td>
<td>“I know you are scared, I will leave the light on for you.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Don’t be upset, everyone loses sometimes.”</td>
<td>“You are upset because you did not win the game.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use Door Openers and Listen

Invite children to say more, and share feelings. Let children know that you accept and respect what they say.

“\text{I see.}”  \text{“Mm hmmm.”}  \text{“Tell me more.”}  \text{“How about that.”}

Get a child’s attention before speaking to him/her. Communicate at eye level. Try not to interrupt or scold children when they are telling you their stories.

Focus on Finding Solutions

- Teaching and modeling problem solving takes time, but the results are long lasting.
- Looking for solutions is usually the best approach to a problem behavior. Rather than focusing energy on blame or punishment, we can invite our children to work with us to solve a problem.
- The best solutions are those that children have a hand in designing and that focus on preventing problems in the future.
Ask the Right Questions

Parents want to know about how their child spent his or her day at school. Many times parents don’t ask specific enough questions to get specific answers from children about their school day.

Often when you ask your child, “What did you do at school today?” the answer is, “Nothing.” or “We played.” This is especially true of elementary children. Or you ask, “How was school today?” and all you get is “Fine.” Children want to share what happened during the day but the question “What did you do at school today?” may just be too wide open for them to answer, as they probably did a lot at school today!

Parents must know the language used in the classroom to refer to different activities, such as reading circles, science centers, cooperative groups, etc.

Ask the teacher to provide a daily schedule or list of questions which use this language, so that you will know how to better ask a child about his or her day.

Some examples might be:

“What story did you read in reading circle today?”

“What did you learn in science centers this week?”

“What was your role in the cooperative group today?” and “Who was the reporter?”

It is also helpful if the teacher helps remind young children or brainstorm together what they did that day just before they leave. It can be a very long day for some children and, by the time they see their parents, they may have honestly forgotten what happened earlier in the day.

A parent might ask:

“What was the first thing you did at school this morning?”

“What happened right after you came back from lunch?”

If you ask a more specific question - you might just get a more specific answer!
Resource 5

Understanding Standards-Based Education

If you have questions or concerns about student expectations and standards-based education, use the following suggestions and questions as a guide.

Ask how you can better understand the New Mexico Content Standards.

- How do I get a copy of the standards?
- What is my child expected to learn?
- What can I do if my child needs more challenge or support?
- How do I support my child?

Ask how your school uses the standards.

- Who makes decisions about what is taught and how it is taught in this school?
- How do I know how my child is doing in relation to the New Mexico Content Standards?
- How often will my child be tested?
- How will I know the results of the tests my child takes?

At the start of the school year, ask about expectations for your child's learning.

- What do you expect my child to learn this year in reading, math and science?
- What are the most important things for the children in your classroom to learn this year?
- What can I do at home to help my child learn these skills?
- How much time should my child spend on homework each night?
- How can I help with homework?
- What types of writing projects will my child have this year?

During the year, follow up on how your child is doing.

- How is my child’s work evaluated using the New Mexico Content Standards?
- Do you use specific criteria (scoring guides, rubrics, etc.) to show progress? If so, ask to see these.
- How often is the reporting of progress made to parents?
- How will I know if my child reaches the “proficiency” level that is expected and what is meant by each of the levels?

To access the New Mexico Content Standards and Benchmarks visit:

- www.nmlites.org/standards/index.html
- www.cesdp.nmhu.edu
## Resource 6

### Ways to Communicate the Importance of Education to Children

The best thing you can do to help your child succeed is to stay interested in his or her education and share the joy of learning, as well as model good habits in reading and writing. Students actually spend much more time at home than they do in the classroom. How they spend their time outside school affects their academic success.

Which of these things can you do to help your child succeed?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Let your child know that education matters.</strong> Work with your child every day so that he or she knows that education is a top priority. Ask specific questions, such as. “How did your math test go?” or “Was your science experiment fun?” Find out about the specific activities carried out in the classroom to know what questions to ask.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Learn as much as you can about your child’s school.</strong> Get to know your child’s teachers and let them know you want to support your child’s education. Attend parent-teacher conferences. Join a parent-teacher organization at the school. Visit the classroom, or even better, volunteer to do something for the school. If it is difficult for you to get to the school, ask about how you can help at home or come up with ideas of your own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Extend your child’s learning.</strong> Every waking moment is an opportunity to learn. Limit the amount of time your child spends watching television and playing video games. Make sure your child is reading and writing and that he or she sees you modeling reading and writing. Take your child to libraries, museums, zoos, outdoor sites, businesses and other places that can help him or her learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Be sure your child is prepared for school daily.</strong> Make sure your child gets a good night’s sleep and a healthy meal before heading out the door. Check with your child and his/her teacher to make sure that homework is completed. Help your child practice new concepts and facts, like multiplication tables and spelling new words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Encourage your child and talk about role models in your community.</strong> Point out the people who have a college degree or a professional career and how they contribute to your local community. Talk about career choices and how doing well in school is connected to having choices in life. Reinforce the importance of valuing your culture, heritage and language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Your child’s academic success depends on your active participation.*
**Resource 7**

**Developing a Vision for Your Child**

Families want the best education possible for their children. This form offers a way to look at both the strengths and challenges your child has. Complete it and share the information with your child’s teacher.

Child’s Name _______________________________________________________________________________________

Strengths, special interests and talents: __________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

Challenges and needs: _______________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Long range work and educational goals:</th>
<th>Goals for interacting with family:</th>
<th>Community participation goals:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Next year:</td>
<td>Next year:</td>
<td>Next year:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In five years:</td>
<td>In five years:</td>
<td>In five years:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As an adult:</td>
<td>As an adult:</td>
<td>As an adult:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Resource 8

#### Planning Guide for Parent-Teacher Conferences

Complete this form before attending your child’s parent-teacher conference and bring it with you to the conference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our Parent-Teacher Conference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child’s Name: ___________________________ Parents Names: ___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s Name: ___________________________ Grade Level: ___________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Date: ___________________________ Time: ___________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Things I Want To Talk About

A. What I think my son/daughter does well at home:

B. What I think my son/daughter does well at school:

C. Questions I would like to ask the teacher:

D. One issue I would like to discuss with the teacher:

#### About My Child

Ask your child what he or she would like to have you talk about or what he or she would like to know more about.

1. Important things in my child’s life I think you should know about:

2. Talk to your child. Ask him/her questions like: What do you like about school? Share this with the teacher.

What do you dislike about school?

Is there anything you would like me to ask or tell your teacher?

3. Other questions or concerns my spouse, partner or family members and/or I have:
At the Conference

(Please read these questions before the conference to help you plan what questions you would like to ask.)

1. Is my child at grade level with his/her reading, writing and math?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

2. May I see something my child has written?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

3. May I see an example of grade level or excellent work?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

4. What are my child’s strengths in class?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

5. What are my child’s weaknesses in class?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

6. Which benchmarks and standards has my child achieved so far?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

7. What do you expect from children in your class (behavior, work habits, etc.)?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

8. What can I do at home to support you and my child in school?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

9. How can I reach you if I have any questions or want ideas on how to help my child succeed in school?

___________________________________________________________________________________________

10. Do we need to meet again? When will we meet?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

After the Conference

1. Talk about it with your child. Praise your child’s strengths.

2. Decide how you will follow through with any plan that you and your child have agreed upon with the teacher.

3. Start a folder about your child. Include in it:
   - Report cards
   - Samples of work
   - Notes from the teacher
   - Test scores

4. Make a calendar and mark:
   - Meetings
   - Important events
   - Social events at your child’s school

5. Check your child’s class work and homework every day.

6. Keep talking with the teacher to discuss your child’s progress.
Action Plan:
Ways the parent, the child and the teacher can work together to ensure success. 
(Do this with the teacher at the conference).

A. What the teacher will do at school:
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________

B. What we will do at home:
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________

C. How we will check our progress (notes, telephone calls, e-mail, follow-up conference, etc.):
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________
Resource 9

Parent and Child Rights in Special Education

Use this information, from the New Mexico Public Education Department’s Special Education Bureau web site, to review the rights of children in Special Education.

What Is Special About Special Education?
Special education is instruction designed specifically to meet the unique needs of children with exceptionalities—those who have one or more disabilities as defined by federal law,* or in the state of New Mexico, who are determined to be gifted. It is important to note that not all students who have a disability or who are struggling qualify for special education. To be eligible for special education or related services, the child must meet two requirements. First, he or she must be found to have a qualifying exceptionality. In addition, the nature of the exceptionality must be such that it directly affects his or her opportunity or ability to learn and progress in the educational program or environment provided for the general student population. Special education and related services are designed to help a child learn the information and skills that other children are learning.

An Overview of the Special Education Process
Every child is special because he or she is a unique individual. In the United States, we provide a free, public education to every child. Schools provide a general curriculum designed to meet the needs of most children and prepare them to function independently as adults and participate in their community. Special education services are provided to those students who, because of exceptionalities, need additional support in order to learn and attain these same goals. It is also the goal of special education to provide services and supports to students in the least restrictive environment (LRE) along side students without disabilities.

Decisions about a child’s program and/or placement are not made lightly or easily. It takes a team using their combined knowledge and expertise to make decisions that are in the best interest of the child. A specific process is followed and you, the parent, are an essential part of the team. The child is also included whenever possible and must be invited to participate if he or she is 14 or older.

In order to better understand your role and your rights in the decisions made about your child, it may be helpful to first take a look at how the special education process works in general.

Step 1 - Pre-referral/Referral Interventions
The child is referred for consideration of the possible need for special education and/or related services. Referrals can come from the school or parents. Local school districts must provide screening and appropriate interventions through a Student Assistance Team (SAT) child study process before referring a child for a full special education evaluation unless a student has an obvious disability or a serious and urgent problem.

Step 2 - Initial Evaluation
The child is evaluated. This may involve formal testing, observations or even outside specialists. Written parental consent must be given before an initial evaluation or a reevaluation.

Step 3 – Determine Eligibility
Based on all the information gathered, a group of qualified professionals and the parent decide whether the child is eligible for special education or related services. A student may be found to be eligible because he or she has a defined exceptionality that directly affects learning or found to be ineligible because either the exceptionality does not directly affect learning or there is no concrete evidence that an exceptionality exists.
Step 4 – IEP Development
If the child is found eligible, a team is assembled and a meeting held to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP is the master plan for the child’s special education and any related services, such as speech therapy or physical therapy that the child needs to benefit from instruction. Parents must be invited to the meeting and to participate as members of the team.

Step 5 – IEP Implementation
Parents consent is required before beginning any special education or related services.

Step 6 – IEP Review/Revision
The IEP must be formally reviewed at least once a year, more often if necessary, or as requested by the school or parent.

Step 7 – Reevaluation
A child receiving services must be reevaluated at least every three years (unless you and the school agree that a specific reevaluation is not necessary).

Step 8 – Determine if Eligible
Eligibility must be reexamined and re-determined after a reevaluation as in Steps 2 and 3.

Step 9 – Exit from Services or Continued Services
If the child is found to still be eligible, the team begins again at Step 4. If not, he or she exits the program.

*Federal law (IDEA-Part B 34 CFR Sec.300.7) defines thirteen categories of disability: autism, deafness, deaf-blindness, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disability orthopedic impairment, other health impairment (including ADD, ADHD), serious emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury and visual impairment, including blindness.

For more information, this document, “Parent and Child Rights in Special Education”, can be accessed in its entirety from the New Mexico Public Education Department’s Special Education web site at:
http://www.ped.state.nm.us/seo/library/procedural.safeguards.interim.draft.pdf
Bilingual Education in New Mexico

Research studies have found many benefits of Bilingual Education Programs, including:

- Building self-esteem and improving academic achievement by incorporating the students’ cultures into classroom instruction;
- Enhancing student intellectual flexibility, creativity and problem solving;
- Developing students’ literacy skills in English and in the home language;
- Building lessons from resources that exist within students’ experiences and backgrounds in order to promote more active student engagement and increased student learning;
- Encouraging parent participation in school activities and goals;
- Expanding student access to people and resources;
- Increasing opportunities to compete in the workplace; and
- Supporting the development of a stronger national economy.

What is Bilingual Education in New Mexico?

Bilingual Education is an instructional program that uses two languages, one of which is English, as a medium of instruction in the teaching-learning process (New Mexico Bilingual Education Regulation, June 2002).

Models of Bilingual Education in New Mexico and Their Purposes

- A **Two-way Dual-Language Immersion** model is designed to develop bilingualism and biliteracy in English and another language for both English-speaking and students with a home language other than English.
- A **Maintenance** model is designed to develop and maintain proficiency and literacy in the student’s home language and English.
- A **Transitional** model is designed to transfer students from instruction in their home language to an all-English curriculum.
- An **Enrichment** model is designed to further develop the home language of fully English proficient students and to teach the cultures of the state.
- An **Indigenous Language Revitalization** model is designed to support and revitalize a student’s native language and culture through oral and/or written language instruction with tribal approval.
Important Facts About Bilingual Education

- Bilingual/ESL teachers teach English more effectively. They have more training on how best to instruct children learning English.

- Bilingual Education is PROVEN to close the gap better and faster than English Immersion.

- English Immersion is proven to widen the gap.

- Bilingual Education is supported by second language acquisition research and experts.

- A person who speaks two languages increases his or her marketability in the work place.

- Bilingual Education enriches academic productivity, creative talents and self-esteem in students.

- In the era of globalization, the rest of the world prepares their students to communicate in more than one language. We should join in.

- Bilingualism is a window into two worlds.

- Bilingualism and multilingualism ultimately provide a competitive advantage in the workforce and allow for additional job opportunities.

- The student’s native language supports the learning of the second language and the comprehension of all subject areas.

Source: New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education (NMABE) web site www.nmabe.net (2006)
Notes