

HB 87 // Yazzie Lawsuit Higher Ed Funding (Sponsor: Rep. Derrick Lente)**Improving educational systems through Indigenous knowledge and expertise**

Students need teachers that respect and reflect the diversity of New Mexico's communities, cultures and languages. They need instructional content and materials that are relevant to their own lives. They need support with social and health issues and assistance with preparing for college or career.

HB 87 utilizes higher education institutions to increase the capacity of schools, school districts and Tribes to meet the needs of Native students. Universities and colleges have many Indigenous faculty who train teachers, develop curricula and pedagogy, create Native language programs, provide behavioral health supports, and assist schools that struggle to serve Native students.

HB 87 leverages the wealth of Indigenous academic expertise for improving K-12 schooling.

All levels of education, from pre-K to college, must work in concert to build an adequate and equitable education system. This is the task set by the court in the *Yazzie/Martinez* ruling.

HB 87 makes investments in:

- Pipelines for recruiting, training and retaining Native teachers, administrators and educational leaders
- College and career readiness programs for Native students, incl. bridge programs
- Student services for Native students at higher education institutions
- Two Indigenous curriculum and materials development centers
- Two Indigenous technical assistance centers
- Social and health services, incl. behavioral health programs, for Native K-12 students

Investment: \$26,209,030 (recurring program investments)

“In education, discrimination and racial bias are forces of institutional racism that begin at pre-school. At stake are Indigenous Peoples’ most precious assets — children and cultural integrity. Educational justice transforms all forms and levels of education to prepare our children with cultural integrity, dignity, and respect.”

*Christine Zuni Cruz, J.D., Isleta Pueblo,
Professor of Law, UNM School of Law*

“Culturally and linguistically sustaining and revitalizing education counters the oppressive, colonial attempts to eradicate Indigenous language, identity, and knowledge. It engages Indigenous communities to determine learning outcomes and ensures alignment with the core values, worldview, and desires for the education of their children.”

*Dr. Tiffany Lee, Diné/Lakota, Chair, Native American
Studies Department at UNM*