



**Aubrey Dunn, State Land Commissioner
State of New Mexico**

FACT SHEET: Early Childhood Education Land Grant Act

- Investing in New Mexico’s children is an essential component for the development of our state, as early opportunities for learning increase the likelihood that a child will attend school and, as an adult, achieve higher income, maintain better health, experience less crime and have lower levels of welfare dependence than those who do not receive early development support.
- Addressing early childhood education would help to reduce both the federal and state need to allocate resources in the future to remediate the lasting effects of the challenges that currently impact New Mexico’s children. New Mexico does not have sufficient resources to address early childhood education programs.
- The federal government holds a vast amount of unleased federal subsurface mineral acreage beneath private land within New Mexico – potentially upwards of 6.5 million acres (acreage is still being identified by the State Land Office).
- This unleased federal subsurface mineral acreage beneath private land within New Mexico could be transferred to the state by Congress and managed by the State Land Office, to be held in trust for the purpose of raising revenue to specifically fund and support early childhood education. New Mexico’s congressional delegation would spearhead the effort to transfer unleased federal subsurface mineral acreage beneath private land from the federal government to the state. Land access would not change since private landowners already manage the surface above these minerals – therefore, hunters, trappers, anglers and recreational users will not be affected by this proposal.
- The “Early Childhood Education Land Grant Act,” which is being proposed to the Legislature by State Land Commissioner Aubrey Dunn, would create the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund and the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Income Fund.
- Any and all unleased subsurface mineral acreage beneath private land that is transferred from the federal government to the state after the Legislature’s passage of the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Act would then be leased out by the State Land Office for the purposes of revenue generation, with all funds earned to be deposited to the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund. However, for the first ten years the federal government will receive fifty percent of revenue generated.
- Annual distributions equal to the interest, dividends and capital gains of the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund would then be transferred to the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Income Fund. Ninety-five percent of the Income Fund would be appropriated annually by the Legislature for early childhood education programs as provided by law. Five percent of the Income Fund would be appropriated annually by the Legislature to the State Land Office to provide for the costs incurred in generating revenue from the management, care, custody, control and disposition of the subsurface mineral acreage transferred to the state for early childhood.
- In FY 16, the State Land Office earned an average of \$32.29 per acre from mining, oil and gas extraction activities across its 13 million subsurface acres. Once transferred from the federal government to the state and leased out by the State Land Office, the approximately 6.5 million acres currently under consideration for transfer could potentially generate \$210 million in annual royalties to the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund (based on average SLO subsurface earnings of \$32.29 per acre).
- As opposed to being a “quick fix” solution, the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund would grow over time and provide a long-term, sustainable endowment and funding stream for early childhood education in New Mexico.