

PERMANENT FUNDS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Bill Number: HJR1

Bill Sponsors

Rep. Antonio "Moe" Maestas and Rep. Javier Martinez

Contact:

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For more information visit: www.investinkidsnow.org

Background

The *Permanent Funds for Early Childhood Education*, is **one of the smartest investments we can make in our kids** and in our state. The joint resolution would help ensure that the next generation of New Mexicans is healthy and successful by **expanding early childhood education initiatives and services** across the state, including: funding for universal pre-kindergarten; expanding access to family services/resources; increasing home visiting; increasing access for child care assistance; promoting professional development for teachers; and assuring accountability and evaluation of implemented programs.

Solid evidence from hundreds of studies shows that the critical window of opportunity for future success happens before children even enter school. **Children are most likely to succeed in school** when they enter school with language and early math skills, as well as self-control and the ability to focus. The programs that prepare kids for success offer a **high return on investment** that is immediate and lasts a child's lifetime.

The Permanent Funds for Early Childhood Education will help New Mexican families by:

- Increasing economic growth immediately and over the coming decades
 - Immediately: HJR 1 will result in **4,000 new early childhood careers**, typically held by women who tend to spend a higher portion of their earnings on their children and in their communities.
 - Over the coming decades: HJR 1 will result in a **better workforce, decreased dependency on social services, increased take-home pay for families**, and will make the state more attractive to businesses and strengthen the state's tax base.
- Supporting parents of young children with: information about pregnancy, breastfeeding, the milestones of baby and toddler growth and development, positive discipline, and techniques to managing stress.
- Providing parents, who are working or going to school, with assistance for high-quality child care and **ensuring that New Mexico's children are in a safe learning environment** when they are not with their parents.
- Ensuring that our children are **ready for kindergarten, reading by the 3rd grade**, and graduating from high school ready to go to college or enter the workforce

House Joint Resolution 1 addresses the unmet needs that have led to New Mexico ranking last or near-last in child well-being:

- Experts estimate the **unmet need in New Mexico for early childhood education is over \$400 million per year**. Since current investments in early childhood programs fall far short of the need, we must secure an adequate and sustainable source of funding.

- Extending the Common Schools portion of the NM Land Grant Permanent Fund (LGPF), currently at \$15 billion, to include early childhood education would assure reliable funding for children’s most formative years. Phased in over three years, the proposed constitutional amendment will **provide 1% of the Common Schools portion of the LGPF to early childhood education, representing about \$112 million** toward the unmet need.
- Through the NM Public Education Department, **local school districts will receive an allocation proportionate to their population of children ages 0 to 5 years.**
- A Center for Early Childhood Education Excellence will be established to assist the school districts in assessing their communities, identifying priorities, developing a plan, and implementing evidence-based programs to meet their communities’ early childhood education needs.
- State-level resources will **provide a measurement system and objective evaluation to assess effectiveness** and impact at the local and state levels.

Fast Facts and Talking Points

- **There is bi-partisan support in the Legislature** for the resolution and also from **80% of New Mexican voters** (Research & Polling).
- The **Land Grant Permanent School Fund is governed by the people of New Mexico**, therefore any change in the distribution formula requires voter approval.
- There is **no better way for us to invest in our state and our communities** than by giving our children the best educational opportunities we can from an early age.
- Smart investments in our **children like early education will strengthen New Mexico families and our communities.** It will provide more opportunities for our children who are the future of our beautiful state.
- Only 1 in 20 (5%) children under age 3 receive home visiting.
- Only 1 in 6 eligible children have access to sliding-fee child care and few gain access to high-quality care.
- Only 1 in 5 (20%) of our 3 and 4 year olds can attend NM Pre-K.
- The average wage for a child care worker is \$9.10 per hour and has dropped by 4% since 2010. For a preschool teacher it is \$12.82 per hour and has dropped by 10% since 2010.

Call to Action and Important Dates

<u>What you can do</u>	<u>Mark your calendars</u>
<p>✓ Call your legislator</p> <p>Switchboard: House: (505) 986-4300 Senate: (505) 986-4300</p>	<p>✓ Thousand Kid March- March 1st</p> <p>Time: 10:30 am March, 11:00 am Press Conference Location: New Mexico State Capital Contact: Jessa Bunker, 505-239-1081</p>

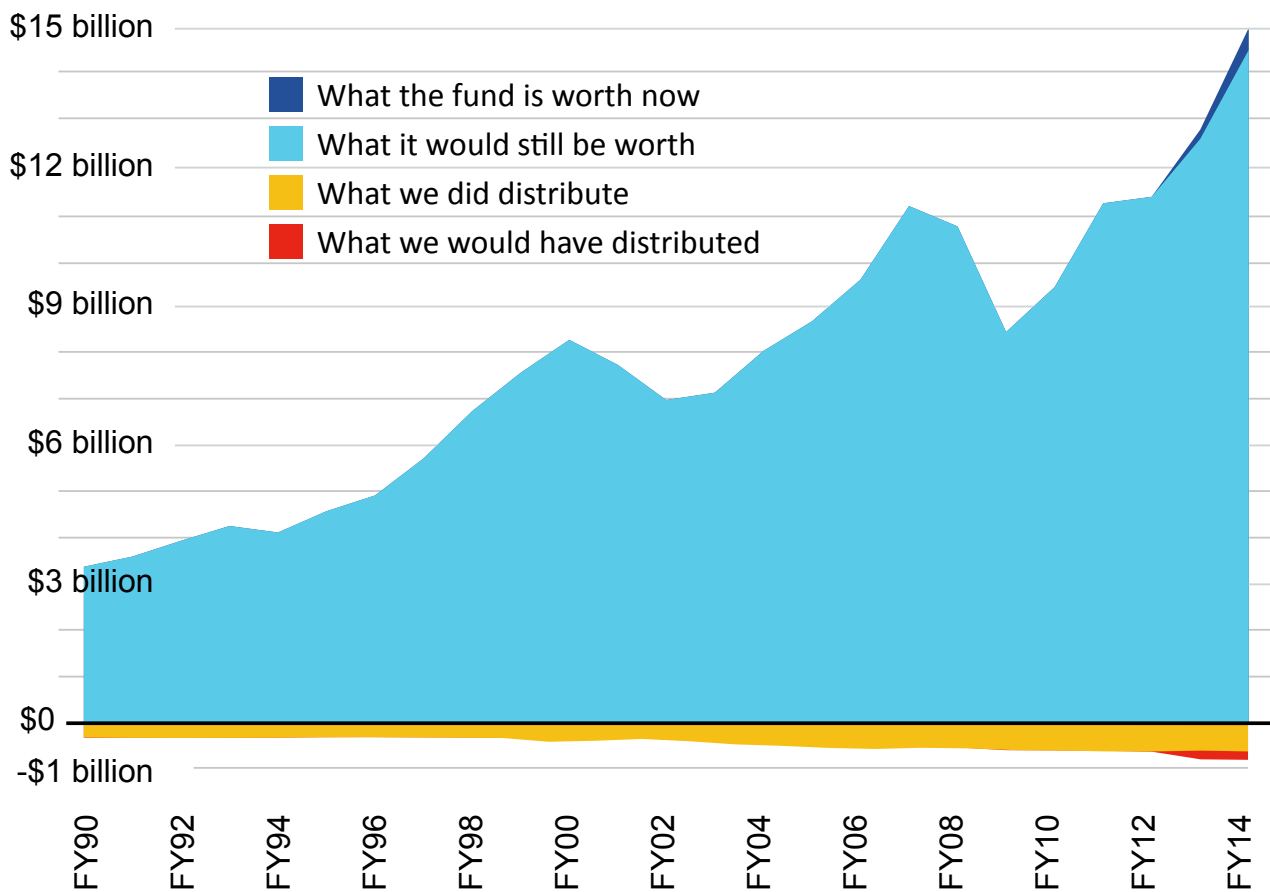
Frequently Asked Questions

Will this deplete the Fund? **The Fund will not be depleted.** The Fund grows approximately 11% per year and HJR 1 would increase distribution by 1% for early childhood, making the total withdrawal 6%. This means the fund still grows by 5% per year.

Specifically, how will the money be spent? After the legislative body sends the constitutional amendment to the voters, the legislators will pass enabling legislation placing guidelines on how the money is to be spent.

A small investment in early childhood would not have damaged the massive fund

If we had invested \$250 million in 2013 and 2014 in programs that prepare children for success in school, the school permanent fund would still be worth \$14.4 billion



Sources: State Land Office and Investment Council reports and audits, NM Voices for Children estimates
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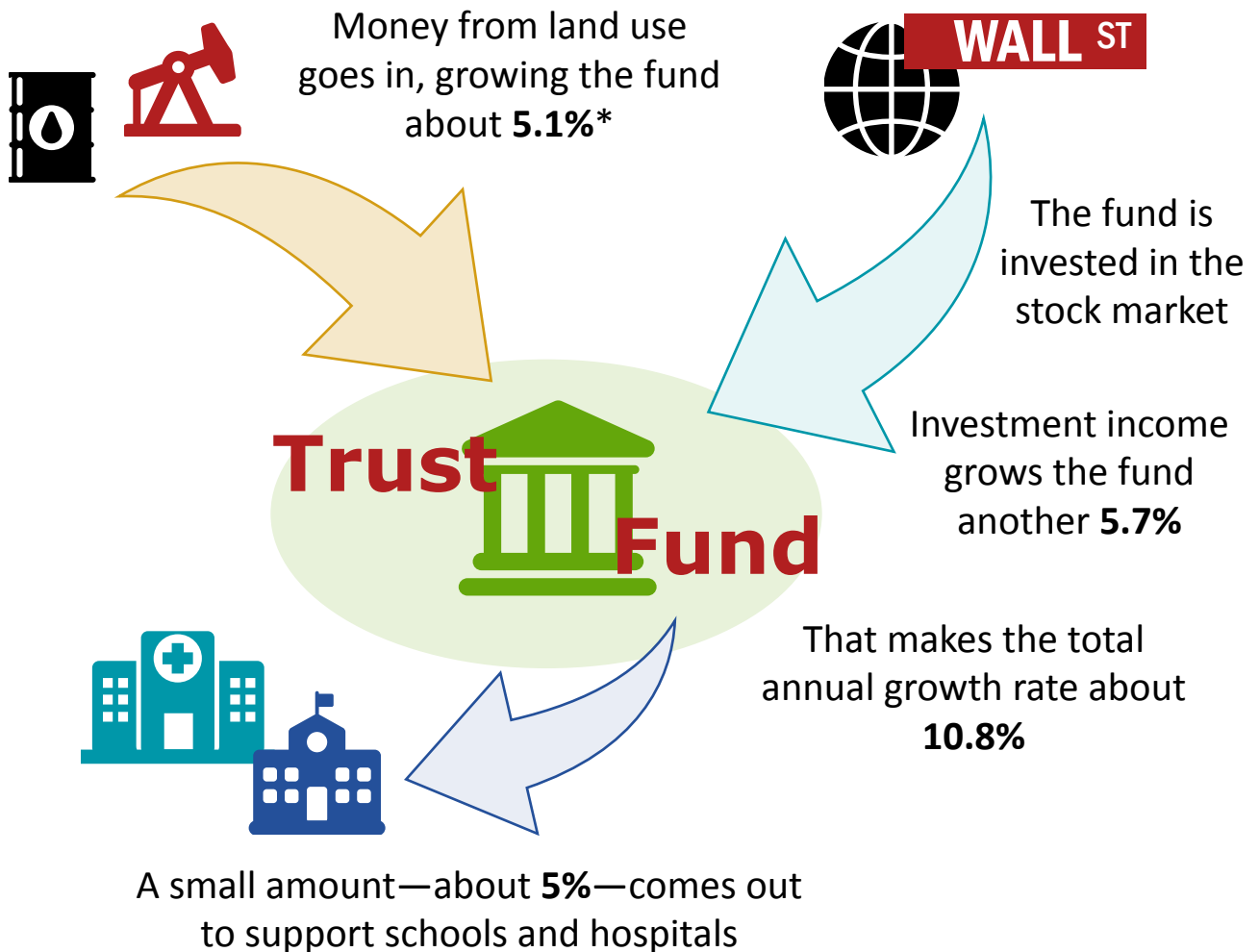
Invest in Kids NOW! is a coalition of more than 40 groups, ranging from businesses to child advocates, educators, and faith-based organizations. For more information go to www.investinkidsnow.org



How the Land Grant Permanent School Fund Grows

Congress established the Permanent School Fund to help pay for education when New Mexico became a state

It's a public trust fund with two sources of income, which makes it different from typical trust funds



*Growth rate calculated on a five-yr rolling average
Source: NM State Investment Council Performance Review, Executive Summary, as of December 31, 2015
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