

The New Mexico STEM Innovation Network was created through state legislative funding in partnership with the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) to strengthen and expand STEM education across the K-12 system in alignment with NMPED priorities. Its mission is to connect systems and establish a cohesive infrastructure that supports PreK–college STEM pathways, preparing students for STEM careers. The network focuses on three key priorities:

1. **Inquiry-Based STEM Learning in All New Mexico K-12 Classrooms** The network strengthens standards aligned and inquiry-based, hands-on STEM instruction that promotes critical thinking and problem-solving while respecting students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds. *The Network is prioritizing K-12 math proficiency in alignment with PED goals.*
2. **Access to Out-of-School Time (OST) STEM Enrichment.** The network expands interest-based OST STEM programs—such as robotics, coding, and agriculture—especially in rural areas. These programs improve engagement and success in school, and build strong STEM identities.
3. **Strengthening Connections Between K-12 Education and New Mexico Industry.** The network aligns K-12 education with New Mexico's STEM industries. Key efforts include increasing internships, industry engagement, regional partnerships, and integrating math and problem-solving into CTE to prepare students for high-demand STEM careers.

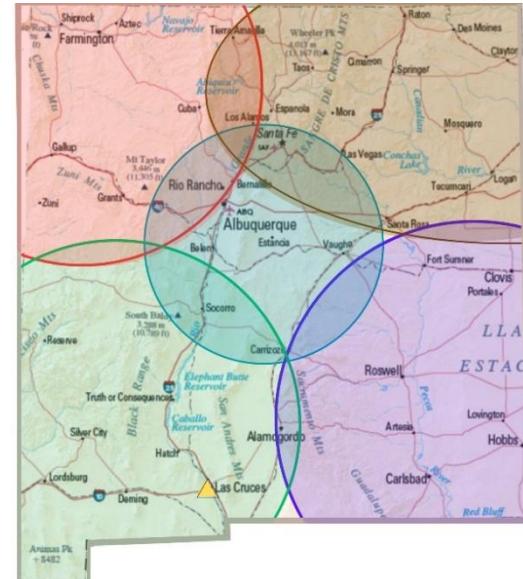
An **Executive Council of 12 leaders** representing industry, education, and Indigenous communities guides the Network's strategy, priorities, and metrics. *The Council provides leadership in advocacy and strategic planning and ensures that equity and culturally responsive practices remain central to the Network's work, particularly in rural and tribal communities.*

### Principal and Regional Hub Structure

NMSU serves as the STEM Innovation Network Principal Hub which has established five regional Hubs across the state. The Regional STEM Hubs form a statewide network for STEM innovation and dissemination across the four quadrants of the state and a central hub. Through partnerships with Regional Education Cooperatives, higher education, Career and Technical Education programs, and New Mexico Workforce Solutions, the Hubs coordinate resources and strengthen statewide STEM connections. They share resources and best practices, promote regional STEM programs and assets, and engage industry partners to connect education with STEM careers and workforce needs.

#### Regional Hub Backbone Organizations

- **NW Region:** San Juan College
- **NE Region:** NM Highlands University
- **Central Region:**  
Explora/R4Creating/NMTech
- **SW Region:** WNMU/SWREC
- **SE Region:** REC #6 (Portales)
- ▲ **Principal Hub:** NMSU



Research and Evaluation components include the development of **common metrics to study the impact on student learning outcomes statewide.**

## STEM Mini-Grants

The STEM Innovation Network mini-grant program was designed to support New Mexico schools, community organizations, professional learning providers, and industry partners to expand STEM learning opportunities.

Nearly \$300,000 in mini-grants were awarded to 23 entities across six geographic regions of NM. Impact includes:

- 2,261 students gained access to in-school and OST STEM programs and STEM competitions;
- 375 educators are receiving STEM professional learning and coaching;
- 18 projects serve rural areas; 7 projects serve Tribal communities;
- Projects include Robotics, AI & Machine Learning, Cybersecurity, Make Tech & Fabrication, Healthcare Simulations, Aerospace, and Environmental Science.



127 students participate in the Los Alamitos Middle School *Soldering your Way to a Welding Career* mini grant.

## Connecting and Accessing Current STEM Resources



Example of STEM Resource available to schools in Northern NM.

STEMinNM connects and extends existing STEM resources statewide by convening partners and sharing access to opportunities such as **STEM Trailers**, **competitions**, **curriculum resources**, and **educator professional learning**. These efforts ensure that rural communities have access to high-quality, engaging STEM experiences.

The Network also coordinates and promotes OST STEM learning through statewide initiatives such as the **Governor's STEM Challenge**, **Supercomputing Challenge**, and **Miner Mayhem**, as well as community-based STEM camps. As a result, **over 800 students in rural/underserved communities** gained access to OST STEM learning opportunities that were previously unavailable.

## Educator Professional Learning to Improve Student Engagement in STEM (Prioritizing Math)

Virtual and In-person professional learning is organized through the Principal and Regional Hub partners with a goal of serving 500 educators in year one. Professional Learning topics include:

- Cultivating Indigenous Research Communities for Leadership in Education and STEM
- High Quality Math Instruction Materials Workshops
- Math Lab: Communities of Practice Monthly Meetings
- *Growing Language Through Science: Strategies That Work Across the Curriculum* Book Study
- NM Tech: Inspire Math Confidence Conference



For additional Information please go to [www.STEMinNM.org](http://www.STEMinNM.org) or contact Wanda Bulger Tamez at (575) 646-2755.