



NEW MEXICO SUMMER ENRICHMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (SEIP)

SUMMER 2026



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the SEIP program?

- A. The New Mexico High School Summer Enrichment Internship Program, which began in 2021 and is funded by the New Mexico Public Education Department, provides paid, meaningful internships for high school students. The internships are designed to provide 20 hours a week (14 hours at a job + 6 hours of professional skills building) for 8 weeks during the summer. The internships are hosted by private employers, with an emphasis on in-demand industries, as well as by government agencies and nonprofit organizations. The program is vital in bridging the gap between academic knowledge and practical world experience. The New Mexico Public Education Department with state funding will once again offer the High School Summer Enrichment Internship Program in Summer 2026 with the support of Education at Work, the Work-Based Learning Alliance, and Britebound.

Q: Who is Education at Work?

- A. Education at Work, LLC, a national nonprofit, is under contract with NM PED to oversee SEIP. Education at Work was chosen through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Education at Work (E@W) is committed to reshaping the education to career journey through paid, flexible work-based learning opportunities. E@W connects high-school and college students with employers, helping employers develop talent pipelines while offering students meaningful experiences that bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical workforce experiences.



Q: What is the timeline for SEIP 2026?

- A. Education at Work negotiates contracts with Program Operators during February & March, who will be important partners in summer 2026. Potential Program Operators interested in participating in 2026 should reach out to E@W immediately through nminterns@eaw.org. E@W is simultaneously responding to employer interest in hosting interns. Student applications will open in March 2026. The program will run for 8 weeks in the summer after the school year concludes and prior to students starting school. All students will be required to attend a pre-employment orientation session prior to beginning their internships.

Q: Where can I go for more information?

- A. You can find more information at nminterns.com. Please join our mailing list and email us at nminterns@eaw.org with any questions.

Program Operators

Q: What is a Program Operator?

- A. In most cases, Program Operators are a county government, Pueblo or Tribal government. Program Operators are important sources of local knowledge in their community.

Q: What are the roles and responsibilities of a Program Operator?

- A. The program operator is responsible for:
- Recruiting employer partners where students in your geographic community will be hosted (E@W is available to provide limited support for recruiting employers).
 - Program operators have a shared responsibility with E@W to recruit and register high school students in your community.
 - Program operators will be responsible for creating an internship schedule that includes the optimal design of 14 hours/week of training and career exploration at the employer site and 6 hours/week of professional skills training and work on a community impact project (a total of 20 hours/week for 8 weeks).



- Program operators will help to identify internship coordinators. Programs must have a maximum ratio of 1 internship coordinator: 20 students. E@W will hire and be the employer of record of internship coordinators.
- Program operators will be the local source of knowledge for the internship coordinators.

Q: Do Program Operators need to submit a grant proposal?

- A. No. Program Operators will not have to submit a proposal in order to participate in SEIP. Education at Work will be issuing subcontracts to Program Operators, with a Statement of Work outlining their responsibilities.

Q: What are the insurance requirements for Program Operators?

- A. Education at Work is the employer of record and therefore carries liability, workers' compensation, and other mandatory insurance for students and internship coordinators. **Employers (see the Employer section of the FAQ for more information)** must carry worker's compensation insurance on their employees who will be part of the program and must have automobile insurance for any vehicle used to transport interns during the program. During contract negotiations, E@W will share information about its insurance policies and the need for any additional requirements.

Q: What are the background check requirements for Program Operators?

- A. Program Operators who are not Internship Coordinators and not Employers do not need background checks or fingerprinting. **(For Employer requirements see the Employer section of the FAQ.)**

Q: What is the relationship of the Program Operator with employers?

- A. Program Operators are important members of the community and are primarily responsible for recruiting employer placements, registering employer placements on the secure site with Education at Work and providing the agreement between Education at Work and the Employer and ensuring it is executed.



Q: Do Program Operators have to use E@W's curriculum?

- A. The base curriculum provided by Work-Based Learning Alliance (WBLA), a non-profit organization that is a subcontractor to E@W, covers the subjects required in the contract between NM PED and E@W and includes nationally curated, best practice materials. If a Program Operator chooses to adapt that curriculum or to use an alternative curriculum, Internship Coordinator(s) must still attend the mandatory weekly virtual training sessions.

Q: Who will be responsible for paying the student?

- A. Education at Work will be the employer of record and will be responsible for paying students.

Q: Can a program operator pay more than minimum wage?

- A. The NM PED contract allows students to be paid minimum wage up to \$15 per hour. Student wages and Internship Coordinator wages will be outlined in the Statement of Work, an attachment to the subcontract negotiated with E@W.

Q: Who hires and manages Internship Coordinators?

- A. E@W will be the employer of Internship Coordinators. E@W encourages Program Operators to make referrals for employment of previous Internship Coordinators whom they recommend for employment in 2026. E@W and its partner WBLA will be responsible for the training of Internship Coordinators to deliver the professional skills curriculum and other responsibilities of the position. Internship Coordinators must attend a mandatory pre-employment training session delivered by WBLA and must attend weekly training sessions delivered by WBLA.

Q: Who matches students with internship placements?

- A. Education at Work will create **initial** placements based on an algorithm that considers many factors to help set up students for success, including location, student interest, slots available in their area, and priorities identified by PED. After the initial matching, Education at Work will review these results with each Program Operator and make adjustments, as appropriate, before students are notified of their placement.



Q: How many students can I place as a Program Operator?

- A. Potential Program Operators will meet with Education at Work to discuss potential internship slots they can place based on the number of high-quality internship job placements the Program Operator can identify balanced with a population allocation to ensure that PED's priorities to ensure that every region in the state is represented and every student is given fair access to participate in the program are met.

Q: What if I find more placements? What if I can't fill my slots?

- A. E@W has designed a dynamic process to work collaboratively with Program Operators in order to enable full utilization of all funds and fair access to the program statewide. Program Operators will have a password-protected, secure site to register employer participation which will enable E@W to track progress toward securing the high-quality employer placements. The E@W team will follow up on a regular basis with Program Operators to discuss: support needed to recruit additional employer placements; availability of additional placements; or, a decision to re-allocate slots to another Program Operator to ensure full utilization of program resources.

Q: What is a program enhancement fee?

- A. The program enhancement fee is the definition of the grant dollars E@W will provide to Program Operators in a fee-for-service subcontract to be used to support the costs associated with the Program Operators' expenses in carrying out the duties as outlined in their Statement of Work. E@W will outline restrictions on how funds can be spent and the requirement to use dollars only in the administration of this program but otherwise decisions on allocation of these funds will be at the discretion of the Program Operator.

Q: How and when will I receive my program enhancement fee?

- A. The program enhancement fee is a grant given to the program operator as outlined in the Statement of Work. The total grant amount will be finalized when the final allocation of employer placements and student assignments have been made, and will be governed by the terms of the subcontract and conditions in the Statement Of Work. Payments will be made in three payments with one in advance of the program start date, one during the program service dates and a final payment after the program ends and all the requirements of the Statement of Work have been met.



Q: What data will Program Operators be required to provide to Education at Work?

- A. Program Operators will be required to support E@W in registering all employer host sites on the secure, password protected site and filling in all information required for registration (see data requirements). Program Operators will be responsible for completing a final survey from E@W on program satisfaction and operations at the end of the summer. If requested, Program Operators will be asked to provide proof that no Program Enhancement fees were spent on prohibited expenditures.

Students

Q: Who is eligible to participate in SEIP?

- A. All currently enrolled high school students who are residents of New Mexico are eligible to participate. Preference will be given to first-time participants, and students currently completing their junior or senior year of high school. Students under 18 years old will need parental or guardian consent. Work permits are required for students younger than 16 years old. Out-of-school youth are not eligible for the program.

Q: How and when will students register for the program?

- A. All students will register through www.nminterns.com. They will be required to fill out a registration form. Parents or guardians will be required to sign a consent form for students who are under 18 years old. If students do not have access to a computer or internet access, Program Operators may hold in-person registration with access to the online registration and a printable, offline registration form will be available. Registration is now open, and priority will be given to students who register by the priority registration deadline of March 31st, 2026.

Q: What happens if a student does not have access to electronic direct deposit?

- A. During the mandatory student pre-internship orientation, we will work with students to establish an ability to receive intern pay through direct deposit options. Both Chase and Capital One offer checking accounts for teens for students who do not have a bank account. Students can open a Capital One account online with an adult's help. Students are also able to use a Cash App account for direct deposit. Establishing this ability is an important part of financial employability training and will support students' future employment and financial fitness.



Q: What happens if a student's timesheet has a problem that prevents it from being processed by payroll in time for payday?

- A. Internship Coordinators will help students submit timesheets to ensure timely payments for students. If a problem still exists, Education at Work will have dedicated HR employees to troubleshoot any outstanding issues to make certain students are paid for hours worked in a timely fashion.

Q: If a student or Internship Coordinator has a grievance or employment concern, who should they contact?

- A. As an employee of E@W, students and Internship Coordinators should follow the E@W process for HR issues. The handbook and HR process will be outlined in the mandatory Internship Coordinator orientation.

Internship Coordinators

Q: What is an Internship Coordinator(IC)?

- A. The Internship Coordinator (IC) is a role required under the NM PED contract that has existed since the start of the program. Generally the IC will be hired one to two weeks in advance of the program start date and remain employed for one to two weeks after the program ends. ICs are part-time (20 hours per week) seasonal employees of Education at Work for Summer 2026. ICs will have a student to coordinator ratio of no greater than 1:20. Many previous ICs have been teachers or educators during their summer break or college students pursuing a degree in a related field (education, social work, counseling, etc.), and in some cases, Program Operators have used previous high school interns to fill the IC role.

Q: What is the role and responsibilities of the Internship Coordinator?

- A. The role of the Internship Coordinator is to be the most important point of contact for the employer, the student, and their parent or caregiver. The Internship Coordinator supervises students including ensuring that timesheets are completed and submitted in a timely and accurate manner. They will manage students at a 20:1 ratio, attend virtual weekly training, deliver the student curriculum (about 6 hours/week), visit student host sites to ensure that both student and employer needs are met, and report to the Director of Internship Coordinators. The Internship Coordinator is the first line of communication in an emergency response situation for students.



Q: Who hires Internship Coordinators?

- A. The employer of record will be Education at Work. However, because many Program Operators have successful and longstanding relationships with previous ICs and Program Operators have the community relationships that are critical to the SEIP program's success, Program Operators will be given the opportunity to recommend to Education at Work candidates for Internship Coordinator positions.

Q: Who will be responsible for paying the Internship Coordinator?

- A. Education at Work is the employer of record and will be responsible for paying Internship Coordinators.

Q: What are the requirements to be an Internship Coordinator?

- A. Internship Coordinators must pass a background check and be fingerprinted. They must also possess the capacity to understand the curriculum and deliver it to high school students. They must have a current, valid driver's license and reliable transportation. It is preferred that they have previous experience working with high school students or are pursuing a field of study that prepares them to work with high school students.

Q: What is the employment period for Internship Coordinators(IC)s?

- A. Education at Work will negotiate the employment period for ICs in consultation with Program Operators, taking into consideration local context. Generally, ICs begin 1 - 2 weeks before the start of the internship and continue for 1 - 2 weeks after the internship is completed. The timeline varies based on the level of support needed. Additionally, all ICs are required to attend a mandatory pre-employment, orientation session and a session on internship protocols and learning objectives.

Q: What are the background check requirements for Internship Coordinators?

- A. All internship coordinators are required to complete and pass a background check and be fingerprinted. This is a requirement of New Mexico state law for individuals with direct supervisory responsibility for students in an education setting. If an Internship Coordinator already has this completed, for example, if they are a school teacher, they do not need to go through this process again. Their background check and fingerprinting for the school district is sufficient.



Q: Who checks the timesheet?

- A. It is the responsibility of ICs to ensure that students understand the importance of submitting timesheets that are accurate and submitted on a timely basis. E@W HR will review all submissions to ensure students do not exceed the 20 hour/week average limit and 160 hours for the summer maximum and that all other New Mexico and federal labor laws are followed. If there is a discrepancy or issue with a time sheet, the Internship Coordinator will be notified and asked to work with the student and all attempts will be made to fix any timesheet issues before payroll closes for the pay period.

Q: Who communicates if a timesheet is not submitted?

- A. E@W HR will immediately notify the Internship Coordinator of any missing or incomplete timesheet submission. They will convey the issues and deadlines to meet the pay period closing date.

Employer Sites

Q: How does an employer join the program?

- A. Interested employers can send an inquiry through the nminterns.org website or to the nminterns@eaw.org email. They can also reach out to a local Program Operator. Program Operators or E@W staff will register an employer in our system on a secure site in order to ensure that they are allocated to a Program Operator's program area, that sufficient Internship Coordinators are available to staff students at the site, and that funding is available for the wages to pay the student. Once registered, employers will receive additional information and a draft of the required agreement between E@W and the employer and once finalized, a roster of students and the contact information for the Internship Coordinator assigned to their site.

Q: What are the requirements to be an Employer Site?

- A. Employers will enter into an agreement with E@W after being assigned to a Program Operator's program for 2026 that will outline all the required responsibilities of an employer. All employer host sites must be eligible to host high school aged interns (14 -17 years of age), as outlined under the [Federal Fair Labor Standards Act](#). E@W will match students based on their age with employers based on the classification of their industry (14/15 year olds, v. 16/17 year olds). An employer must commit to having a supervisor



assigned to the high school interns. The employer should have tasks and responsibilities appropriate for a high school student to understand the career opportunities, skills and work requirements in the career field (ie: health care, IT, plumbing, etc.) of the intern placement. Employers should have appropriate safety protocols in place to ensure that high school students participating in an educational internship program are able to learn important life and professional skills, as well as appropriate career-specific skills in an environment appropriate for their age and skill level. The employer should have a general liability policy and be prepared to name E@W as an “other insured” and E@W will name the employer in their liability policy as an “other insured.” Further, E@W’s worker’s compensation policy will cover students and internship coordinators, but the employer must provide proof of workers compensation insurance for their own employees as well as the classification coverage for the supervisor assigned to the intern in order to assure appropriate coverage under E@Ws policy.

Q: What are the roles and responsibilities of a Supervisor at an Employer Site?

- A. While the Internship Coordinator is responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the intern(s) during their work hours (approximately 14 per week) and during their professional skills training (approximately 6 hours per week not at the work site), supervisors should be aware of safety protocols appropriate for the supervision of interns engaged in an educational program, and should have a list of tasks and responsibilities for the intern appropriate for their skill and age level. Supervisors should be prepared to share information about their own career journey, in particular their path from education into their career/job role, how those pathways may have changed, and what they value today as skills and abilities of early career hires. Prior to the start of the internship, E@W will provide “tips & tricks” from previous employers and supervisors who have successfully participated in the NM SEIP program to support new supervisors. Lastly, the supervisor should work closely with the designated Internship Coordinator to address any challenges or concerns early in the internship placement and they should reinforce to students the importance of submitting timely and accurate timesheets and connect that to the requirements of their own organization and workplace to establish professional norms and relevance for students. Supervisors should direct students to the E@W HR processes for any specific concerns.



Q: What jobs and roles can NM SEIP interns fill in the Summer 2026 program?

A. All SEIP employers providing internship opportunities to New Mexico students must adhere to the federal and state child labor laws regarding work hours, permits, and allowed work. <https://www.dws.state.nm.us/Child-Labor>

Pueblo and Tribal Nation rules may differ from federal and state rules. If you are a Pueblo or Tribal Nation, please inform EAW of where these variances exist.

Summary resource:

https://www.dws.state.nm.us/Portals/0/DM/LaborRelations/Working_as_a_Teen_2023.pdf

Non-Agriculture Jobs

For minors age 16-17 or younger, established by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

Prohibited Hazardous Occupations *

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/YouthRules/young-workers/non-ag-16-17>

Federal law establishes safety standards and restrictions for young workers in non-agricultural industries. The list of hazardous jobs that you are not permitted to do include the following types of work:

- Manufacturing or storing explosives.
- Driving a motor vehicle or work as an outside helper on motor vehicles—bans operating motor vehicles on public roads and working as outside helpers on motor vehicles, except 17-year-olds may drive cars or small trucks during daylight hours for limited times and under strictly limited circumstances.
- Coal mining—bans most jobs in coal mining.
- Most occupations in forest fire fighting, forest fire prevention, timber tract, forestry service, and occupations in logging and sawmilling operations.
- Power-driven woodworking machines.
- Exposure to radioactive substances and ionizing radiation—bans employment of minors where they are exposed to radioactive materials.
- Power-driven hoisting apparatus—bans operating, riding on, and assisting in the operation of most power-driven hoisting apparatus such as forklifts, non-automatic elevators, skid-steers, skid-steer loaders, backhoes, manlifts, scissor lifts, cherry pickers, work-assist platforms, boom trucks, and cranes. Does not apply to grease rack lifts used to raise cars in gasoline service stations, tire stores, and other establishments.
- Power-driven metal-forming, punching and shearing machines.



- Mining, other than coal—bans most jobs in mining at metal mines, quarries, aggregate mines, and other mining sites including underground work in mines, work in or about open cut mines, open quarries, and sand and gravel operations.
- Power-driven meat-processing machines, slaughtering and meat packing plants—bans the operation of power-driven meat processing machines, such as meat slicers, saws and meat choppers, wherever used (including restaurants and delicatessens). Also prohibits minors from cleaning such equipment, including the hand-washing of the disassembled machine parts. This ban also includes the use of this machinery on items other than meat, such as cheese and vegetables.
- Power-driven bakery machines—bans the operation of power-driven bakery machines such as vertical dough and batter mixers; dough rollers, rounders, dividers, and sheeters; and cookie or cracker machines.
- Balers, compactors, and power-driven paper-products machines—bans the operation of all compactors and balers and certain power-driven paper products machines such as platen-type printing presses and envelope die cutting presses. 16- and 17-year-olds may load, but not operate or unload, certain scrap paper balers and paper box compactors under very specific guidelines.
- Manufacturing of brick, tile and related products.
- Power-driven circular saws, band saws, guillotine shears, chain saws, reciprocating saws, wood chippers, and abrasive cutting discs—bans the operation of, and working as a helper on, the named types of power-driven equipment, no matter what kind of items are being cut by the equipment.
- Wrecking, demolition, and ship-breaking operations.
- Roofing operations and work performed on or about a roof—bans most jobs in roofing operations, including work performed on the ground and removal of the old roof, and all work on or about a roof.
- Trenching and excavation operations—bans most jobs in trenching and excavation work, including working in a trench more than four feet deep.

Non-Agriculture Jobs

For minors age 14-15, in addition to **Prohibited Hazardous Occupations** for minors age 16-17 or younger above, established by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA):

Prohibited Occupations*

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/YouthRules/young-workers/non-ag-14-15>

Occupations involving:

- Processing, mining, in any workroom or workplace where goods are manufactured or processed, in freezers, or in meat coolers.
- Processing, including laundry and dry cleaning



EDUCATION
WORK

- Public messenger service
- Hoisting apparatus or any power-driven machinery
- Power-driven mowers/cutters
- Operation or tending any power-driven machinery, except office machines.
- The use of auto pits, racks, and lifting apparatus
- You may not *work from ladders, scaffolds, or their substitutes*
- Youth peddling, sign waving, or door-to-door sales activities.
- Catch or cooping poultry.

Occupations in connection with:

- Transportation of persons or property
- Warehousing and storage
- Communications
- Public utilities
- Construction

Occupations in retail food or gas service establishments:

- Work in boiler/engine rooms
- Maintenance/repair of machines and equipment
- Outside window washing
- *Cooking or baking operations.*
- Operating, setting up, adjusting, cleaning, oiling, or repairing power-driven food slicers, grinders, choppers, and mixers
- Work in freezers/coolers
- Loading and unloading goods

Limited exception

Ages 14–17 may separate mica only if:

- Blasting happens when no one is working
- Mica is moved to a different site before processing

** and any occupations found and declared hazardous by FLSA.*



Agriculture Jobs

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/YouthRules/young-workers/ag-16-plus>

For minors age 16-17

- Can work on any farm job.

For minors age 14-15, Federal law establishes safety standards and restrictions for young workers on farms. If you are not yet 16, you cannot be employed in occupations that have been declared hazardous.

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/YouthRules/young-workers/ag-14-15>

Hazardous jobs include:

- Operating a tractor of over 20 PTO horsepower, or connecting or disconnecting an implement or any of its parts to or from such a tractor;
- Operating or working with a corn picker, cotton picker, grain combine, hay mower, forage harvester, hay baler, potato digger, mobile pea viner, feed grinder, crop dryer, forage blower, auger conveyor, unloading mechanism of a nongravity-type self-unloading wagon or trailer, power post-hole digger, power post driver, or non-walking-type rotary tiller;
- Operating or working with a trencher or earthmoving equipment, fork lift, potato combine, or power-driven circular, band or chain saw;
- Working in a yard, pen, or stall occupied by a bull, boar, or stud horse maintained for breeding purposes; a sow with suckling pigs; or a cow with a newborn calf (with umbilical cord present);
- Felling, buckling, skidding, loading, or unloading timber with a butt diameter or more than 6 inches;
- Working from a ladder or scaffold at a height of over 20 feet;
- Driving a bus, truck or automobile to transport passengers, or riding on a tractor as a passenger or helper;
- Working inside:
 - A fruit, forage, or grain storage designed to retain an oxygen-deficient or toxic atmosphere;
 - An upright silo within two weeks after silage has been added or when a top unloading device is in operating position;
 - A manure pit; or
 - A horizontal silo while operating a tractor for packing purposes;
- Handling or applying toxic agricultural chemical identified by the words "danger," "poison," or "warning" or a skull and crossbones on the label;
- Handling or using explosives; and
- Transporting, transferring, or applying anhydrous ammonia.



Entertainment Industry

- The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions enforces rules for employing and protecting child performers in the entertainment industry, including motion pictures, theatrical, radio, and television productions.
- The employer is responsible for obtaining a Pre-Authorization Certificate for any child performer under the age of 18 BEFORE the employment begins.
- Additional important details can be found at:
https://www.dws.state.nm.us/Portals/0/DM/LaborRelations/Child_Employment_Entertainment_Law.pdf
- Film or TV productions, even if hazardous, only if:
 - A New Mexico-certified safety trainer is present at all times

If you have additional questions, please email them to nminterns@eaw.org.