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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Broadband for Education bill heads to Senate Floor** *Legislation transfers Statewide Education Network to Broadband Office*

SANTA FE – This morning, the Senate Finance Committee passed [SB 401](#), the Broadband for Education bill, by a vote of 7 to 1, clearing the way for a full Senate vote.

The Broadband for Education bill would transfer the Statewide Education Network (SEN) from the Public School Facilities Authority (PSFA) to the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE). The legislation would move all SEN staff, funds, projects and operations to the state’s broadband office.

“We are pleased that the Finance Committee understands the significance of this bill and what it will mean for broadband expansion on the education front,” said **Drew Lovelace**, acting director of OBAE. “SB 401 will make SEN run more efficiently, and such a transfer will enable us to leverage more education programs and allow for resiliency.”

SEN is currently run by OBAE, so the transfer will be seamless, and the move also provides OBAE with autonomy. PSFA also supports the bill.

SEN launched its broadband infrastructure program last July, connecting dozens of schools through a school-centric broadband network. The network will allow students and teachers to share classes, resources and educational and social services.

SEN plans to connect all New Mexico schools through this bold, high-tech program by 2027.

Passage of SB 401 will also allow for more middle mile broadband for SEN, something that will benefit broadband providers, schools and students. SEN middle mile could also be used in communications emergencies statewide.

The sponsors of SB 401 are [Sen. Michael Padilla](#), Senate Majority Whip, [Rep. Debra Sarinana](#), [Rep. Tara Lujan](#) and [Rep. Joy Garratt](#).

A Senate vote could come as early as this weekend. If SB 401 passes, the legislation would be assigned to a House committee.

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*The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion is dedicated to serving New Mexico with a commitment to make high-speed broadband accessible to all New Mexicans. OBAE's mission is to expand and improve high-speed internet service with passionate leadership that drives bold, equitable, affordable and inclusive broadband solutions. OBAE seeks results that honor the state's rich heritage and elevate quality of life for all.*