



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

**In Case You Missed It:**

**Editorial: Consider new kids' fund using new mineral rights**

By *Albuquerque Journal* Editorial Board

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<http://www.abqjournal.com/826289/consider-new-kids-fund-using-new-mineral-rights.html>

State Land Commissioner Aubrey Dunn has modified a proposal from his predecessor's playbook in an interesting effort to raise money for early childhood education.

Dunn is proposing that a new permanent fund be created that would draw revenues from leasing out subsurface mineral rights from land the federal government would transfer to the state if Congress approves. The Legislature would have to approve Dunn's proposal for an Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund.

Former Commissioner Ray Powell two years ago had put forth something similar. Instead of raiding the state's \$14.6 billion Land Grant Permanent Fund as many early childhood advocates have pushed for, Powell opposed that plan and had proposed that the state look into acquiring Bureau of Land Management parcels the agency wanted to dispose of. That land would have then be leased to benefit early childhood and other education programs.

Unlike Powell's proposal, which involved surface acreage, Dunn's plan involves only subsurface rights and would not affect public access, according to a spokeswoman for his office. The state would share royalties and other revenue from leases with the federal government for 10 years.

Dunn's idea has merit and is worth lawmakers' consideration.

*This editorial first appeared in the Albuquerque Journal. It was written by members of the editorial board and is unsigned as it represents the opinion of the newspaper rather than the writers.*