



A Sufficient Education is not just sufficient funding.

A Sufficient Education includes things such as:

quality programs, qualified staff, student enrichment, experiential learning,
equitable access, adequate infrastructure,
updated technology, high academic expectations,
college and career readiness, and
culturally and linguistically responsive materials and curriculum.

Staffing has reached critical levels of need.

Staffing for a sufficient education requires continued investment and support. Schools need highly trained and highly qualified educators, professionals, and support staff. The New Mexico Legislature is encouraged to seek supplemental funding and structures that articulates both short and long-term strategies for a professional workforce and to address the staffing crisis especially with our lowest paid employees.

Principal and School District Leadership Development Program will help deal with the critical staffing needs. 59 of the 89 school districts in New Mexico have new superintendents for the 2022-23 School Year additionally 4 out of 10 principals (38%) are expected to leave the profession in the next three years according to the National Association of Secondary School Principals. A June 2022 Aspen Institute report calls for rethinking of the principal's role that encourages agency, expertise, collaborative leadership and community connections. The New Mexico Legislature is encouraged to fund and support a principal and school district leadership development program.

Extended learning time is not just additional days.

Increased instructional learning opportunities for a sufficient education can and should be locally designed. Sufficient funding from the Legislature is successful when it results in increased instructional learning time, not just increased funding. Communities can implement research-based practices that excite and engage student learning and invigorate our educators and staff. Increased instructional time should acknowledge the need for increased student learning time, restructured student learning experiences, and embedded time for educator professional development. Increasing time without changing the days or improving teacher quality is not a sufficient education. The Genius Hour model in our extended learning time schools has given students equitable opportunities and enrichment.

Educational programming is in the midst of reform.

Educational programming in a sufficiently funded school offers each student rigorous coursework, social-emotional supports, experiential learning, internships, college and career readiness, bilingual and dual language education, personalized educational pathways, and culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum and materials. Additionally, the pandemic exacerbated the need for technology tools, up-to-date facilities and infrastructure, improved transportation systems, community school frameworks, whole child supports, and social-emotional learning.

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Social Emotional Learning and the Behavioral Health Pipeline and School Reimbursement is an important part of supporting the whole child. There is global recognition that the behavioral health supports for students are essential for their success. A 2022 New Mexico First, cites suicide rates, substance abuse, mental health, and children’s behavioral health services as increasing areas of concern for behavioral health in New Mexico. That report cites the prevalence of persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness among New Mexico high school students increased by 25% from 2015 to 2019. The New Mexico First report, shows that 64.86% of New Mexicans live in a mental health professional shortage area. The New Mexico Legislature should develop a strong pathway for increased numbers of behavioral health providers that includes paid internships. The state should examine the reimbursement process for schools and districts for behavioral health services provided to students.

Technology Device and Connectivity Funding is essential to provide an equitable education to all students and is an essential part of the core instructional materials for all students in New Mexico. In April 2021, addressing the Martinez and Yazzie Consolidated Lawsuit, First Judicial District Court Judge Matthew Wilson ordered the state to provide “at-risk” students computers and high-speed internet for remote and post-pandemic learning. Research from the Brookings Institution found that ed-tech interventions are most effective when scaling up quality instruction, facilitating personalized instruction, expanding opportunities for practice, and increasing learner engagement. School districts are working to ensure that all students have a device by using Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds, which will expire in 2024. The New Mexico Legislature should develop and consistently fund technology devices and connectivity for all students.

Capital Outlay Offset Exemptions should be dealt with to support equitable funding for all schools in the state. The Public School Capital Outlay Fund was developed and established in response to the 1998 Zuni lawsuit and seeks to establish and implement a uniform funding system for capital improvements. In 2003, the Legislature enacted a state share funding formula to take into account the availability of school district revenues from both bond levies and direct mill levies that support capital outlay. That requires an offset from direct legislative appropriations for capital outlay expenditures be applied against the state share of funds awarded to a school district by the Public School Capital Outlay Council. The offset is an amount based on the state share formula equaling 100 percent minus the state share percentage calculated by the formula, times the amount of the legislative appropriation. The New Mexico Legislature should look to **eliminate the offset for Capital Outlay projects** if the project has “life, health, and safety” implications. “Life, health, and safety” be determined if the capital outlay projects are for school security and safety, replacement of major mechanical/structural systems, and other improvements to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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