



AFT New Mexico • Albuquerque Teachers Federation • NEA-New Mexico
 New Mexico Coalition of Education Leaders • New Mexico PTA
 New Mexico School Boards Association

2022: Investing in an Educational Renaissance
Attracting, Retaining, and Supporting a Diverse Workforce

The NM Education Partners 2022 platform is based on the following:

- Funding must be BOLD and COURAGEOUS in order to hire and retain the workforce our students require and the Constitution mandates.
- Staffing shortages are our biggest collective educational crisis: we must focus on systems that support educators and eliminate or reform the systems that don't support them. (e.g.: Licensure, lack of substitutes, increased mandates)
- Educator retention is different from educator recruitment, and both must be addressed in order to stem the historic levels of vacancies in our schools. Stabilizing the economic future of educators and the education system is the challenge, and bold, stable investment is the solution.
- Educational equity and "learning loss" can be addressed with local decision making and flexibility, including local autonomy based on stakeholder input and resources. Bold funding with local decision making is a priority in meeting student needs.
- Digital equity and access must be addressed across both rural and urban communities.

Bold Investments in an Educational Renaissance

1. Competitive salaries now and in the future. Educator vacancies are a nation-wide issue, indeed a world-wide issue. Only a bold investment with a promise for future growth will allow New Mexico to compete for the staff we need in a highly competitive market. At a minimum we recommend:

<u>Teachers</u>	<u>School Year 2022-23</u>	<u>School Year 2023-2024</u>	<u>School Year 2024-2025</u>
Tier 1	\$50,000	\$55,000	\$60,000
Tier 2	\$60,000	\$65,000	\$70,000
Tier 3	\$70,000	\$75,000	\$80,000

- Counselors, social workers, special education therapists, and nurses are critical to meeting the priority needs of students. Bold funding to hire additional staff while maintaining current staff that support student well-being are the best antidote to systemic statewide trauma. **All are part of staffing for the needs of students.**
- A mandatory minimum for educational assistants, secretaries, clerks, cafeteria staff, custodians, and bus drivers of at least \$30,000 with bold across-the-board increases. **Investing in these essential workers will not only stabilize our workforce, it is a path to higher, more inclusive economic growth.**
- Increased compensation for principals to 80K, 90K, and 100K will also help to **recruit and retain high quality educational leaders.**
- **Expand Paid Teacher Residency Programs to:**
 - Provide a consistent pipeline of new teachers.

- Recruit more diverse candidates.
- Meet student and district needs by reducing turnover and filling shortages.
- Provide value to school communities and classrooms.

Paid residencies can more immediately address our State's teacher pipeline problems if we expand and better fund teacher residencies. By expanding residency funding to every institution of higher education and providing each resident \$35,000/academic year, we can attract second career educators, have excellent training embedded in our schools, and in-turn commit to remain in our districts.

Teacher residency programs create a vehicle to recruit teachers for high-needs fields and locations; offer recruits strong content and clinical preparation—specifically for the kinds of schools in which they will teach; connect new teachers to early career supports helping to keep them in the profession; and provide financial incentives to retain teachers in districts that have invested in their success.

- In order to address historic vacancies, the New Mexico Legislature should address current State statute to help bolster our substitute ranks by allowing retired educators to work increased time in our schools by relaxing current ERB guidelines (with a sunset) for **retirees returning to the classroom in substitute roles**.
- Increase state **contributions to the ERB** to reach a fully-funded status on a quicker timeline in order to recruit and retain both new and veteran educators.

2. SEG Sufficiency and Flexibility to Address Local Needs and Stability Funding: Districts are still coping with decades of disinvestment in their schools. The state must make bold investments for an equitable education system. Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities build relationships and engage students in school, and they are essential to student success and engagement:

- The SEG must support each district to pay a salary differential to educators who are band directors, coaches, speech and debate team leaders, department chairs, and orchestra teachers and many more. **Each district should have the SEG funding and the flexibility to pay for local priorities and services that are essential to our students.**

3. Flexibility to Address Local Needs and Issues of Equity: Administrators, educators and families are looking forward to taking further advantage of the investment our State has made in additional learning, and this means moving from standardization to personalization:

- **Extended Learning Time Program:** While some districts can best address students' needs with 10 additional days of schools, others feel the **flexibility** to add hours instead of days will best support their students in their behavioral, academic, and culturally/linguistically sustaining endeavors. Diverse, yet successful, models include the "Genius Hour" program offered by Albuquerque Public Schools, as well as **locally modified ELTP programs** in Deming Public Schools and Cuba Independent Schools.
- **Temporary modifications to the current K-5+ Program** requirements must be made to support districts in providing targeted support for specific elementary students who experienced attendance issues, during remote and/or hybrid learning and provide them with in-person schooling after the 2021-2022 school year and/or during the 2022-2023 school year. Creative incentives should be provided to students, staff, and families that elect to engage in this program: weekly field trips with costs built in, parent and student focus groups to promote equity and input, and culture/language opportunities for students and families.
- **School mental and behavioral services** along with youth mentoring programs and social emotional services must be prioritized and funded adequately.

4. Community Schools: Community schools remove barriers to success. The community schools strategy rethinks public schools to provide an integrated focus on academics, health and social services. **Community schools organize the resources of a community to address and eliminate barriers to learning.** It centers public schools as hubs for communities and combines a rigorous, relevant educational program with extended learning opportunities, family and community engagement, and an infusion of culture/language and social services. Strategies for meeting the needs of students and families are strengthened as partnerships are built between schools and community-based organizations:

- We recommend the State create the capacity and infrastructure required to scale the community school strategy (inclusive of locally-determined expanded learning time) to all schools in which at least 80% of students come from low-income families.