

Supporting our State and our Students

FY27 UNIFIED HIGHER EDUCATION PRIORITIES

Endorsed by the Higher Education Regents Coalition

New Mexico Council of University
Presidents (CUP), James Johnston, Chair

New Mexico Independent Community
Colleges (NMICC), Becky Rowley, Chair

New Mexico Association of Community
Colleges (NMACC), Sabrina Ezzell, President

Legislative Finance Committee

December 10, 2025

THANK YOU

Eastern New Mexico University * New Mexico Highlands University * New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology * New Mexico State University * Northern New Mexico College * Western New Mexico University * University of New Mexico

Central New Mexico Community College * Clovis Community College * Luna Community College * Mesalands Community College * New Mexico Junior College * New Mexico Military Institute * Northern New Mexico College * San Juan College * Santa Fe Community College * Southeast New Mexico College * Western New Mexico University

ENMU-Roswell * ENMU-Ruidoso * NMSU-Alamogordo * NMSU-Dona Ana * NMSU-Grants * UNM-Gallup * UNM-Los Alamos * UNM-Taos * UNM-Valencia

WITH YOUR SUPPORT -

- academic enrollment increased 3.6% from Fall 2024 & 2025
- trained or provided paid internships/ apprenticeships in high-demand fields to over 6,200 students in FY2025



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS

With your continued support of the **Lottery Scholarship** and the **Opportunity Scholarship**, New Mexico has

- the fifth lowest level of student debt¹
- the third smallest proportion of students with debt²

With your support of **New Mexico post-secondary education**

- New Mexico ranks **9th** in the U.S. and District of Columbia in **social mobility index**³



1. WalletHub September 18, 2025;



2. Education Data Initiative June 26, 2025;



3. CollegeNet 2025

INSTRUCTION & GENERAL



FORMULA FUNDING

a **4.70% increase** in formula funding, **\$42.5 million**.

- Inflation has increased higher education costs by **3.7%**.¹
- An additional **1.0%** to help address skyrocketing health insurance costs.

LEGISLATIVE MANDATES

Fully fund mandates that require new institutional services.

Fully fund any new employee benefits.

1. Mountain States Higher Education Price Index

COMPENSATION



EQUIVALENT TO STATE AGENCIES

Allow institutions the flexibility to implement an 'average' compensation increase. Each percentage requires a \$12.7 million appropriation.

STATE MANDATED EMPLOYEE BENEFIT ENHANCEMENTS

Request full funding for increased costs due to any state changes in employee benefits, such as increasing the mandated employer share of insurance benefits.

NON-RECURRING REQUESTS

Campus Safety

\$20.0 million for campus safety equipment, including access controls.

CHECS Cybersecurity

\$13.1 million working in conjunction with HED and DoIT to protect institutions from cyber threats.

Building Renewal & Replacement

\$100.0 million to address deferred maintenance and demolition for health & safety reasons

Equipment Renewal & Replacement

\$10.0 million, to support instruction & general equipment



SECTOR SPECIFIC REQUESTS

Workforce Training; Paid Internships, Externships, and Apprenticeships

Institutions are currently gathering data to demonstrate the return on investment of the NM GRO appropriation. We will be requesting predictable, sustainable funding in the 2027 Legislative Session.

Innovation Hub Package

\$100.0 million Appropriation to the Economic Development Department to support competitiveness within New Mexico's research universities and national labs.

Technology Enhancement Fund

Continued support for TEF



REGARDING -



Dual Credit

We request -

- language requiring the Public Education Department to provide funding up to the standard tuition rate to post-secondary institutions for dual credit students.

Lottery & Opportunity Scholarships

We support -

- continued funding for these important New Mexico student scholarship programs.
- review of the programs, including sustainability.
- recognition of the needs of students in allowing exemptions for at-risk students and hardships.

PRIORITY RECAP

2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

I&G FUNDING

- 4.7% increase in I&G funding

COMPENSATION

- increase commensurate with state employee/public education increases, allowing for flexibility
- Funding for state mandated employee benefit changes

NON-RECURRING

- \$100.0 million for the EDD Innovation Hub Package
- \$20.0 million for Campus Safety
- \$13.7 million for Cybersecurity
- \$100.0 million for Building Renewal & Replacement
- \$10.0 million for Equipment Renewal & Replacement

OTHER

- Support for Workforce Training; Paid Internships, Apprenticeships
- Support for the Technology Enhancement Fund
- Adopt Dual Credit language

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

- Central New Mexico Community College
- Clovis Community College
- Eastern New Mexico University
- ENMU - Roswell
- ENMU - Ruidoso
- Luna Community College
- Mesalands Community College
- New Mexico Highlands University
- New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
- New Mexico Junior College
- New Mexico Military Institute
- New Mexico State University
- NMSU - Alamogordo
- NMSU - Dona Ana
- NMSU - Grants
- Northern New Mexico College
- San Juan College
- Santa Fe Community College
- Southeast New Mexico College
- Western New Mexico University
- University of New Mexico
- UNM - Gallup
- UNM - Los Alamos
- UNM - Taos
- UNM - Valencia



NEW MEXICO
ASSOCIATION of
COMMUNITY
COLLEGES

Endorsed by the Higher Education Regents Coalition 



NEW MEXICO HIGHER EDUCATION UNIFIED BUDGET REQUEST

2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Supported by the Higher Education Regents Coalition 

New Mexico's higher education institutions submit our unified priorities for consideration. Federal funding uncertainties have cast a degree of unpredictability. We are committed to continue serving New Mexico with high quality educational opportunities from our premier research institution's, the comprehensive institutions, and community colleges; providing academic and workforce training education.

RECURRING PRIORITIES

Instruction & General (I&G) Funding – 4.7% increase

New Mexico's higher education institutions support our students as they pursue their educational goals. Funding is needed to address these increased costs -- according to the Mountain State Higher Education Price Index, institutions will lose 3.7% of their purchasing power due to inflation. The additional 1.0% provides funding to address increased costs due to skyrocketing health insurance increases.

In supporting our students, funds will be invested in student education, retention initiatives, and enhancing our abilities to make data driven decisions.

Legislative Mandates

- Provide full funding for legislative mandates requiring new institutional services to comply with new laws.
- Fully fund any statutorily enhanced employee benefits, including any required increase in employer share of group insurance. New Mexico post-secondary education institutions participate in either NMPSIA coverage, NM Health Care Authority coverage, or are self-insured.

We request institutions receive funding commensurate with the actual cost of any legislative mandates.

Cost of Living Adjustment, Equivalent to State Agencies, \$12.7 million for each percent

- Provide compensation equivalent to the increase provided for state agency and public education employees.
- Include in the compensation appropriation language flexibility for institutions to implement an “average” increase to address pay inequities, including addressing compensation for our lowest paid staff.
 - “Average” has been vetoed from the appropriations act. This action has resulted in institutions providing the same percentage increase to all employees, nullifying the opportunities for institutions to provide a higher percentage increase for our lowest paid employees.
 - The requirement institutions provide the same percentage increase to all employees, including those not paid from the state appropriation, requires the institutions to use other revenue streams – such as tuition increases - to provide the compensation increase.
 - This COLA will help employees with the skyrocketing costs of health insurance.

NON-RECURRING FUNDING PRIORITIES

Statewide Initiatives

Campus Safety: \$20.0 million

Provide support for essential campus safety equipment such as lighting, access controls, and cameras, including the need for safe student housing. This funding can assist in the costs of retrofitting older facilities for modern access controls. This funding request is for all New Mexico public higher education institutions, including New Mexico Military Institute and New Mexico’s Native American institutions.

CHECS Cybersecurity Initiatives \$13.1 million

Working in conjunction with HED and DoIT, to assist in protecting institutions from cyber threats. This funding request is for all New Mexico public higher education institutions, including New Mexico Military Institute and New Mexico’s Native American institutions.

Building Renewal & Replacement (BR&R): \$100 million

This funding is crucial to keep our facilities open to our students. BR&R is the only mechanism to address deferred maintenance.

- Support non-recurring funding for critical infrastructure.
- Support to address critical deferred maintenance needs.
 - (Use the original BR&R formula, excluding square footage added in last 5 years.)
- Support funding for building demolition for health and safety.
- Support funding for construction cost overruns due to inflation and supply chain challenges.

Equipment Renewal & Replacement: \$10 million

Support non-recurring funding for institutional instruction and general equipment.

Sector Initiatives**Community Colleges and Comprehensive Regional Institutions****Workforce Training; Paid Internships, Externships, & Apprenticeships**

The authorization for the \$60 million NM GRO appropriation expires June 30, 2027. We believe the NM GRO appropriation is a sound investment in New Mexico's economy. This appropriation is demonstrating the integral role New Mexico's community colleges and comprehensive regional institutions play in growing our work force.

The HED Report on NM GRO funding is a start in demonstrating the efficacy of these funds. In FY2026 institutions will gather data to demonstrate the return on investment. In the 2027 Legislative Session, Regional Universities and Community Colleges will be requesting a predictable methodology for annual appropriations for workforce training, internships, externships, and apprenticeships to include -

- Service-Learning Funding (Paid Internships for Credit)
- Undergraduate Research Program/Workforce Training
- Short-term, industry recognized workforce training

Research Universities**Innovation Hub Package \$100 Million appropriation to EDD**

Working collaboratively with New Mexico's research universities and national labs, New Mexico's Economic Development Department is spearheading many initiatives to increase New Mexico's competitiveness, including growing New Mexico's research infrastructure.

Technology Enhancement Fund (TEF)

Continued support for TEF

Language, Substantive Legislation**Dual Credit**

As secondary education receives full funding, regardless of whether students are taking a high school class or a dual credit class, we request the legislature adopt language requiring the Public Education Department to provide funding up to the standard tuition rate for dual credit students.

Financial Aid

Lottery & Opportunity Scholarships:

We request the state continue to fund scholarships that support student success, retention, and completion.

- Support the sustainability of our student tuition programs
- Continue to recognize the needs of students in allowing exemptions for at-risk students and hardships.
- Support the sustainability of our tuition programs and the Higher Education Trust Fund
- Support continued funding of the Lottery and Opportunity Scholarships, recognizing the relationship between state appropriations for higher education institutions and unfunded mandates passed by the legislature and executed by the governor and tuition increases are linked.

FUNDING FACTS

- *Each 1.0% of formula funding generates approximately \$9.0 million*
- *Each 1.0% tuition & fee increase generates approximately \$4.9 million*
- *Each 1.0% of formula funding is equivalent to a 1.8% tuition & fee increase*
- *Opportunity Scholarship funding supplants tuition revenue; HEI Balances are needed for cashflow as institutions are not 100% reimbursed until the end of the semester.*