



Educational policy issue areas listed below are a listing of the priority pieces of legislation that AFT New Mexico's Executive Council adopted in 2018 in preparation for the 2019 New Mexico Legislative session. While not an exhaustive listing of bills we will support, a significant portion of our union's time and energy will be spent addressing these critical needs.

As always, our legislative priorities prioritize the needs of our students first. We believe that by serving our students, their families, and the communities in which we live and work, we can not only provide better outcomes for New Mexico's students, we can also strengthen and grow our profession.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

1. Implement Community School models for all early childhood programs and K-12 school settings.
 - **Research Says:** Community schools provide much needed services to often underserved communities. Community schools are also an accepted turn-around model under Title I funding provisions.
 - **Bottom Line:** Community schools are a proven success in other areas of the country and should be replicated in New Mexico on a widespread scale.
2. Universal Early Childhood Education access for all 3 & 4 year-olds.
 - **Research Says:** Universal access to early childhood education is a smart investment, attracts business, and ensures a better chance for future success later in a student's educational journey.
 - **Bottom Line:** New Mexico should fund universal early education for all 3 & 4 year olds.
3. Creation of a Department of Early Education.
 - **Research Says:** In order to fully serve our students, all early childhood educational services should be brought under one department in order to be efficient.
 - **Bottom Line:** New Mexico should establish a Department of Early Education to be on par with the Public Education Department and the Higher Education Department.

K-12 EDUCATION

Moving Forward-A New Day for Public Education in New Mexico

A SYSTEMIC APPROACH to attract and retain high quality educators in New Mexico through a continuum of Professional Support:

High School

- **Research Says:** Educators Rising, a “grow your own” teacher initiative, is a proven way to make this happen and is already established in some New Mexico high schools.
- **Bottom Line:** As New Mexico works to rebuild and modernize our CTE programs—let’s start with Educators Rising in every high school.

Pre-Service

- **Research Says:** Teacher preparation programs that are built on strong formal partnerships with K-12 schools and prioritize clinical practice in authentic settings produce graduates who feel better prepared to teach and are rated as stronger than other new teachers by employers and independent researchers. Additionally, they have been successful in addressing critical shortages.
- **Bottom Line:** Raise the bar for both teaching candidates and teacher education programs, including embedded on-going clinical experiences, and loan forgiveness for graduates who commit to teaching in NM for a minimum of 3 years.

Teacher Residencies

- **Research Says:** Research on the impact of the residency model suggests that, on average, residents are more racially diverse than new teachers; are much more likely to stay in teaching, especially in the high-need districts that sponsor them; and are typically more effective than other novice teachers.
- **Bottom Line:** Establish strong paid teacher residencies as one pathway to licensure for post-baccalaureate and second career candidates.

Mentoring

- **Research Says:** Beginning teachers who receive mentoring focus on student learning much sooner; they become more effective as teachers because they are learning from guided practice rather than trial-and-error; and they leave teaching at much lower rates.
- **Bottom Line:** Restore and increase the funding for the requirement of the NM Administrative Code. Allocate a minimum of \$2000 per beginning teacher in order to maintain high quality mentor programs in every district.
- **Current Statute:** 22-10A-9 NMSA 1978 was first enacted in 2003, by House Bill 212 Section 40.

Induction

- **Research Says:** Strong induction and support for Level I teachers can increase their retention, accelerate their professional growth, and improve student learning. The most effective induction programs include coaching and feedback from experienced teachers and ongoing opportunities to observe expert teachers. Research suggests that district and school practices related to supporting teachers influence teachers’ decisions to enter, stay in, or leave the profession.
- **Bottom Line:** Include additional funding to support extended mentoring/induction for Level 1 teachers in years 2-5.

Professional Development

- **Research Says:** Professional development that links theory and practice, creates discourse around problems of practice, is content-based and student centered, and that engages teachers in analysis can support the serious teacher learning needed to engender powerful student achievement

- **Bottom Line:** There is significant research that investment in teacher-directed professional development pays off in increased student learning. Paid time must be embedded into the school year for all educators.

Resources

- **Research Says:** Today, a decade after the Great Recession, investment in public education in every state remains below what is required to provide our nation's people with the education they need to thrive. In New Mexico, we are still \$228-380 million under our 2008 funding level for public education. And, the funding in 2008 was \$600 million or more short of sufficiency, as affirmed by the recent Yazzie/Martinez v. State of New Mexico ruling.

According to Richard Ingersoll (University of Pennsylvania), one of the top reasons for teachers leaving the profession is that they don't have the essential resources to do their jobs well—it has to do with the working environment. Studies suggest that teachers leave, and stay, because of the conditions in which they work.

Schools and systems that work to build a positive and productive school culture attend to both the physical and intellectual needs of teachers and students. Basic needs including safety and adequate resources are systematically addressed; up-to-date and appropriate materials for teaching and learning are provided; and learning environments promote trust, respect, empowerment, and a focus on continuous learning for students and adults.

- **Bottom Line:** New Mexico must create an adequate per-student amount that is revisited and revised every 5 to 10 years. That number, the foundation of the SEG, must be the Multiplicand and the students (times the weighted factor) must be the Multiplier. That promise of sufficient funding should be kept yearly.

A failsafe (perhaps the state's School Permanent Fund) should be enacted only if that promise is broken and in order to maintain sufficient funding.

It's time to take the politics out of school funding. When public schools have more money, students do better.

Competitive Salaries

- **Research Says:** Combining both the improvement and accountability functions into a single teacher evaluation process raises difficult challenges. When the evaluation is oriented towards the improvement of practice within schools, teachers are typically open to reveal their weaknesses, in the expectation that conveying such information will lead to more effective decisions on developmental needs and training. In high-performing countries, teachers are compensated more generously than American teachers, typically earning pay similar to that of senior civil servants and professionals such as engineers and accountants. They are expected to be the best in the world and are compensated accordingly.
- **Bottom Line:** Create a Teacher-Weighted Formula that supports a competitive, statewide Career Ladder compensation system.

Teacher Evaluation

- **Research Says:** Use current practice, policy, and research to redesign New Mexico’s teacher evaluation system so it provides useful feedback to teachers to improve their practice and embed evaluations in a performance-based system of licensing and career advancement.
- **Bottom Line:** Changing the teacher evaluation system can be a powerful tool for positive change.

Other Specific Bills:

1. Repeal and replace current evaluation system for certified teachers. An outline of a bill is ready. (Vetoed)
2. Revamp instructional materials definitions in order to modernize the practice and allow educators to differentiate their tools according to the needs of their students (2017; HB42 Vetoed)
3. Extend National Board Certification stipend to school all school personnel eligible, specifically, but not exclusively counselors. (2017; SB200 Vetoed)
4. Sick Leave for Educational Retirement Credit (2018; HB 85 Vetoed)
5. Greater investment in career technical and trades education in K-12 school settings. (2018; HB179, as well as more investment, Vetoed)

- Interest in career and technical education (CTE) is emerging in many top-performing countries as a strategy to boost the national economy and offer a high standard of living and attractive careers to a broader constituency.
- In many countries CTE is well funded, academically challenging and aligned with real workforce needs. It is hands-on, attractive to students and parents, and can lead to university for students who may seek professional and managerial positions later.
- CTE is a pathway to good jobs, by building technical skills that can be achieved much earlier than the traditional academic experience.
- The United States’ primary focus on college readiness often neglects career readiness. Preparing students for the workplace or continued education is increasingly urgent, as two-thirds of jobs created by 2022 will require some form of postsecondary education whether it is an industry recognized credential or a bachelor’s degree.
- By 2024, New Mexico will have almost 673 thousand jobs available that require less than a bachelor’s degree but will require some form of training or certification, but education is traditionally pushing students toward a postsecondary degree.

Bottom Line:

- Establish meaningful partnerships between local industry, postsecondary education and high school CTE programs to identify skills gaps and opportunities for improvement.
- Identify career pathways for students aligned with local industry needs.

- Create policies that connect local industry with secondary and postsecondary partners.
 - Salary Increases for certified teachers and all licensed support and related school personnel.
 - In addition to across the board tiered increases, additional tiered increases (\$4,000 for Level I, \$6,000 for Level II, and \$6,000 for Level III) for current educational employees should be implemented in order to support those who have been working under the current administration's policies, and also attract and retain quality educators.
 - These additional increases combat the salary compaction that occurred during the Martinez administration, and also increases contributions into the ERB.
 - Research shows there is a shortage of educational employees across the country and state, and current NM PED policies are exacerbating New Mexico-based vacancies.
6. Licensure Competency for certified teachers to allow for professional dossier to be evidence for licensure competency (currently professional dossier is included in PED Rules) (2017; HB124 Vetoed)
 7. Moratoriums for new charter schools, and equalize the funding between charters and public school districts. (2017; HB46)
 8. Replace A-F school grading system—An LESC Task Force is currently working on consensus recommendations, and we support this effort.
 9. Newcomer Programs: *Newcomer programs are programs designed for recent immigrants at the secondary school level who have little or no English proficiency, and limited or no formal education in their native countries. These programs have been developed to meet newcomers' needs before they enter into general education classrooms. The goals of newcomer programs are mainly to help kids develop linguistic survival skills and start adapting to the new culture.* <http://www.colorincolorado.org/faq/what-are-newcomer-programs-what-are-their-pros-and-cons> and <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/newcomers-toolkit/ncomertoolkit.pdf>

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE RELATED PERSONNEL (Early Ed teachers and K-12 through Higher Education classified staff)

1. One-Year Probation
 - **Research Says:** Educational employees should be treated as other state workers do by having a one-year probationary period, not three years.
 - **Bottom Line:** New Mexico should reduce probationary periods for classified workers to one year.
 - **Legislation:**
 - 2017 HB 265 (Vetoed)

2. Minimum \$16/hour and tied to inflation for all educators working in early childhood settings and classified workers in K-12 (including transportation employees with private contractors) and higher educational settings.
 - **Research Says:** Wages for early childhood educators have fallen behind, and workers are now earning less than they were 10 years ago. In order to attract highly qualified educators, we must raise wages. A full 40% of classified K-12 and higher educational employees qualify for state/government assistance, despite working a full time.
 - Research shows there is a shortage of educational employees across the country and state, which includes educational assistants and other classified personnel. In New Mexico, our vacancies are increasing, especially for educators who work with high needs student populations.
 - **Bottom Line:** New Mexico should provide a living wage of \$16/hour (minimum) and \$5-\$6/hr. longevity wage increase for educational employees for all educational employees (including transportation employees with private contractors) and provide for COLAs. New Mexico should also invest in its educational workforce, and provide for higher wages in publicly run early education centers.
3. Scholarship Fund for educators in early childhood settings and classified educational employees in K-12 and higher education settings.
 - **Research Says:** Education is expensive, and as lower wage workers, early education through higher education classified staff often cannot afford additional schooling without taking out risky loans and getting into deep debt.
 - **Bottom Line:** New Mexico should provide scholarships for higher education for early educators and all education classified staff, with possible rebates for working in high needs/rural educational settings.
4. Develop career pathways for certification and advancement of early childhood workers and K-12 and higher education classified educational employee.
 - **Research Says:** When given the opportunity, many early educators and K-12 and higher education classified educational employees in would pursue a lifetime career in the education profession. Research demonstrates that when educational assistants become teachers, they stay in the education field for the remaining of their career. We should support professional development and opportunities for advancement in the educational system.
 - **Bottom Line:** New Mexico should “grow its own” by creating programs to encourage educational workers to pursue greater degrees of certification.
5. PTSD related to Workman’s Comp
 - **Research Says:** Many educational employees experience trauma and often injured while performing their work.
 - **Bottom Line:** New Mexico should include PTSD as a condition covered under Workman’s Compensation.
5. Air-conditioning for all school busses

- **Research Says:** During summer months (and depending on geographic location) internal school bus temperatures reach levels that are unsafe for students and the educational employees required to operate them.
- **Bottom Line:** New Mexico should provide funding for air-conditioning equipped busses as new models are purchased.

HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Student Loan Bill of Rights

- **Research Says:** Students shouldn't have to take on risky loans with little or no financial literacy component in order to get a higher education. Borrowers should have full information before committing to often high-interest and long-term loans.
- **Bottom Line:** New Mexico should adopt a Student Loan Bill of Rights that outlines the rights and responsibilities of both lenders and borrowers in order to prevent defaults and unsustainable educational loan practices. LFC Dec 2017 Report explained that New Mexico students have the highest rate of default on student loans.

2. Lottery Scholarship Sustainability

- **Research Says:** The New Mexico Lottery Scholarship is not sustainable at current levels.
- **Bottom Line:** The Lottery Scholarship should move to a needs-based system that prioritizes students who would not be able to attend an institution of higher education based on rising educational costs.

3. Student Loan Debt Cancellation

- **Research Says:** US student debt burden has reached \$1.5 Trillion, impacting over 44 million Americans. On average, a bachelor's degree leaves the degree-holder with \$30,000 of debt. The State of New Mexico holds debt for many of its citizen's college loans.
- **Bottom Line:** New Mexico should discontinue holding educational debt for its citizens, and take steps to cancel or reduce student debt, especially for those working in public service or non-profits within the state.

4. Higher Ed Personnel Act

- **Research Says:** Educators in higher education settings do not have the protections – such as due process rights – afforded to K-12 educational employees
- **Bottom Line:** Higher educational workers should have the same protections as other educational workers, and New Mexico should adopt protections in order to ensure that due process is provided and respected.

5. Adjunct Parity

- **Research Says:** Adjunct faculty often have heavy workloads without the protections enjoyed by tenured faculty. Class loads for adjunct faculty are overly burdensome and pay for these positions have decreased, even as the percentages of adjunct instruction has risen across universities and colleges.

- **Bottom Line:** Adjunct professorial staff should be compensated at a higher level, and New Mexico should adopt policies that encourage more opportunities for full tenured faculty positions.

6. Pay minimums for Faculty

- **Research Says:** Pay for university and college faculty has not kept up with inflation. As budgets for higher education in New Mexico have decreased, faculty have also been forced to receive fewer and lesser raises in compensation.
- **Bottom Line:** New Mexico must raise wages for faculty in order to attract and retain the best teaching staff possible for our higher educational institutions.

FUNDING, DEFECITS, AND REVENUE SOURCES

First and foremost, New Mexico needs diversified and consistent sources of revenue. Some of these possibilities include:

Personal Income Tax (PIT) The 2003 PIT cuts benefit the wealthiest taxpayers while the bottom 40% of taxpayers received no advantage. A family earning \$22,000 a year pays a personal income tax rate of 4.9%, which is the same rate paid by a family making \$100,000 annually. Returning to the pre-2003 income tax rates could generate as much as \$450 million per year.

Capital Gains Tax This tax was also reduced in 2003 and, like the PIT, also benefitted the wealthy disproportionately. An analysis by NM Voices for children showed that, in 2011, 49% of the tax cut went to those with incomes of more than \$1 million. Restoring the pre-2003 tax rates could generate \$28 to \$45 million additional revenue per year.

Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) Over time, the state's GRT increased from 2% to more than 5% while specific economic activities were excluded from being taxed. Also, new types of goods and services are now a larger part of New Mexico's economy, but are not subject to the GRT. The state's Gross Receipts Tax should be extended to new activity such as more internet sales, which could raise an additional \$25 million, by some estimates. However, if the GRT were to be extended to groceries—disproportionally impacting the poor—there should be a substantial increase to the low-income comprehensive tax rebate (LICTR).

Combined Reporting for All Sectors Enacting combined reporting laws would prevent multi-state corporations from sheltering income in U.S. tax havens. Comprehensive combined reporting laws could bring an additional \$19.4 million in annual revenue to New Mexico, according to a 2014 study by U.S. PIRG.

Tax Expenditures The LFC's 2015 tax expenditure report indicated that New Mexico lost \$1.2 billion in revenue due to "carve outs" in the state's tax base. The state's healthcare industry is the largest beneficiary of tax expenditures, reportedly costing New Mexico \$344 in lost revenue.

Land Grant Permanent Fund (LGPF) The fund is resource that should be utilized to build a system of supports for New Mexico's children from early childhood education through college. The voters should be allowed to decide on a constitutional amendment that would allow the

LGPF to restore K-12 school funding and provide additional payouts for early childhood education, with safeguards to maintain stability of the Fund.

Natural Gas and Oil Severance Taxes New Mexico has different severance tax rates for oil and natural gas. This inequity makes no sense. Equalizing tax rates on the extraction of natural gas and oil potentially could raise \$300 million each year in new revenue.

Cigarette & Liquor Taxes Nationally, New Mexico has the 22nd-highest tax rate on cigarettes. A 1 percent increase in the tax could raise \$18 million a year and still keep the rate competitive with neighboring states. Similarly, New Mexico could raise taxes on liquor and continue to be competitive. Equalizing and indexing taxes on liquor, beer and wine could raise \$24 million in new revenue.

Gasoline Tax New Mexico has the 44th-highest gas tax in the U.S. (at 18.88 cents/gallon). Raising the tax by 1 cent per gallon would keep New Mexico competitive with Utah (29.41 cents/gal.), Colorado (22 cents/gal.), Texas (20 cents/gal.), and Arizona (19 cents/gal.).

Excise Tax on Automobiles Our 3% motor vehicle excise tax is one of the lowest in the region. Raising this tax by 1 percent would raise \$44 million and would maintain a lower rate than Denver, CO (7.6%), Texas (6.3%), and Arizona (5.6%), according to a 2016 LFC Hearing Brief.

State Tax on Online purchases New Mexico Legislature last year passed a bill that sought to impose a state tax on internet businesses that had at least \$100,000 in sales to New Mexico customers, which analysts conservatively estimated would bring in about \$20 million a year in new revenue. However, Gov. Susana Martinez, who has opposed increases in state taxes, vetoed the measure.

(These suggestions are a combination of work done by AFT, AFT NM, ATF, and the Fairness Project.)

NON-STARTERS

The following policy concepts are detrimental to a healthy system of public education, and AFT New Mexico cannot support them in any form. We encourage lawmakers to seek alternatives to these concepts and find solutions that support and improve existing educational conditions for students, their families, and the communities we serve.

1. Vouchers for Private/Religious Schools
2. Tax Credits for Private/Religious Schooling
3. Adjunct Teachers in K-12 Settings
4. Watering Down Advancement Requirements in 3-Tier System
5. 4th Tier in 3-Tier System
6. Privatizing Public Education Jobs