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HOUSE MEMORIAL 61

**57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2026**

INTRODUCED BY

Raymundo Lara

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE TO STUDY  
COMPENSATION FOR CLASSIFIED PUBLIC SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DISTRICT  
EMPLOYEES, STATEWIDE COSTS OF LIVING AND HOUSING AVAILABILITY  
AND OPTIONS TO IMPROVE COMPENSATION.

WHEREAS, the success of public schools depends on the hard  
work and dedication of all school employees, including  
educational assistants, instructional support providers, bus  
drivers, food service providers, custodians, security personnel  
and many others; and

WHEREAS, school districts and charter schools face  
challenges staffing all critical public school positions and  
report concerns about salary compaction for existing school  
employees; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico state university's 2025 New Mexico

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1 educator vacancy report identified more than three hundred  
2 vacancies in classified classroom positions in public schools  
3 statewide, with disproportionately high vacancy rates in  
4 classified special education positions; and

5 WHEREAS, the 2025 New Mexico educator vacancy report does  
6 not include data on vacancies in classified non-classroom  
7 positions, but other research suggests high vacancies in these  
8 positions; for example, a 2023 report by the legislative  
9 education study committee noted regional bus driver shortages  
10 related to competition with higher-paying private sector  
11 positions for licensed commercial drivers; and

12 WHEREAS, according to the Massachusetts institute of  
13 technology, the minimum living wage in New Mexico is twenty  
14 dollars ten cents (\$20.10) per hour for a single-person  
15 household and twenty-four dollars fifty-one cents (\$24.51) for  
16 a four-person household with two working adults and two  
17 children; provided that in some New Mexico counties with higher  
18 costs of living, the minimum living wage is higher; and

19 WHEREAS, in 2023, the legislature increased salaries for  
20 educational assistants and instructional support providers to a  
21 minimum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) per year, but  
22 according to the United States census bureau, these salaries  
23 are still below the national average of nearly thirty-four  
24 thousand dollars (\$34,000) per year; and

25 WHEREAS, some full-time classified public school employees

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1 have reported to legislators that the employees have needed to  
2 take on second jobs, have experienced housing and food  
3 insecurity and have resorted to selling blood plasma to  
4 supplement inadequate incomes; and

5 WHEREAS, over the past several years, the legislature has  
6 increased salaries for teachers and other certified public  
7 school employees, and those salary increases have notably  
8 decreased vacancies in certified positions and improved  
9 retention rates for those positions;

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
11 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative  
12 education study committee be requested to study:

13 A. compensation for classified public school  
14 employees, including classified school district employees who  
15 provide transportation, food or custodial services;

16 B. statewide costs of living and housing  
17 availability; and

18 C. options to improve compensation, including  
19 opportunities for career advancement or salary differentials  
20 based on experience, credentials or staffing needs; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include input from  
22 the legislative finance committee, the public education  
23 department, local school districts, charter schools and public  
24 school employees' unions; and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education

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1 study committee's research, findings and recommendations be  
2 reported to the governor and the legislature on or before  
3 October 31, 2026; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
5 transmitted to the legislative education study committee, the  
6 legislative finance committee and the public education  
7 department.

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