



## New Mexico Education Partners 2016 Joint Legislative Goals

New Mexico Education Partners want to be held accountable through a system that is fair and valid. We are all committed to continuous improvement and improved student outcomes, but schools need resources and support. More importantly, they need encouragement; and they need the general public to recognize that kids are more than test scores and schools are more than just a grade.

- (1) No less than fifty percent (50%) of all new revenue should be dedicated to K-12 public education. New appropriations for public education should be allocated to Districts “above the line” through the State Equalization Guarantee. This provides for appropriate local decision-making, is in accord with legislative intent and conforms to the Constitutional guarantee to provide all students in the state with a free and fair public education. (Article XII, Section 1: **Free Public Schools:** A uniform system of free public schools sufficient for the education of, and open to, all the children of school age in the state shall be established and maintained.”)
- (2) In addition to maintaining and enhancing K-12 funding, we support new funding for Pre-K Education for three and four year old children statewide. Whenever possible, these services should be provided by New Mexico Public School Districts. If not provided by public school districts, services should be provided by other qualified in-state providers. Pre-K Education programs need to be high-quality and delivered by highly-trained and appropriately certified professional educators.
- (3) In order to attract and retain competent, qualified, and caring teachers in New Mexico, we must continue to add \$2,000 a year for the next 4 years to the 3-Tiered minimums. In addition we must include enough funding for substantial raises for all Support and Related Services such as counselors, nurses and therapists, as well as for all the classified employees who ensure our schools run well and our student are taken care of. Building level instructional leadership is vital to continued success for our public schools. Steps must be taken to retain competent, qualified, and caring principals through enhanced compensation and provision of enhancements to the job responsibilities. Cost-of-living increases must be provided for all education employees.
- (4) Since increasing the distribution to public schools from the land grant permanent fund in 2003, the corpus of the fund has continued to grow at a rapid rate. The distribution has relieved pressure on the general fund during the economic downturn. As a measure of protection against future downturns, the legislature should pass a resolution placing a constitutional amendment on the 2016 general election ballot that amends Article 12, Section 7 of the New Mexico Constitution to permanently restore the annual distribution to beneficiaries of the fund from 5% to a minimum of 5.8%.