

NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



NMSBA’s top priorities are focused on keeping our students and staff safe, providing the best education possible for students, increasing achievement, and implementing quality learning programs based on best practices.

Local Decision Making

1. **Local Control** – NMSBA supports the local decision-making authority of school boards and opposes legislation and executive action that restricts the ability of locally elected school boards and superintendents to respond to the varied and ever-changing needs of their districts, students and communities. NMSBA calls on the New Mexico Legislature to support legislation affirming and expanding the authority of locally elected school boards to independently develop and adopt educational policies and rules that reflect the educational needs of the students and communities they serve.
2. **School Flexibility** – NMSBA recognizes that school planning decisions should not be a “one size fits all” proposition and supports legislation and flexibility to allow local school boards to make decisions about school calendars, length of school week, re-entry, and instruction based upon relevant scientific evidence and community needs.

Adequate Funding

3. **Educator Recruitment, Retention, Preparation and Compensation** - NMSBA supports legislative action that keeps all school personnel employed and vacancies filled; invests in substantial increased salaries for all school personnel to remain regionally competitive; provides a competitive benefits package including a decrease in employee health care costs; provides educator housing assistance; ensures the education retirement system is financially sound; and reinstates full meeting per diem for school board members.
4. **Core Education Mission** - NMSBA supports sufficient, stable and recurring funding, resources and the flexibility required to open the doors, meet any new mandates and fully staff the constitutionally mandated core education program to meet the unique needs of all districts - large, medium and small including full funding for student transportation expenses. Special attention should go to addressing the possibility of reductions in federal funding, and timely award of initial, final and carryover funds and processing requests for reimbursement by the NMPED.

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CONTINUED

5. **School District Operating Reserves** – NMSBA requests that school district reserves be preserved and protected without penalty as they are critical to keeping the doors open between revenue inflows, are utilized for locally established priorities, and provide resources to address unfunded health and safety concerns.
6. **Student and Staff Safety** – NMSBA supports legislation to provide direct aid with the flexibility necessary for school districts to meet the critical and ever-changing school safety, cybersecurity, social emotional health and housing needs of our students and staff.
7. **Extended Learning Programs** – NMSBA supports legislation to continue extended learning programs along with flexibility in the K-12 Plus Program to help increase student participation and adjust to family schedules; and provide sufficient funding to update all related curriculum materials.
8. **Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Curriculum** – NMSBA supports legislation that will continue to fund culturally and linguistically responsive training, curriculum and materials. We also support reporting and accountability to ensure students are provided these opportunities and engage in the work necessary to create change in our schools to address educational disparities as required by the Martinez and Yazzie court order.
9. **Capital Outlay** – NMSBA supports the continued reduction of local matching requirements and easing match waiver provisions for standards based and systems projects; removal of matching requirements for school safety, Pre-K and Career Technical Education facilities and programs and AC/HAVC replacements and upgrades.

Governance

10. NMSBA supports passage of a Joint Memorial asking voters to approve a constitutional amendment to re-establish a State Board of Education as an independent body with the authority to appoint a State Superintendent of Education with funding and oversight for a robust and accountable education system for all students, educators and communities.