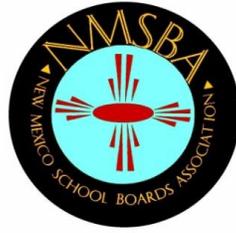


NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



Presented to
LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

OLIVIA CALABAZA, PRESIDENT
JOE GUILLEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Santa Fe, New Mexico

About NMSBA...

Vision

The New Mexico School Boards Association aspires to be recognized as the premier source of development and support for local boards of education in New Mexico. The NMSBA will be known as the leading advocate for local boards in their role of insuring that all students will graduate from New Mexico high schools prepared for a quality life and committed to improving society.

Mission

The New Mexico School Boards Association is the member organization for all of New Mexico's school boards to support their efforts in providing a quality education for all students of New Mexico. The NMSBA serves its members through:

- *Commitment to local decision making
- *Advocacy at the state and federal level for commonly held needs
- *Leadership development services and training for local school boards
- *Collaboration with community, elected officials and other educational organizations

We are 450 STRONG!
Support, Train, Recognize Outstanding New Mexico Governance



NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION 2020-2021

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Marvyn Jaramillo, President-Elect – Mesa Vista
Dymorie Maker – Vice-President - Lovington
Christine Ludi – Secretary Treasurer – West Las Vegas
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NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

2021 INTRODUCTION, GUIDING PRINCIPLES & LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the New Mexico School Boards Association (NMSBA), as an advocate for public education, is to provide leadership and services that enable local boards of education to govern effectively. Through NMSBA, local boards of education are involved in the legislative process to achieve needed school and program reforms. Each of these efforts is focused on the goal that every student is entitled to a free and quality public education.

Annually, NMSBA initiates a legislative process that enables local school boards to express their opinions on current educational issues. These opinions are collected through a resolutions development process. Following a comprehensive analysis of all resolutions, the NMSBA Resolutions and Legislative Committee recommends legislative priorities to the membership for adoption. At the recent NMSBA Annual Convention, the 2021 Legislative Priorities were adopted and now represent the collective voice of New Mexico's 89 school boards and over 450 school board members.

The 2021 New Mexico Legislative Session will be a challenging 60 days with many important issues to deal with. We trust our Legislative Priorities will be carefully considered by New Mexico's Legislative and Executive Leaders.

GUIDING PRINCIPALS

In analyzing legislative proposals in the interim and during the legislative session NMSBA uses three guiding principles:

- **Unfunded Mandates**
NMSBA opposes legislation that mandates public schools to implement new programs or initiatives without providing the necessary financial resources. NMSBA will continue to advocate for funding for unfunded mandates that currently exist.
- **Local Control**
One of the important components of a successful public education system is local decision-making. NMSBA believes that decision making at the district level must be preserved and expanded and opposes any legislation that attempts to diminish or take away this authority.
- **Adequate Funding**
NMSBA believes funding for public schools, which is the primary responsibility of the state, should be increased to a level that assures every student will receive an adequate education based on their needs. Funds should be appropriated in a manner that preserves the ability of school boards to allocate funds within their districts based on the diverse needs of their students and communities.

2021 NMSBA 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. **School Re-Entry Decisions** – NMSBA recognizes that school re-entry 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 re-entry and small group instruction based upon relevant scientific evidence.
2. **Sharing of Data** – NMSBA believes all pandemic related scientific evidence and data should be shared with school districts to strengthen local decision making which will: maximize distance/blended learning; assess student achievement; ensure supports for social and emotional learning; emphasize authentic, culturally responsive learning; and, leverage more adequate and equitable school funding.
3. **Graduation and ADC** – NMSBA supports temporary flexibility for alternative demonstration of competency needed for graduation and extended time to meet course requirements particularly for graduating seniors.

Adequate Funding

4. **Core Education Mission** - NMSBA supports sufficient and stable 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 transportation expenses.
5. **Hold Harmless for Declining Enrollment** – NMSBA supports legislation that holds school districts harmless from the prior year enrollment provisions of the State Equalization Funding Formula for the duration of the public health emergency.
6. **School District Operational 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.

7. **Student and Staff Safety** – NMSBA supports legislation to provide direct aid with the flexibility necessary for school districts to meet the unpredictable and ever-changing pandemic needs including PPE, technology and HVAC, social-emotional supports, training, food and other basics.
8. **Educator Recruitment, Retention and Preparation** - NMSBA supports legislative action that keeps all school personnel employed; partners with schools in covering any increases to the employer and employee cost of equitable health care for school personnel; and invests as we can, in increased salaries for all school personnel with the long-term goal of becoming regionally competitive.
9. **Digital Divide/Online Learning** - NMSBA supports funding to ensure all districts and students are provided with Internet access, dedicated laptops, tablets or other devices coupled with education programming to enable and maximize online learning opportunities. NMSBA also supports the convening of a statewide committee to establish broadband access for all residents with representation from school boards and superintendents.
10. **Extended Learning / K-5 Plus** – NMSBA supports legislation to continue extended learning programs along with flexibility in the K-5 Plus Program by removing the 80% cohort requirement to help increase student participation and adjust to family schedules; allow flexibility for a 15-day program to be continued; increase funding by changing the factor; and provide funding to update all curriculum materials.
11. **Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Curriculum** – NMSBA supports legislation that will continue to fund culturally and linguistically responsive training, curriculum/materials; and develop methods of reporting and accountability to assure NM students are provided these opportunities and engage in the work necessary to create change in our schools to address educational disparities.
12. **Impact Aid Distribution** - NMSBA supports a hold harmless provision from any reductions to district operating budgets as a result of the U.S. Department of Education’s recent ruling on federal impact aid distributions.