

NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



Presented to
LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

PAULINE JARAMILLO, PRESIDENT
JOE GUILLEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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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!

Serving New Mexico's School Boards for over 65 years

NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

2025 STATE OFFICERS

Pauline Jaramillo, President – Socorro

Marvyn Jaramillo, President-Elect - Mesa Vista

Terry O’Brain, Vice-President - Hobbs

Arlean Murillo Secretary-Treasurer – Gadsden

Christine Ludi, Immediate Past-President – West Las Vegas

RESOLUTIONS & LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Pauline Jaramillo, Chair – Socorro

- Gary Montoya – Central
- Terry Martin – Clovis
- James Casaus - Cuba
- Mary Lou Cameron – Deming
- Stephanie Thompson – Farmington
- Priscilla Benally – Gallup
- Laura Salazar Flores - Gadsden
- Terry O’Brain – Hobbs
- Teresa Tenorio – Las Cruces
- Paul Gonzales – Las Vegas City
- Laurie Strebeck – Logan
- Toby Willis - Logan
- Patti Ann Ancell – Lovington
- Monica Aragon – Mora
- Albert Chavez - Moriarty
- Felix Benavidez – Pojoaque
- Gary Tripp – Rio Rancho
- Carmen Gonzales – Santa Fe
- Kimberly Klement - Silver
- Patrick Cohn – Silver
- Travis Glenn – Tatum
- Rebecca Bartoo – T or C
- Chris Matson - Vaughn
- Linda Montoya – West Las Vegas
- Lilliemae Ortiz – NMSBA Legislative Liaison

NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

INTRODUCTION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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 2025 Legislative Priorities were adopted and now represent the collective voice of New Mexico's 89 school boards and over 450 school board members.

The 2025 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 PRINCIPLES

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 ensures 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.

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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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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 Lawsuit.
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.