

Recommendations for Recruiting and Retaining Teachers: Listening to Teacher and Student Voices

NM Legislative Finance
Public Education Subcommittee

September 21, 2021

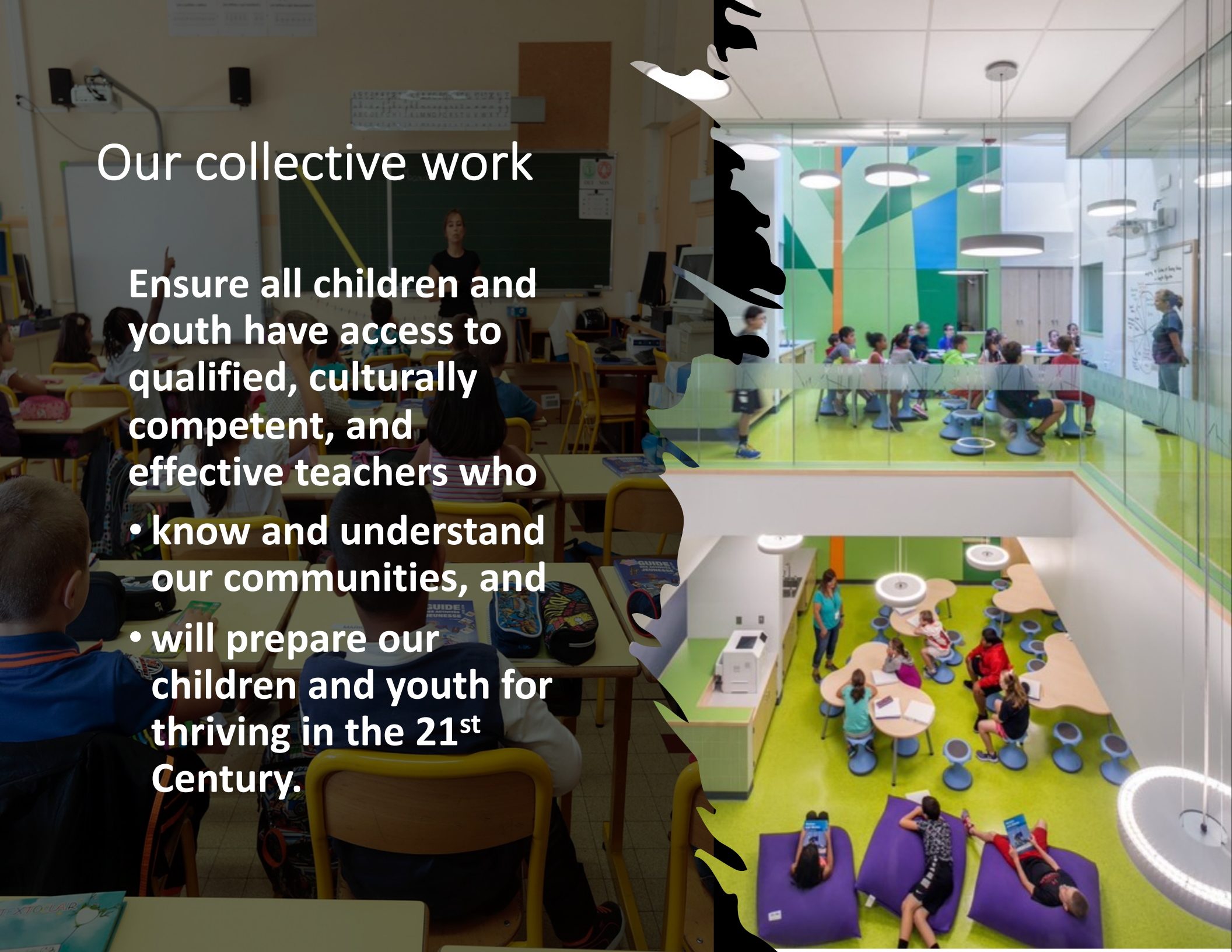
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&
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Our collective work

Ensure all children and youth have access to qualified, culturally competent, and effective teachers who

- know and understand our communities, and
- will prepare our children and youth for thriving in the 21st Century.



Our current context:

- 25% of New Mexico's teachers are over the age of 55 – the highest in the nation.
- 40-50% of new teachers in New Mexico leave within the first 5 years of teaching.
- 52% of low experienced teachers are teaching in high-needs schools in New Mexico, compared to 24% of schools nationwide.
- 63% of graduates from New Mexico higher education institutes teach in New Mexico.
- 9% of all teachers are teaching on an alternative license. In 2019-2020, over 60% of teacher preparation program graduates were in an alternative certification program. Many alternative certification teachers are completing coursework while they are teaching.

Our Study: **Recruiting & Retaining Teachers in Northern NM**

Methodology

Learning Alliance of New Mexico

collected data
Fall 2019

977 Surveys Collected

- **610** teachers participated
 - **367** high school students participated
 - **32** districts, charter schools, tribally-controlled and Bureau of Indian Education Schools in Northern New Mexico within the seven-county region served by the LANL Foundation
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45 Focus Groups Conducted

- **28** teacher focus groups
 - **132** teacher participants
- **17** student focus groups
 - **198** high school student participants
- Focus groups were conducted in **22** districts

What we heard...

Overall Teachers in Northern NM Are:

Committed to their profession



**Committed
to their
students**

Committed to on-going professional learning

What we heard...

Overall Youth in Northern NM:

Support and respect their teachers



Are planning to attend college or pursue a career pathway -- 43% want to major in STEM fields

If they were to become teachers, 65% could imagine teaching in a STEM content area

What we learned...

Teachers

Teachers are struggling due to lack of support and feeling undervalued. 47% of novice teachers are “very satisfied” with their decision to become a teacher, but satisfaction decreases over time; only 39% of veteran teachers are “very satisfied.” 31% of the teachers surveyed were on the fence about continuing their career.

School leadership & pay are two factors that greatly influence teachers’ job satisfaction and retention.

Teachers want consistent opportunities to collaborate and engage in meaningful professional learning. 88% of surveyed teachers reported being supported by colleagues and that this was their greatest source of support.

Students

Only 3% of students surveyed indicated that they wanted to major in education. Only 52% of teachers would recommend for their students to go into teaching.

Students expressed interest in becoming teachers but were daunted by a perceived lack of respect for teachers, low salaries, and lack of support for becoming a teacher from the adults in their lives.

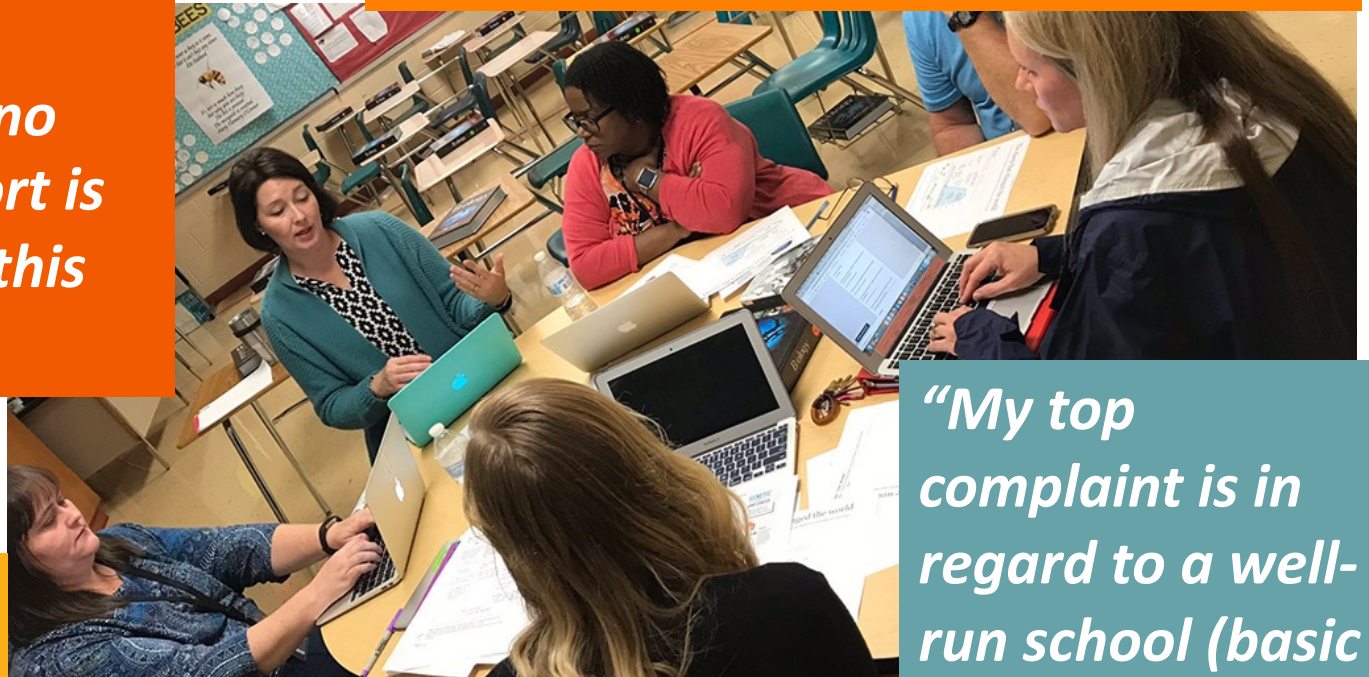
Scholarships, mentoring, and the promise of a job when they graduate would encourage some students to become teachers in their communities.

What we heard...

Many of our teachers do not feel valued or respected

“It has become too focused on test scores...The class sizes have become unmanageable, and no administrative support is happening to adjust this trend.”

“The job description is literally miracle worker...I get treated as a defective adult...”



“It's a lot of work and in New Mexico, the pay is not great. It's hard, I do not feel valued.”

“My top complaint is in regard to a well-run school (basic operations) with consistent school leadership.”

What we heard...

Our students are not interested in becoming teachers in NM

“Be more inspirational of how being a teacher could be beneficial because most people say that teachers don't get paid well and it's not worth the time.”



“To become a teacher I would want a radical change in the system.”

“I would want teachers to not get in trouble for things out of their control.”

“I'd need to be able to afford it, since my salary wouldn't be that great at repaying my inevitable student loans.”

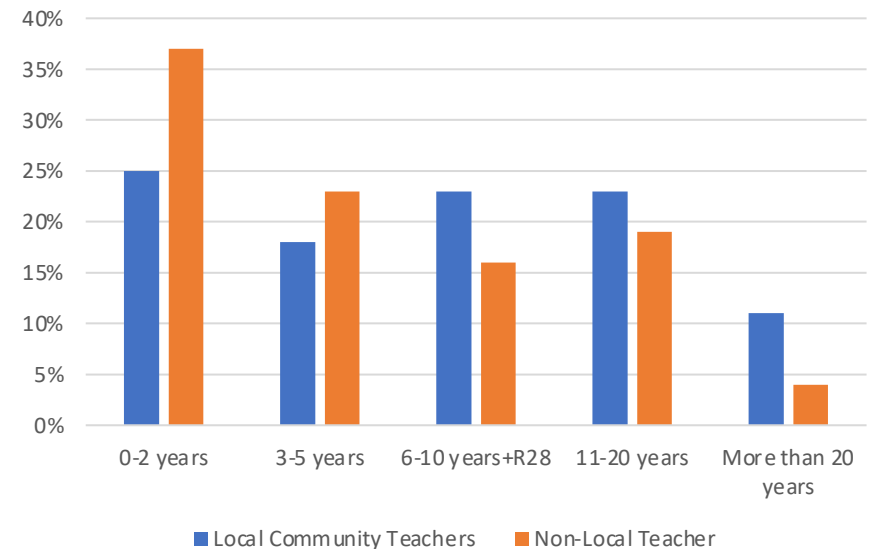
“The pay would have to exponentially go up.”

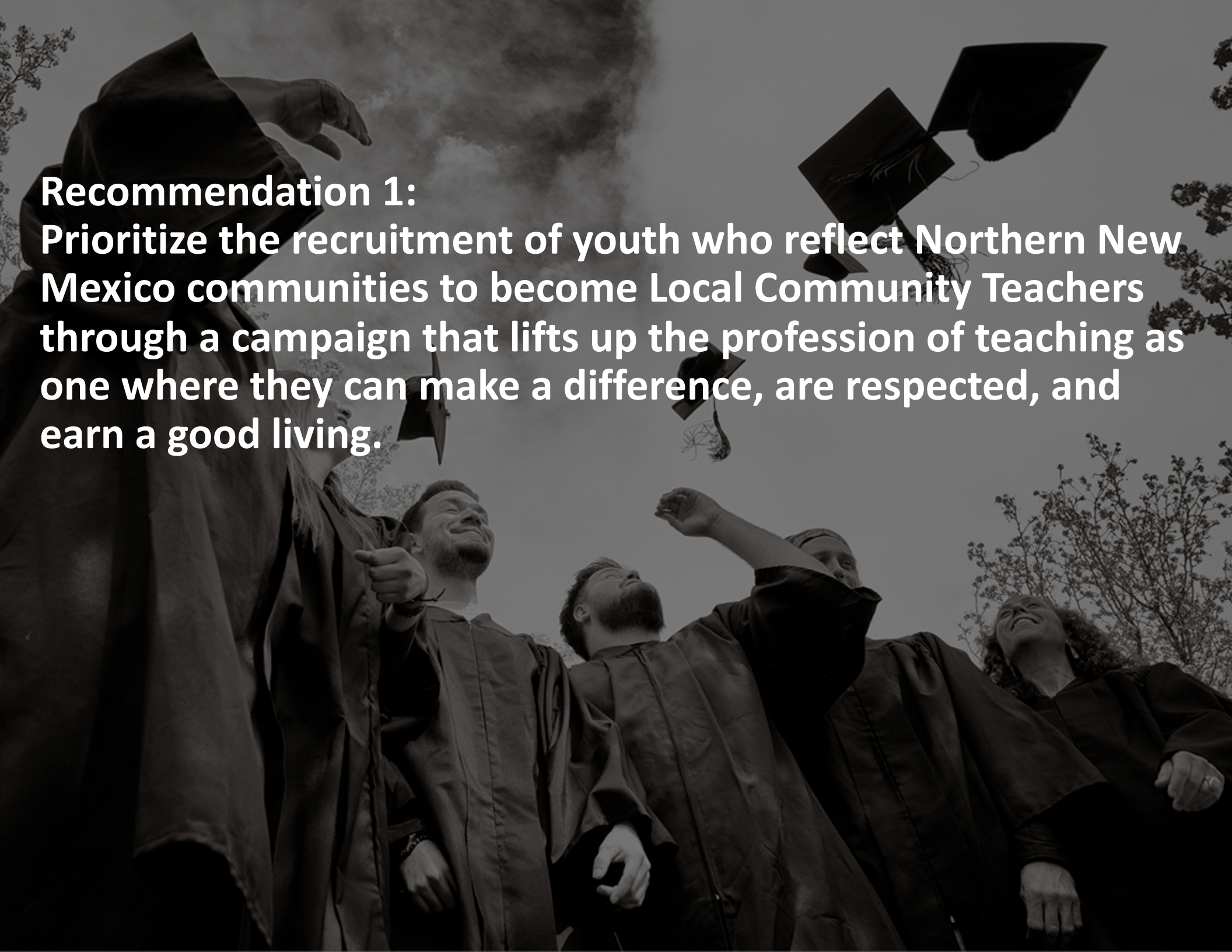
What we learned...

Local Community Teachers, teachers originally from the communities where they teach, are more likely to:

- **Attend NM's institutions of higher education.**
- **Live, work and stay in their communities at higher rates than non-local teachers.**
- **Earn bilingual/TESOL certification at higher rates than non-local teachers.**

Number of Years Teachers have Taught in Their Current District/Charter School
($\chi^2(4, n = 594) = .00001, p < .001$)



A black and white photograph of graduates in gowns and caps celebrating. Several graduates are visible, some with their arms raised and caps flying in the air. The scene is outdoors with trees in the background.

Recommendation 1:

Prioritize the recruitment of youth who reflect Northern New Mexico communities to become Local Community Teachers through a campaign that lifts up the profession of teaching as one where they can make a difference, are respected, and earn a good living.

Recruiting
Local Community
Teachers can ensure
our students have
teachers who look
like them, who
know their
communities, and
who will help them
excel.

- Teachers of color boost the academic performance of students of color, including improved reading and math test scores, improved graduation rates, and increases in aspirations to attend college.
- During the 2018-2019 school year, 77 percent of the student population was made up of students of color while only 41 percent of teachers match the student diversity of the state.

Sources:

- <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/diversifying-teaching-profession-report>
- Teach Plus New Mexico Report: Transparency & Trends - Teach Plus Teacher Leaders on Creating Opportunities for Students and Teachers of Color in New Mexico

Recommendation 2:
Reimagine, focus and support teacher preparation and mentoring; foster partnerships with Northern New Mexico schools and districts to recruit, financially support, prepare, place and mentor Local Community Teachers for teaching in the 21st Century.



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*Investing in Learning
& Human Potential*

Strong teacher preparation matters

- Teachers from traditional programs were more satisfied and committed to the profession.
- The majority of beginning teachers who entered the field through an alternative licensure program reported feeling woefully underprepared for the complex work that teachers do.

“I believe having sufficient and well trained teachers is critical to the health of our society.” — Northern NM Teacher



Recommendation 3:

Increase support for principals and superintendents to develop leadership best practices that will make schools excellent places to work and learn in the 21st Century.

Strong leadership is key for stemming teaching turnover and ensuring students have access to effective teachers.

- Teachers in Northern NM want to work in well run schools with consistent leadership that fosters supportive, collaborative environments.
- More effective principals stem teacher turnover in the right ways: Effective principals retain high performing teachers, and low performing teachers tend to leave.
- In AZ, schools with higher rates of low-income and/or minority students, where teachers rated their working conditions as more satisfactory, had lower attrition rates.
- It costs \$9000 for a rural district to replace a teacher and up to \$21,000 for an urban district.

Sources:

Geiger & Pivovarova (2018); <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2018.1457524>
Grissom & Bartanon, 2018 <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831218797931>
<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/teacher-turnover-report>

Recommendation 4:

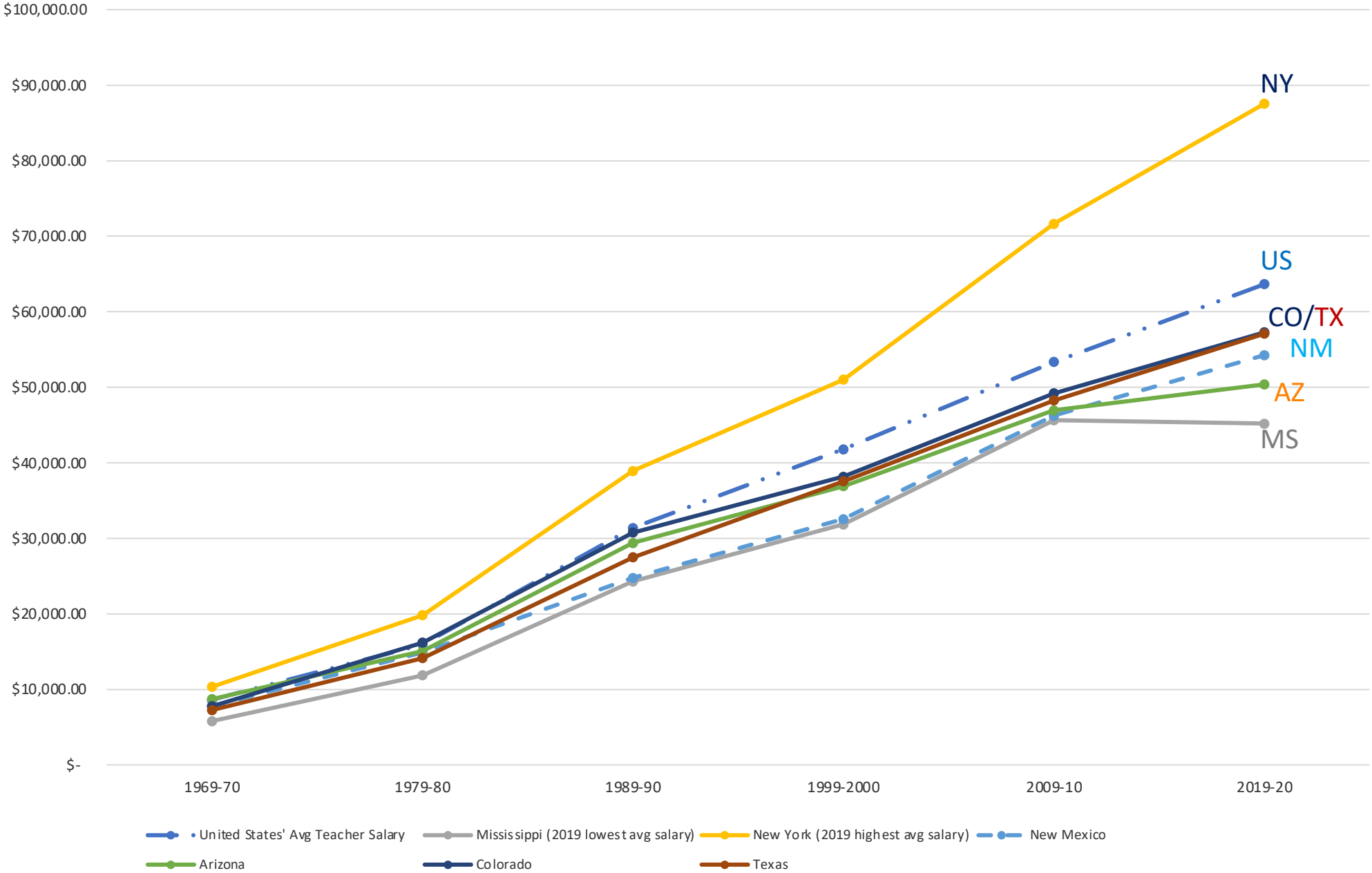
Continue the upward trend, from the last few years, in teacher pay.



Growth in Average Teacher Salaries by decade

1969 - 2019

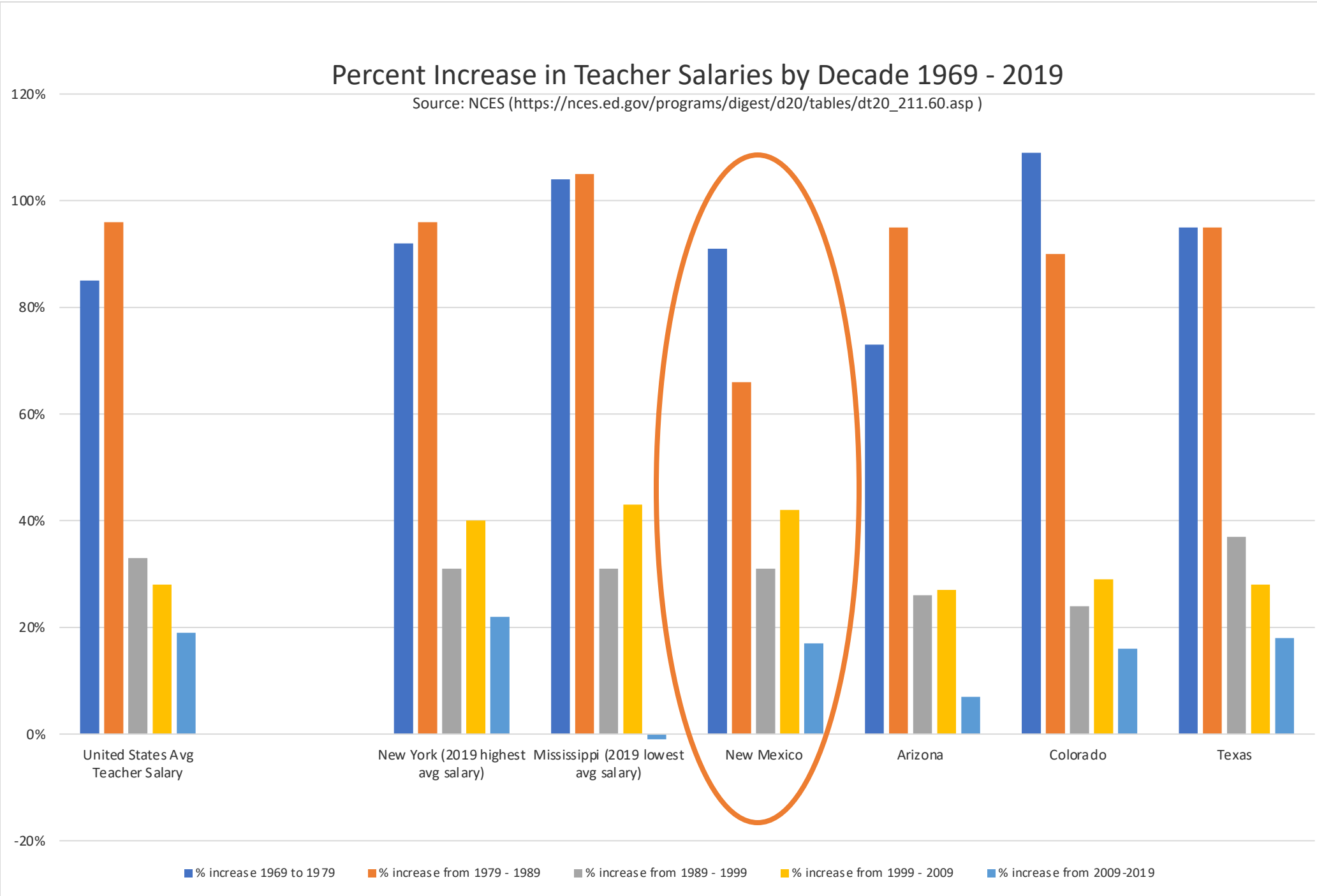
Source: NCES (https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_211.60.asp)



Trends in Teacher Salaries Over Five Decades

Percent Increase in Teacher Salaries by Decade 1969 - 2019

Source: NCES (https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_211.60.asp)



Recognize that the Work is Collaborative & Needs to Be Connected

Recommendations	State: Policy Makers & Implementers	Higher Education: Leadership & Faculty	District: Super- intendents	School: Principals	Classroom: Teachers
Prioritize Support for Local Community Teachers:	<p><i>Launch and sustain a statewide campaign to strengthen respect for educators. Highlight the incredible work our educators do and recognize the transformation they are leading in our state for 21st Century Learning. Continue to support Grow Our Own Initiatives, Educators Rising and Other Programs.</i></p>				
Reimagine, Focus and Support Teacher Preparation Programs:	<p><i>Rethink alternative licensure programs along a spectrum. Recognize alt prepared teachers need increased support. Ensure teacher education programs and professional learning opportunities are culturally and linguistically responsive and grounded in best practices aligned with the Science of Learning and Development for 21 Century Learning.</i></p>				
Strengthen School Leadership, Professional Development & Pay:	<p><i>Increase training and support for principals and superintendents to develop the leadership best practices that will make schools excellent places to work and learn in the 21st Century.</i></p>				



*Teachers plant
a seed of knowledge
that lasts a lifetime...*



THANK YOU!

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