STUDENT CENTERED PUBLIC EDUCATION REQUIRES SUFFICIENT FUNDING AND NO CUTS

2017 NEA-NM LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT

STUDENT SUCCESS: Good Education Inspires Students' Natural Curiosity and Builds Their Desire to Learn

Good education inspires students' natural curiosity, imagination, and desire to learn. While student assessment is a valuable tool for teachers, no test can measure a student's curiosity or the benefit of the inspiration fostered by education employees. Schools that nurture these values today are growing New Mexico's future inventors, thinkers, artists and leaders. So much happens at school that shapes our children's tomorrows, and therefore we must instill a love of learning, foster creativity, and teach critical thinking skills. Of all the things we teach our children, the most important is love of learning. Too much focus on teacher evaluations tied to student scores on standardized tests and the A-F school rating system warps school priorities.

OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS: All Students, Regardless of Their Zip Code, Deserve the Support, Tools and Time to Learn

Every child must have an equal opportunity for has success regardless of zip code. If New Mexico is serious about every child's future, let's get serious about doing what works. The research is clear: sufficient funding is needed to provide learning opportunities that begin by age four, safe schools, opportunity for one-on-one attention, up-to-date instructional materials, well-resourced teachers and community support services like nutrition and health for children who need it. We must sufficiently and equitably fund our schools!

QUALITY: Ensure Every Student Has a Caring, Qualified, Committed Teacher

Opportunity for all New Mexico students means recruiting, retaining, and respecting educators. All New Mexico public school employees must receive competitive professional compensation. At minimum, raises should keep pace with the cost of living each year. Low pay and unfair "merit" awards to only a few educators are driving quality teachers and other employees away from working with the schools.

OPPORTUNITY: Every Student Gains When Teachers and Others Advance

When educators are heard in the policy-making arena, as well as at the work place, students thrive. Policies that help retain quality teachers and other education employees, and help them advance professionally, serve our students well. Educators value high quality, relevant, job -embedded professional development. The Legislature must fully fund New Mexico's statutorily required teacher mentoring programs. Educators value fair evaluations and support from administrators without dictation from bureaucrats in Santa Fe interfering in that professional relationship. Representation rights for employees must be protected. This means supporting maintenance of due process and all collective bargaining rights.

OPPORTUNITY: When Parents and the Community Thrive, Student Success Improves

Poverty affects student growth and limits opportunities. Legislation to help end poverty and improve the quality of life for students, parents and the community as a whole should be supported. This means maintaining all Union organizing rights (opposing so-called "Right to Work"); increasing the minimum wage to a living wage based on community standards; and providing access to quality public early education. Comprehensive community support services that promote wellness, including good nutrition, physical health and mental health and nutrition are critical for student success.

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Great Public Schools Begin With Us!