

Now is the time for change

In a landmark court decision, a judge ruled that New Mexico is violating students' constitutional rights to a sufficient education. Schools lack the programming, resources, and funding they need to enable our children to succeed. Now is the time to make historic changes that ensure our students graduate ready to enter college or start a career.

We need to end the decades of racial and economic inequities. We must invest in Pre-K, pay teachers competitive wages, provide culturally and linguistically relevant instruction, reduce class sizes and have adequate numbers of nurses, counselors and social workers.

At the core of a sufficient and equitable education is multicultural and multilingual learning that responds to the cultures, languages and heritages of our diverse student populations. The court found that the state is not meeting its duties and responsibilities for a multicultural education established by state law. Research shows that when schools help students maintain their language and identity, learning and academic outcomes improve.




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Transform Education New Mexico is a coalition of over 20 organizations. We are educators, families, tribal leaders, local experts and lawsuit plaintiffs.

American Federation of Teachers New Mexico (AFT-NM)
New Mexico Voices for Children
Keres Children's Learning Center
Learning Alliance NM
Native American Community Academy (NACA)
NGAGE NM
National Education Association NM (NEA-NM)
NACA Inspired Schools Network (NISN)
The Sun Project
New Mexico Education Action Alliance (NMEAA)
Dual Language Education of NM
College Horizons
New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education (NMABE)
Native American Budget & Policy Institute
New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty (NMCLP)
The Santa Fe Indian School Leadership Institute
NM Dream Team/United We Dream
CHI St. Joseph's Children
NM School Boards Association
Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP)
Coalition for the Majority
Current and former superintendents of school districts
Plaintiff school districts (Cuba Independent School District, Gallup-McKinley County Schools, Lake Arthur Public Schools, Moriarty Edgewood School District, Rio Rancho Public Schools, Santa Fe Public Schools)

www.transformeducationnm.org

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**TRANSFORMING NEW MEXICO'S
PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM**

Platform for Action

Transform Education NM has developed a platform of action that is essential to providing New Mexico's students with a sufficient and equitable education. It is based on the court's ruling, volumes of research and expert testimony at trial, and consultation with hundreds of community and educational leaders. The state should act now to make these changes.

- **Provide multicultural and multilingual learning at all levels**—make structural changes at the Public Education Department (PED) and enforce standards for culturally and linguistically relevant curriculum and instruction.
- **Collaborate with New Mexico's tribes and local communities**—ensure our families, tribal leaders, educators, and local experts are at the forefront of shaping the education system.
- **Develop multicultural systems capacity through higher education**—financially support higher education departments to train and develop Native American and bilingual educators, promote language preservation and strengthen multicultural curriculum development.



Learn more: www.transformeducationnm.org/our-platform

Instruction, Pre-K & Social Services Programs

The court found New Mexico has successful programs that close the educational achievement gap—but the state fails to provide all students access to these programs.

NEEDED ACTION:

- **Ensure all children have access to quality Pre-K.** Universal, culturally and linguistically relevant Pre-K should be available for all 3-year olds and 4-year olds.
- **Increase instruction and learning opportunities.** Our schools need smaller class sizes, relevant curriculum, enrichment programs, instructional materials and technology. Schools should also offer K-5 Plus, summer and after-school and literacy programs.
- **Provide comprehensive social services.** Nurses, counselors and social workers should be in all schools. Support the Community in Schools model that actively engages parents and the broader community.

Funding

The court was clear that a lack of funding is not an excuse for violating the constitutional rights of our students and ordered the state to increase funding so districts could provide a sufficient education.

NEEDED ACTION:

- **Increase funding for at-risk students.** This means increasing the at-risk index in the school funding formula so that at-risk students are funded at 25% above non-at-risk students and base eligibility on the income level used for Free & Reduced Lunch programs.
- **Restore baseline funding.** This would restore funding to 2008 levels (adjusted for inflation).
- **Increase funding for transportation, bilingual instruction and rural schools.** This will ensure students have equitable opportunities in our diverse state.

Teachers

Teachers are at the heart of our education system. The court's ruling showed that New Mexico lacks enough teachers to meet demands. Additionally, teachers are leaving the profession at alarming rates. And our most experienced educators are not teaching in low-income communities.

NEEDED ACTION:

- **Raise teacher pay.** New Mexico must be competitive with surrounding states. Teacher pay should be raised to \$45,000/\$55,000/\$65,000 (tiers for starting salaries) and adjusted for inflation.
- **Provide more professional development.** Teachers should be supported with more professional development days, at their full daily rate of pay. This must include building capacity for culturally-responsive, bilingual instruction and endorsements to Teach English as a Second Language (TESOL).

Accountability

The court found that New Mexico's Public Education Department lacks accountability systems and audits to ensure students receive a sufficient and equitable education. Action must be taken to guarantee greater oversight and accountability of the PED.

NEEDED ACTION:

- **Strengthen monitoring of school funding.** PED must work with districts to develop a monitoring and accountability system that ensures at-risk students receive programs and services.
- **Replace A to F school grading.** The current grading system must be revamped to reflect the goals of our communities and provide the support needed for our schools and teachers.
- **Ensure tribal consultation.** PED must consult and collaborate with tribal governments to monitor and evaluate the education system as part of the government to government relationship with tribes.