

NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

"Serving New Mexico's School Boards for over 60 Years"

2020 SPECIAL SESSION PRIORITIES



NMSBA's priorities are focused on providing a safe and healthy quality education for all students, increasing achievement and implementing research based learning programs and best practices.

1. **STUDENT AND STAFF SAFETY:** NMSBA's requests that no action be taken by the legislature that jeopardizes the health and safety of students and staff, and if necessary, supplemental funding be made available to secure necessary equipment, PPE, Covid-19 testing and sufficient staff to ensure a safe learning environment.
2. **CORE EDUCATION MISSION:** NMSBA supports sufficient SEG funding, resources and the flexibility required to open the doors and fully staff the constitutionally mandated core education program to meet the unique needs of large and small districts.
3. **DIGITAL DIVIDE/ONLINE LEARNING:** NMSBA supports action that does not jeopardize funding and resources to ensure all school districts and students are provided with Internet access, dedicated laptops, tablets or other devices coupled with education programming to enable participation in online learning opportunities which are key components of the new learning program.
4. **EXTENDED LEARNING PROGRAMS:** NMSBA supports additional funding up and above open the doors expenses for extended learning programs identified as local district priorities to help offset the effects of this year's abbreviated school calendar and to remedy identified deficiencies and create positive educational experiences and improved outcomes for all students.
5. **SALARY INCREASES AND HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS:** NMSBA supports action that would offset approved school employee salary increases with proposed increases in employee health insurance costs.
6. **SCHOOL DISTRICT CASH BALANCES:** NMSBA requests that school district cash balances 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. **DISTRICT LIABILITY PROTECTION:** NMSBA supports legislation that will hold school districts harmless from COVID-19 related lawsuits if they can demonstrate implementation of significant procedures to show due diligence and attempts to avoid foreseeable harm to students, staff, and community members.
8. **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.

Approved by NMSBA Board of Directors May 28, 2020