Improving Education the New Mexico Way

Jeannie Oakes and Carmen Gonzales
Learning Policy Institute

Improving Education the New Mexico Way

Jeannie Oakes, Daniel Espinoza, Linda Darling-Hammond, Carmen Gonzales, Jennifer DePaoli, Tara Kini, Gary Hoachlander, Dion Burns, Michael Griffith, and Melanie Leung

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

December 4, 2020

LPI Research Questions

Current Priorities

- What do New Mexicans value?
- What reforms seem necessary?

Current Status & Challenges

- How do key features of the system now fall short?
- What "bright spots" help show the way?

Promising System Improvement Strategies

- What evidence-based strategies can improve key elements of the system?
- What is needed for high-quality implementation, accountability, sustainability?

LPI Research Methods

Document Analysis

- Reform Proposals from 15+ NM groups
- LESC, LFC, PED publications

Stakeholder Interviews

- State & local policymakers, educators, academics, nonprofit leaders, business partners, advocates—nearly 100

Analysis of New Data & Existing Research

- PED and public data sets
- Scientific studies
- Case examples

Four Big Findings

1. New Mexico has unique characteristics that complicate improvement & require more resources & capacity

2. Systems making significant improvement focus on 5 key elements—we need to do this in a New Mexico way

3. Supportive accountability can foster capacity & high-quality implementation/improvement—again, in a New Mexico way

4. This is not easy work—needs long-term strategy and shared ownership

What Complicates Education Improvement in New Mexico?

- Making the most of rich geographic, cultural, and linguistic diversity requires balancing state direction with local flexibility and strong local capacity

- NM's distressed economy brings high costs, but little state revenue—resulting fairly equitable funding that is inadequate

- Too little capacity + Too little funding = Disappointing implementation & Disappointing outcomes

Improving Education the Complicated New Mexico Way

- Diversity is an asset, not a liability

- Poverty creates barriers but does not prevent learning or school success

- Students affected by marginalization and poverty must be at the center of the system

- Districts/schools require support and capacity to make the most of diversity and reduce barriers

1. Meaningful Learning Goals

2. Knowledgeable and Skillful Educators

3. Supports that Meet Students' Needs

4. High-Quality Early Learning

5. Adequate and Equitable Funding

Evidence Base

Goals for New Mexico

Current Status

Recent Progress

Short-term Steps

Longer term Steps

1. Meaningful Learning

Clear Learning Goals for New Mexico

Deeper Learning

Whole Child Approach

Strong High School Pathways

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

NM Falls Short on Traditional Measures
Scant Attention to Deeper Learning & Whole Child

New Mexico's Rank on Selected Outcome Measures

Rank	State	College Readiness, 2018 (SAT/ACT)	High School Graduation Rate, 2016	NAEP Math Scores, 2017	NAEP Reading Scores, 2017	Preschool Enrollment, 2017
1	Massachusetts	4	13	1	1	5
2	New Jersey	5	2	4	2	2
3	New Hampshire	1	9	3	2	12
4	Vermont	13	11	8	4	1
5	Connecticut	2	15	21	4	4
	....					
14	Colorado	6	44	15	8	23
15	Kansas	36	22	20	20	3
22	Utah	34	26	14	11	35
33	Texas	24	5	24	41	38
43	Oklahoma	46	35	42	39	21
44	Arizona	48	42	24	34	46
48	Nevada	39	48	42	41	48
50	New Mexico	50	49	48	49	44

In 2018, New Mexico

- scored lowest on SAT and ACT tests

- graduated 10% fewer students on time than the national average.

- 1/3 students proficient in ELA/Reading, 1/5 in math

Source: https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/rankings/education/prek-12

Recent Progress

- NM began implementing Next Generation Science Standards

- The state began redesigning assessments that drive instruction

- Lawsuit renewed attention to "whole child," including cultural and linguistic responsiveness

- HB91: created a 7-year "career and technical education pilot project"

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

Short- and Long-Term Steps

Establish a state online hub that provides access to deeper learning, CLR, and SEL resources
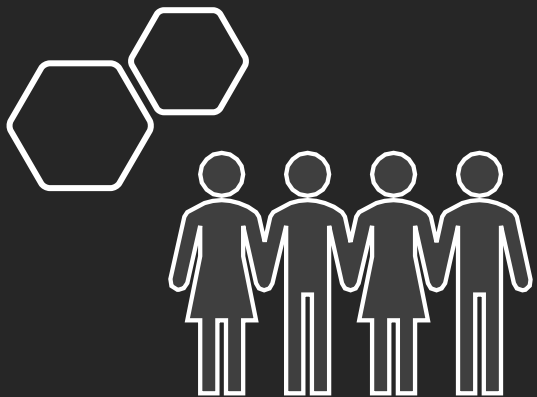
Invest in high-quality curriculum frameworks, instructional materials, professional development, and assessments in these areas

Convene a task force to develop a framework and standards for college & career pathways

Invest in a Pathways Trust—public/private partnership to fund college & career pathways statewide

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

2. Knowledgeable and Skillful Educators

Shortages account for about 8% of the state's 21,000 teaching positions

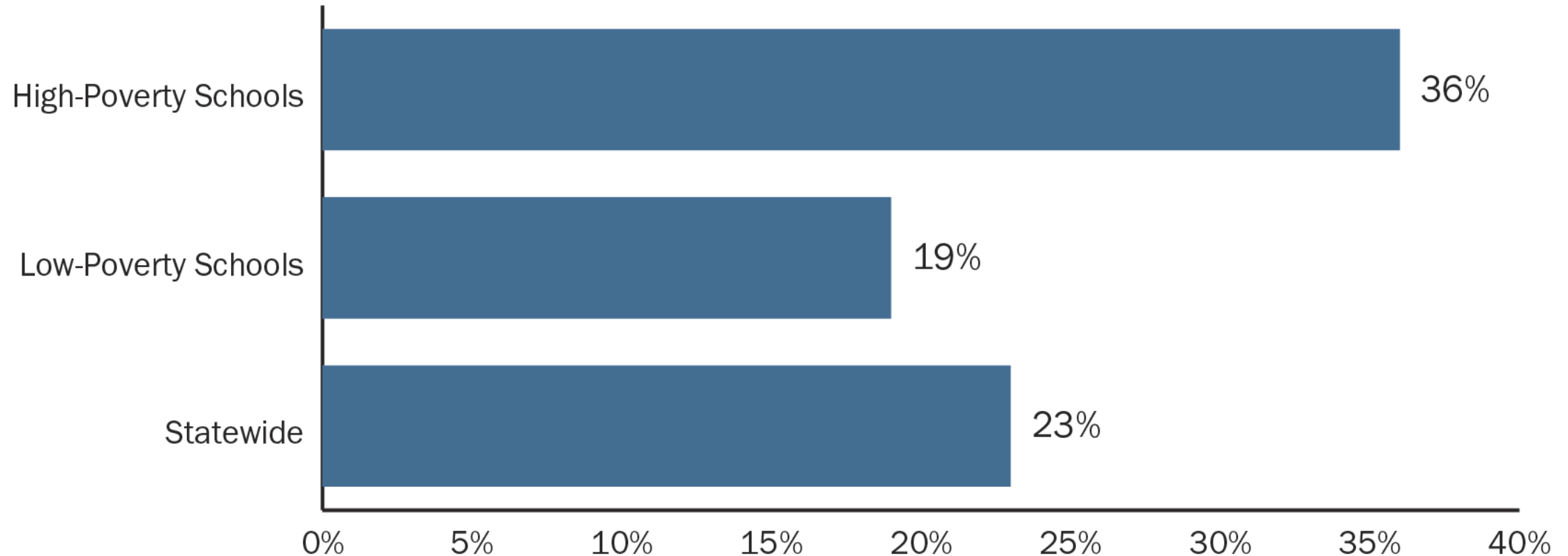**Estimated Size of New Mexico Teacher Shortages**

1800

1600

1400

1200

1000

800

600

400

200

0

Shortage Size

■ Underprepared Teachers   ■ Vacancies

Source: 2019 New Mexico Educator Vacancy Report; Higher Education Act National Teacher Preparation Data

Average % Inexperienced Teachers by Schools Serving the Most and the Fewest Students from Low-Income Families, 2018–19

Note: Analysis compares schools in which at least 75% of students are eligible for the Free and Reduced-Price Lunch program with schools in which up to 25% are eligible
Data source: New Mexico Public Education Department, New Mexico Vistas.

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

Short- and Long-Term Steps

Task force to evaluate and strategize about improving educator preparation, licensing, and accreditation.

Invest in improving educator preparation programs, licensing, and accreditation.

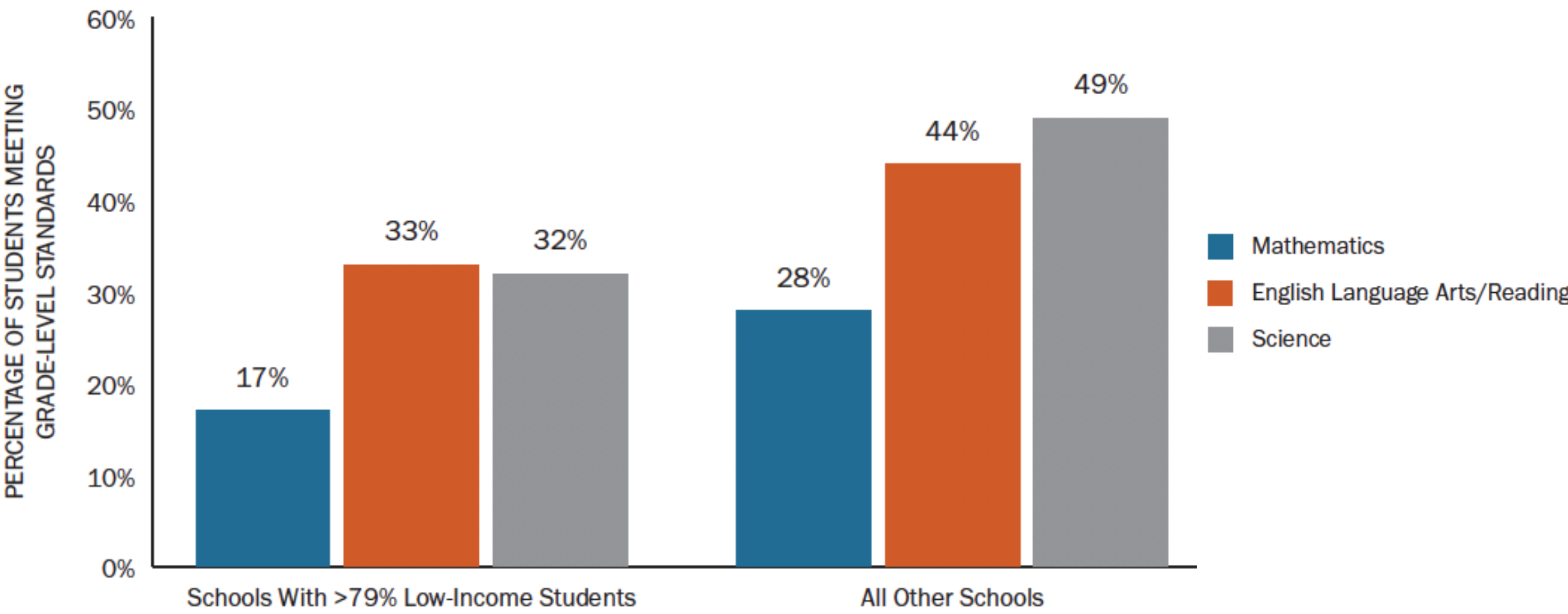Evaluate mentoring for first-year teachers to guide program design and implementation.

Invest in extending mentoring supports to all second-year teachers.

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

3. Supports that Meet Students' Needs

High Concentrations of Poverty Impact Student Learning

Average percentage of students meeting grade-level standards, 2017–18

Source: NMPED. District Report Card 2018: Proficiencies by school; NMPED. Student success and wellness data: FRL Eligibility report SY2017-18.

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

Enable all high-poverty schools to become Community Schools with Expanded Learning Time
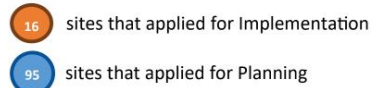
Well-implemented CS yield

- Improved peer/adult relationships and attitudes toward school

- Increased attendance

- Increased achievement and graduation rates

- Reduced gaps

Well-implemented ELT yields

- Increased achievement

Community Schools — New Mexico Public Education Department

16 — sites that applied for Implementation
95 — sites that applied for Planning

Progress in New Mexico

- In 2019 & 2020, 150+ applications for PED grants

- Currently 29 schools with grants

But…

- Insufficient funding

- Limited technical assistance

- K–5+ and ELT challenges

Short- and Long-Term Steps

Blend and braid funds to support community schools with ELT; engage the Children's Cabinet to make community schools hubs for programs across agencies

Invest in making community schools with expanded learning time the norm at all high-poverty schools

Gather data to enable oversight and to inform improvement, including data about implementation as well as outcomes

Invest in regional TA to help schools implement community schools with ELT and provide supportive accountability
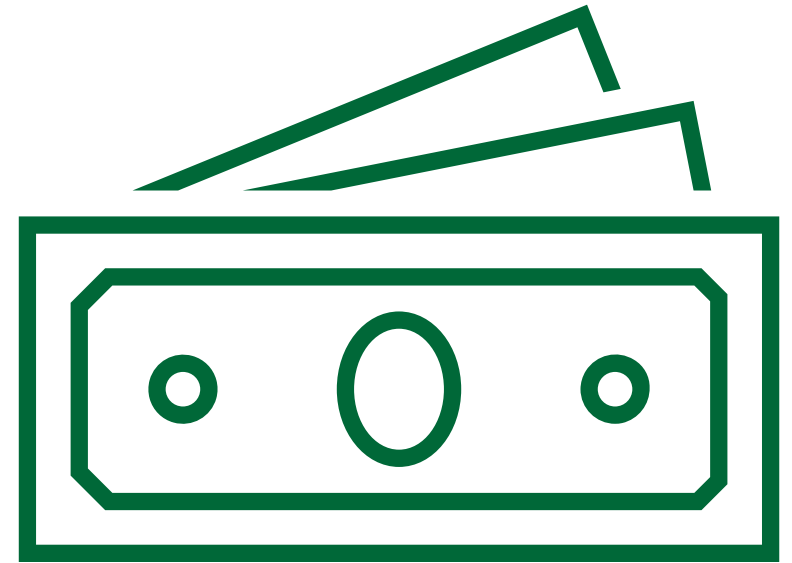
LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

4. High-Quality Early Learning

5. Adequate and Equitable Funding
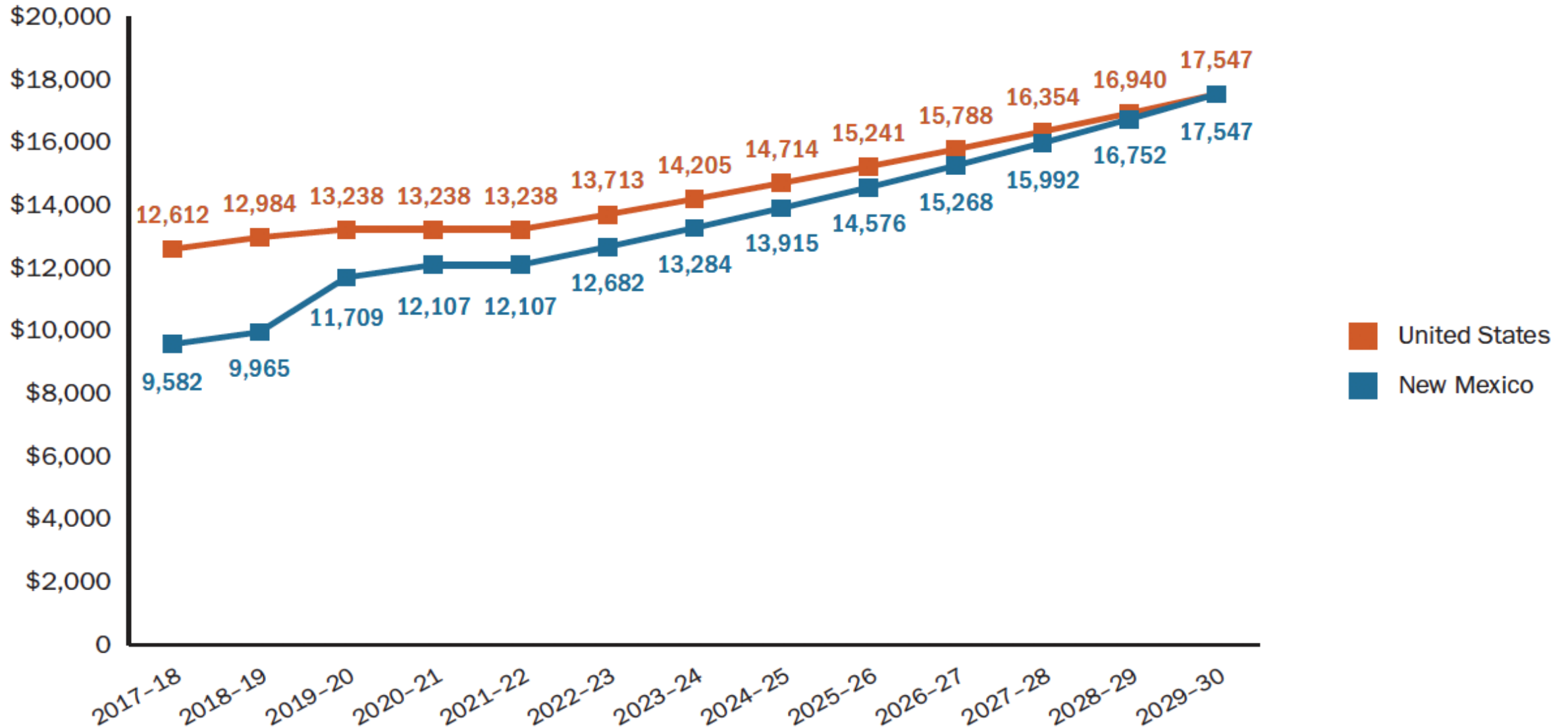
How Does Money Matter?

- Improve achievement and graduation of students from low-income families

- Improve life outcomes, such as employment, wages, and reduced poverty rates

- Investments in instruction, especially in high-quality teachers, appear to leverage the largest gains in performance

Recent Progress in Funding

- Increased education spending by $672 million

- Tripled at-risk funding formula weight

- Current gap of $1,100 per pupil v. 2018 gap of over $3,000.

Per-Pupil Expenditures: Closing the Gap by 2029–30

United States
New Mexico

United States values: 12,612 | 12,984 | 13,238 | 13,238 | 13,238 | 13,713 | 14,205 | 14,714 | 15,241 | 15,788 | 16,354 | 16,940 | 17,547

New Mexico values: 9,582 | 9,965 | 11,709 | 12,107 | 12,107 | 12,682 | 13,284 | 13,915 | 14,576 | 15,268 | 15,992 | 16,752 | 17,547

Years: 2017–18 | 2018–19 | 2019–20 | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 | 2029–30

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

Short- and Long-Term Steps

Multi-sector task force to develop strategies for generating additional state income

Increase funding over 5-8 years to reach the per pupil national funding average

Evaluate equity of new teacher cost index and the rural adjustment in the SEG

Further increase SEG at-risk funding + add a concentration factor

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

Supportive Accountability:

Building Capacity for Improvement and Effective Use of Funds

Evidence about Supportive Accountability

Emphasize meaningful learning; skilled and committed educators; and responsible use of resources

Set clear goals, collect appropriate data, and provide support for capacity building and continuous improvement

Designed to provide useful information to the public to assess the quality of schools

Recent Progress

Shift away from top-down test-based accountability models—learned Deming lessons from business in 1980s

More comprehensive measures of school quality

New teacher evaluation system focused on ability to engage students in high-quality learning

Development of an online financial reporting system

Short- and Long-Term Steps

Use a "Profile of the New Mexico Graduate" to develop multiple outcome measures for district/school dashboards

Invest in a research and accountability unit in NMPED to provide analyses and support

Require community-engaged, local budget and accountability processes, including collaboration with tribes

Regional technical assistance, PD, and school reviews to build local capacity to use accountability data for school improvement

Moving the Agenda Forward

The Blueprint For Maryland's Future

Benefits of Statewide Stakeholder Commission

Recommend long-term system changes

Build collective ownership of a long-term plan

Avoid future litigation over adequacy and equity

Next Steps

Fund, convene, and support an independent, statewide body of diverse leaders charged with developing a plan and providing long-term guidance for education improvement in New Mexico

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE