

CHANGEMAKERS

ALUMNI



FROM LAST TO LEADING: New Mexico's Climb to Excellence

New Mexico must confront our failure to deliver on quality education for all students now.

Despite significant investments, traditional approaches have failed to deliver the progress our students deserve:

- **Stagnant Outcomes:** New Mexico students have ranked **50th in the nation** for math and reading proficiency for **10 consecutive years**.
- **Increased Investment Without Results:** New Mexico has invested more in education over the last decade – 70 percent more since 2019 – and yet student outcomes remain flat.
- **Unfulfilled Promises:** Eight years after the landmark Yazzie/Martinez ruling, significant systemic improvements have not materialized.
- **The Reality:** New Mexico's education challenge goes beyond funding or policy; it is a challenge of coherent implementation, oversight, and sustained execution.

Over the next TEN YEARS, New Mexico has an opportunity.

We're not starting from scratch – there are strategies, models, and resources we can tap into, now:

- **Local Proof Points:** Schools right here in New Mexico – including high-performing charter schools – are demonstrating that higher expectations for all students are achievable.
- **Lessons From National Models:** States like Mississippi and Louisiana—facing similar challenges with poverty and rural geography—have executed dramatic educational turnarounds.
- **Unprecedented Resources:** New Mexico's historic budget surpluses provide the opportunity for more strategic investments.

Over the next TEN YEARS, New Mexico can lead with and achieve a vision.

The next decade will be pivotal to securing New Mexico's future. What do we want to do with it? What will we prioritize?

- **Student Mastery of the Fundamentals:** Let's reach high standards in reading, math, and career readiness for all students.
- **Economic Development:** Let's maximize local talent, including New Mexico's linguistic and cultural assets, to attract top-tier companies, foster home-grown businesses, and capitalize on industry demand.
- **Stronger, Connected Communities:** Let's elevate economic mobility and community well-being, ensuring a quality life is within reach of all New Mexicans.

New Mexico needs more than another short-term education initiative. We need a sustained, measurable ten-year strategy – grounded in evidence, centered on student outcomes and opportunity, supported by sufficient resources and capacity, and executed consistently across administrations. **Changemakers** is a coalition of civic, business, and community leaders spanning diverse backgrounds, political affiliations, and perspectives. We have united around a single urgent mission: **championing transformative, lasting improvements in New Mexico's education system.**

We believe every kid in New Mexico can succeed with the right support. JOIN US!



OUR CALL TO ACTION:

A Ten-Year Vision for the Next Governor

We call on New Mexico's next Governor to lead this critical transformation by committing to three overarching priorities that will guide our education efforts over the next decade, transcending political affiliations and outlasting any single administration:

1. **Make Education Improvement Priority #1** across all executive administration efforts.

Goal: *Within five years, New Mexico will begin to lead the country in NAEP growth and will continue to do so for the next five years.*

2. **Focus Relentlessly on Student Mastery** of reading, math, and post-secondary readiness as the central metrics of state success.

Goal: *New Mexico is among the top half of states in NAEP proficiency in 4th-grade reading & math within ten years.*

3. **Empower and Hold Accountable the NMPED** to create, execute, and stick to a multi-year strategy for improving K-12 academic and career success. State leaders should measure implementation honestly, learn continuously, and adapt the strategy intelligently in order to sustain progress across administrations.

Goal: *New Mexico moves from the bottom quartile to the top quartile in education, as ranked by The Annie E. Casey Foundation, within ten years.*

With bold, steady leadership over the next ten years, New Mexico can rewrite its education story:

- **Our state's entire education system follows a clear, actionable roadmap for improving reading, math, and post-secondary readiness** and sticks to this comprehensive strategy for the next decade, regularly reporting to the public on progress, investments, and improvements (if needed). Every state leader charged with leading or overseeing the education system can immediately talk about what New Mexico is doing to improve student achievement, why we are doing it, and where we are in implementing our strategy.
- **Every student learns from effective curriculum and teachers**, who are expertly trained and continually supported in using High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) and rewarded for their impact.
- **Chronically under-performing schools receive targeted, meaningful interventions and evidence-based support, monitoring, and accountability directed by NMPED.** Where a school is closed or restructured, families have real alternatives, including high-performing charter school options, so that intervention leads to better outcomes for students, not just disruption.
- **Every school has a highly-trained, effective school leader at the helm**, and New Mexico has a strong bench supplied by a deep network of preparation programs and specialized training that equips principals and administrators with the skills and know-how necessary to lead the implementation of our state's strategy at the school level over the next ten years.



We commit to working together across political and ideological lines to keep the central focus of New Mexico's education system where it should be – on students and their success. JOIN US!

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