



Office of the Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor plans to deliver 7% raises to New Mexico educators, increase base salary levels

Administration continues record investments in public education, seeks to fill vacancies and improve system for students, families, workers

SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Wednesday announced that her administration will pursue a seven percent raise for all New Mexico education personnel as part of her legislative agenda for the upcoming 2022 legislative session, increasing pay for more than 50,000 K-12 educators and school staff across the state.

This significant pay increase – the largest in a single year in recent memory – would be accompanied by additional increases to base educator salary levels in the state’s three-tier licensure system, raising minimum teacher salary levels to \$50,000, \$60,000, and \$70,000, representing an average 35% total increase in base salary levels since the Lujan Grisham administration came into office.

In 2019, following years of deep cuts to public education, the governor authorized 6 percent raises for all New Mexico educators while also dramatically increasing educator salary levels as part of [an almost half-billion-dollar investment](#) in public schools that year. This pay raise was followed by an additional 2 percent across-the-board increase for educators in 2020.

“New Mexico educators deserve better compensation – it’s as simple as that,” said **Gov. Lujan Grisham**. “And we will deliver it. Their tireless work for students and communities and their efforts to overcome countless challenges during the pandemic underscore the passion and commitment they have long brought to their jobs day in and day out. If New Mexico kids deserve the best, and they do, then New Mexico educators deserve the best. I want our educators to be the best-compensated in the region. It’s more important than ever. And we’re going to get it done.”

“Educators expect and deserve the respect of the state and communities they serve,” said Public Education Secretary **Kurt Steinhaus**. “This administration will continue to demonstrate that respect. We must address teacher vacancies and the difficulty of working throughout this

pandemic in school environments; the work is not yet done until every school community and district and family in this state has the high-quality and compassionate personnel they deserve.”

A seven percent raise, coupled with higher entry-level salaries for new teachers, will make New Mexico more competitive and increase the average educator salary to **\$64,006**, putting the state on par with the national average, according to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#).

Like the majority of the country, New Mexico faces an educator shortage as more teachers retire or leave the field than enter the profession. After a successful [23% reduction in teacher vacancies](#) in the first year of the Lujan Grisham administration, teacher vacancies amid the pandemic have increased nationwide. Boosting pay will not only attract newcomers to the field, it will also help the state retain current educators.

The total estimated cost of the recurring appropriation for educator raises and increased base educator salaries is roughly \$280 million.

“Because of the governor and the Legislature, we are finally on the road to a professional salary for our educators,” said Senate President Pro Tempore **Mimi Stewart**. “These last two years have been overwhelming for our communities and our schools. This significant increase will help retain and recruit excellent teachers, and I thank the governor for her leadership.”

"Increasing educator and school staff pay is an important recognition of the vital job educators and school staff do for New Mexico's children and students every day," said Representative **G. Andrés Romero**, House Education Committee Chair.

“Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham’s proposed executive budget for K-12 public education is a significant step forward towards our shared goal of a strong system of public education in New Mexico,” said **Whitney Holland**, president of American Federation of Teachers New Mexico. “These proposals represent an investment in the educators who work diligently every day in our public schools serving students and families in challenging conditions and amid historic vacancies, without sacrificing student and school programming needs. We applaud the Governor’s prioritization of New Mexico’s dedicated educational professionals, and if adopted in the upcoming legislative session, these proposals will help to recruit new educators into our schools, retain veteran educators, and return respect to our profession.”

"Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham continues to make education a priority in New Mexico with this proposed budget" said **Mary Parr-Sanchez**, president of National Education Association New Mexico. “This budget demonstrates the commitment from the Governor to improving education in New Mexico. From day one, Governor Lujan Grisham has listened to educators and responded to their needs and the needs of students while simultaneously managing the effects of a global pandemic."

In addition to delivering educator raises and increasing base educator salary levels, the Lujan Grisham administration has enacted several programs to support New Mexico educators and attract New Mexicans to the teaching profession, including:

- The [Grow Your Own Teachers Scholarship Program](#), providing scholarships to school staff for the pursuit of education degrees at New Mexico higher education institutions
- The [Teacher Preparation Affordability Scholarship Program](#), providing funding to New Mexico students enrolled in teacher preparation programs at New Mexico higher education institutions

- The [Teacher Loan Repayment Program](#), providing funding for student debt repayment for teachers in high-need areas across New Mexico public schools

School personnel raises and increased minimum salary levels are one of numerous agenda items included in the budget request submitted Tuesday by the Public Education Department, including \$20 million for student technology and connectivity, \$19 million in bridge funding to provide behavioral health service providers for students, a doubling of funding for community schools, and increased funding for career technical education, early literacy, and the Indian Education Fund.

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