

## Education Policy Decisions made in the Best Interest of Our Students

APS does not fear setting high standards for our students. Yet, we do believe that the decisions we make to encourage accountability and high standards must be balanced with the needs of our students and what is in the best interest for the health of our public education system. APS believes the legislature should consider rethinking the demonstration of competency required by high school students to receive a diploma of excellence. We believe there are multiple ways high school students can continue to meet a high bar for excellence but can do so in alternative ways other than standardized assessments.



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*Accelerate Progress for Students*

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**Albuquerque Public Schools  
Government Affairs Team**



## 2014 Legislative Agenda

### **APS Board of Education**

Martin Esquivel, President

Kathy Korte, Vice-President

Steven Michael Quezada, Secretary

Dr. Donald Duran, Member

Lorenzo Garcia, Member

Dr. Analee Maestas, Member

Dr. David Peercy, Member

# Sufficiently Fund Public Education

Albuquerque Public Schools takes its mission seriously—to provide the very best education possible to each child who walks through our school doors. The education our students deserve is an investment in our great state.

The success of public education is dependent on our legislators adequately funding the entire public education sector. Specifically, APS believes fiscal year 2015 appropriations must consider:

- Appropriately funding any and all new statutory and regulatory requirements for public schools. This consideration would avoid unfunded mandates from the State.
- Prioritizing “above-the-line” funding for new revenue available in FY15 and preserving local control for school boards to budget and expend those funds.
- Guaranteeing adequate resources are available to school districts to eliminate class size waivers and return class sizes to 2008 statutory levels.
- Supporting public school employee salaries by:
  - ◇ Considering an across the board percentage salary raise to keep up with increasing employee liabilities to retirement pensions and increased cost of living
  - ◇ Increasing minimum salaries paid to educational assistants
  - ◇ Funding the rising cost of health care so employees may continue to carry quality insurance coverage without experiencing plan design changes or premium increases

- Recognizing the need to celebrate our best teachers and support our struggling teachers through mentorship programs and advanced professional development.
- Funding statutorily required increases to employer contributions to educational retirement pension plans.
- Acknowledging the importance of instructional materials in the classroom and increasing funds available for schools to purchase those materials.
- Solving the state’s school transportation issues and ensuring there are adequate school buses and support for those buses available to transport students to and from school.
- Fostering leadership in our schools by continuing support for home-grown principal mentorship and leadership programs which capitalize on existing partnerships between public education and higher education institutions.
- Expanding career and technical education programs which build relationships between city and county governments and local business leaders.
- Recognize the need to care for the wellbeing of the entire student, not just the academic student by:
  - ◇ Providing access to professional counseling services when a student suffers from mental health issues, including but not limited to substance abuse
  - ◇ Providing access to quality health and dental care by continuing support to school-based health clinics

- ◇ Assisting families when needed through the services of trained social workers

- Understanding the growing costs of testing our students and guaranteeing school districts have the financial support necessary to administer and score those assessments and report the data to education stakeholders.
- Tackling the growing technology gap in our schools and providing both the technological infrastructure and the hardware necessary to make sure students receive a 21st century education.
- Respecting New Mexico’s state equalization guarantee funding formula and providing significant time to analyze the impact of changes to the funding formula so we may understand those changes, fiscally plan for those changes and ensure there is appropriate funding available to implement those changes.

