High School Graduation Gains Equal Economic Success

In many states and across the nation, high school graduation rates are rising and economies are seeing the benefits. New Mexico’s graduation rate increased by 2.3 percentage points from the Class of 2011 to the Class of 2012. These additional 700 graduates represent gains of as much as $112 million in increased lifetime earnings and $400,000 in annual state and local tax revenues.

If New Mexico increased its overall graduation rate to 90 percent, the economic benefits from these 10 additional graduates would likely include as much as
- $74 million in increased annual earnings and $4.9 million in increased state and local tax revenues;
- 460 new jobs and a $96 million increase in the gross state product; and
- $133 million in increased home sales and $11 million in increased auto sales.

Progress Has Been Made, But Graduation Gaps Remain

Despite Gains, Not All Students Are Graduating from High School at the Same Rates...

High School Graduation Rates by Race (Class of 2011)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Students</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>American Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NM</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation (Avg.)</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...and Even Fewer Are Graduating from College

Four-Year College Graduation Rates*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Students</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>American Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NM*</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation*</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Due to data limitations for two-year institutions, particularly as they relate to students who transfer from their first institution, two-year college graduation rates have been omitted.
*Graduation within six years of entrance (Cohort from 2005 to 2011)

Better Preparation Is Key for Success in College and a Career

Literacy Is an Underlying Problem for Many Students

School Year (SY) 2010–11 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading Scores for New Mexico Eighth Graders*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>American Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(NM: New Mexico; Nation: National Assessment of Educational Progress)

Better Preparation Is Key for Success in College and a Career

Nationally, the average gaps between state- and NAEP-reported reading and math scores are 40 percentage points and 32 percentage points, respectively.

States Are Strengthening Standards to Improve Preparedness

New Mexico, along with 45 states and the District of Columbia, has adopted a common, state-created set of world-class standards for college and career readiness in English language arts and math. The four remaining states have their own college- and career-ready standards.

More Accurate Measures of Student Proficiency Are Needed

New Mexico’s Eighth-Grade Proficiency as Measured by State Test vs. the Nation’s Report Card (NAEP) for SY 2011–12

![Graph showing reading and math proficiency comparison between state test and NAEP]

Connecting Technology to Schools and Students

Having access to a broadband network—connectivity—is crucial to taking advantage of the world of technology and what it offers in the classroom. New Mexico does not have a statewide broadband network for its schools. The use of technology lends flexibility to schools and classrooms. New Mexico does allow additional flexibility by permitting schools to use funding for instructional materials on digital resources.

The Next Frontier: Deepen and Personalize Learning

Today’s modern economy requires more than basic content knowledge. Leading states are building an engaging and personalized education process to achieve deeper learning outcomes of core content knowledge, creative and critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

The following schools in New Mexico are part of a deeper learning network and represent new approaches to prepare students, particularly those historically underserved, for college and a career: nex+Gen Academy (Albuquerque).

To foster such learning, school districts like Colorado’s Adams County School District 50, and even entire states, like New Hampshire and Oregon, permit students to advance their grade level based on mastery of content rather than on amount of time spent in the classroom.


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