



## **SOAR: Southwest Outreach Academic Research Evaluation & Policy Center**

# 2019 New Mexico Educator Vacancy Report

Date Prepared: October 4, 2019

**Prepared by:**

**New Mexico State University College of Education Southwest Outreach Academic Research  
(SOAR) Evaluation & Policy Center**

*Dr. Rachel Boren, Ph.D., Director*

*Data collected by SOAR researchers: Germain Degardin, Ruth Lawson, Samantha Mendoza, and  
Giovanna Perez*

[alliance.nmsu.edu/soar](http://alliance.nmsu.edu/soar)

## Introduction

The New Mexico Educator Vacancy report has been done annually by the New Mexico State University SOAR Center since 2015. The purpose of this report is to provide policy makers, superintendents, higher education, and other stakeholders with a clear picture of the staffing needs in K-12 schools across the state, focusing primarily on teachers with other educator positions discussed as well. The results and recommendations are designed to facilitate informed decision making among these different groups and subsequent implementation of strategic initiatives and efforts to address the most critical areas gleaned from the data.

## Methodology

To gather the most detailed and up to date data from the districts, SOAR staff and students went to each school district's website to find the current job postings. They put this information into a comprehensive database and grouped positions by district and teaching area or job type, such as middle school science, elementary educational assistant, and so on. If the information was not available on the district website, they searched the New Mexico Regional Education Applicant Placement (REAP) database, where districts and schools can post educator positions, and if the district information was still not available, the researcher called the district. Although this information changes as people are hired, the data provided in this report represent verified openings as of September 23, 2019. Please note, these data *do not include* state charter schools or private schools. The data represent the 89 school districts defined by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) plus the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Schools located in New Mexico.

This report also presents information about the pipeline of educators from the colleges and universities in the state. Beginning with the Fall 2018 report, Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) in New Mexico provided the SOAR Center with the number of students they admitted to a teacher education program and how many graduated from a teacher education program the prior academic year. This approach was utilized for the current report as well. In prior years, this information was gleaned from the New Mexico Educator Accountability Reporting System (EARS), however, obtaining these figures directly from the EPPs yields the most up to date data available.

## Results

### *Vacancies*

In all, there were a total of **1,054 educator vacancies** for the positions in Table One below, with **644 teacher vacancies** included in this total. Last year there were 740 teacher vacancies, indicating an overall decrease of 96 teachers, or 13 percent. Though this is a decrease, the 644 figure is still substantial. In terms of total vacancies, the 2018 Vacancy Report cited 1,173 educator vacancies, though the current report focused only on the job categories below in addition to teacher positions and did not include every position in last year's report. A breakdown of these vacancies by position can be found in Table One below.

Position	Number of Vacancies
Teachers	644
Educational/Instructional Assistants	258
Speech Language Pathologists	42
Counselors	37
Emotional/Behavioral Support Providers	26
Instructional Coaches	16
School Psychologists	14
Educational Diagnosticians	10
Administrators (Principals and Assistant Principals)	7
<b>Total Vacancies</b>	<b>1,054</b>

Table One: Educator Vacancies by Position

When breaking down the teacher vacancies by grade level and general area, the **largest need was for elementary teachers** (173 teachers; 27 percent of the total teacher vacancies), followed closely by special education teachers (151 teachers; 23 percent of the total teacher vacancies). Additionally, within these 644 teacher vacancies, **66 had bilingual** specified in the job title (10 percent). All teacher vacancy groups can be found in Figure One below.

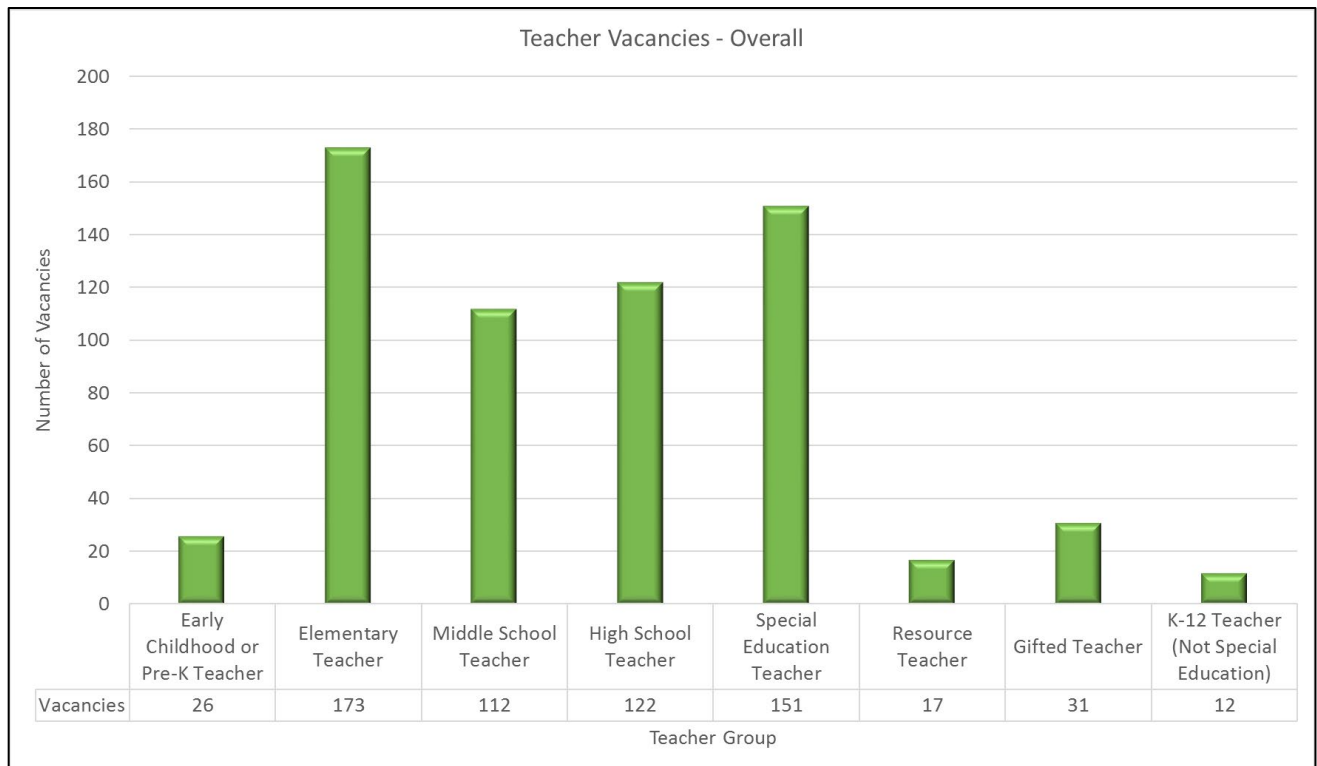


Figure One: General Breakdown of Teacher Vacancies

When breaking down **the Special Education Teacher vacancies** into grade levels and adding those figures to the totals in Figure One, this yields a need for 30 teachers at the early childhood or pre-K level, 217 teachers at the elementary level, 160 teachers at the middle school level, 159 teachers at the high school level, and 30 K-12 teachers. Compared to last year’s Report, there were decreases in the number of vacancies across all levels, except for pre-K teachers, which increased from 13 last year to 30

vacancies this year. Last year's Report also identified 267 special education vacancies compared to 151 this year (182 including gifted teachers for a 32 percent decrease).

Utilizing the same geographic district grouping as prior Vacancy Reports, the central region continues to have the highest amount of vacancies, with 309 this year (compared to 400 last year), and it is important to keep in mind that this region includes Albuquerque and Santa Fe Public Schools. Though there were also decreases in the northeast (27 this year; 58 last year) and northwest (96 this year; 123 last year), there was a **25 percent increase in the southeast** (147 this year; 118 last year) **and a 59 percent increase in the southwest** (65 this year; 41 last year). Table Two below lists the districts and the total number of teacher vacancies in each region.

Region	Districts
Central: 309 Teacher Vacancies	Albuquerque Public Schools, Belen, Bernalillo, Estancia, Los Lunas Schools, Moriarty - Edgewood School District, Mountainair, Pecos, Rio Rancho Public Schools, Santa Fe, Vaughn
Northeast: 27 Teacher Vacancies	Cimarron Municipal Schools, Clayton, Des Moines Municipal Schools, Grady Municipal Schools, House, Las Vegas, Logan, Maxwell Municipal Schools, Mora, Mosquero, Penasco ISD, Questa Independent School District, Raton, Roy Municipal, San Jon, Santa Rosa, Springer, Taos, Tucumcari, Wagon Mound, West Las Vegas
Northwest: 96 Teacher Vacancies	Aztec Municipal Schools, BIE, Bloomfield Schools, Central, Chama Valley Schools, Cuba, Dulce, Espanola, Farmington, Gallup-McKinley, Grants- Cibola, Jemez Mountain, Jemez Valley, Los Alamos Public Schools, Mesa Vista, Pojoaque, Zuni
Southeast: 147 Teacher Vacancies	Alamogordo, Artesia, Capitan Schools, Carlsbad Municipal Schools, Carrizozo Municipal Schools, Cloudcroft Municipal Schools, Clovis Municipal School District, Corona, Dexter, Dora, Elida Municipal Schools, Eunice, Floyd Municipal School District, Fort Summer, Hagerman Municipal Schools, Hobbs, Hondo Valley, Jal, Lake Arthur Municipal Schools, Loving Municipal Schools, Lovington, Melrose, Portales Municipal Schools, Roswell, Ruidoso, Tatum, Texico, Tularosa Municipal Schools
Southwest: 65 Teacher Vacancies	Animas, Cobre Consolidated Schools, Deming Public Schools, Gadsden, Hatch Valley, Las Cruces, Lordsburg Municipal Schools, Magdalena Municipal School District, Quemado, Reserve, Silver, Socorro, Truth or Consequences

*Table Two: District List and Total Teacher Vacancies for Each Region*

Next, looking more closely at the elementary, middle school, high school, and special education teacher vacancies, the **specific subjects that were listed mainly consisted of math (62 vacancies)**, with **science and English language arts** closely behind (46 vacancies each), and music the next highest area of need (34 vacancies). Compared to last year's Report, almost all subjects had an increase in the number of vacancies this year, particularly the three subjects cited above. English language arts saw a 31 percent increase, while math and science demand increased by 15 percent each compared to last year. It is also worth noting that for the core subjects (math, science, English language arts, and social studies), only a handful (less than five total) of vacancies were at the elementary level, indicating that almost all needs in these areas were at the secondary level, with a strong need in special education as well (see next section). Among all subjects that had at least five vacancies, the breakdown can be found in Figure Two below. These figures include job postings that listed "General Education Teacher" without a specific subject specified and 10 vacancies that had multiple subjects attached (e.g. Math and Science Teacher).

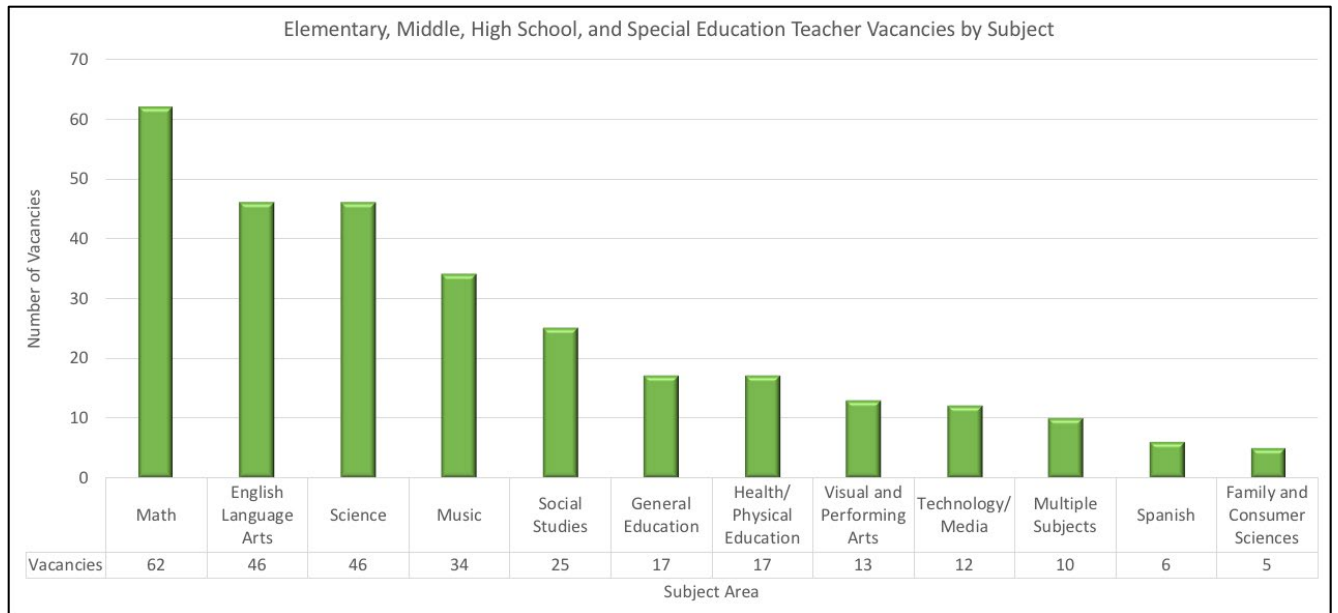


Figure Two: Vacancies by Subject Area for Elementary, Middle, High School, and Special Education Teacher Positions

Taking a closer look at the 151 special education teacher vacancies from Figure One, the needs vary in terms of student level and subject area. The largest need within the **special education teacher total is for elementary teachers (44 vacancies; 29%)**, with less, but still notable, middle and high school teacher needs (25 vacancies and 22 vacancies, respectively; 17% and 15%). There were other special education teacher needs in specific subjects, particularly math and science, and all of these areas can be found in Figure Three below.

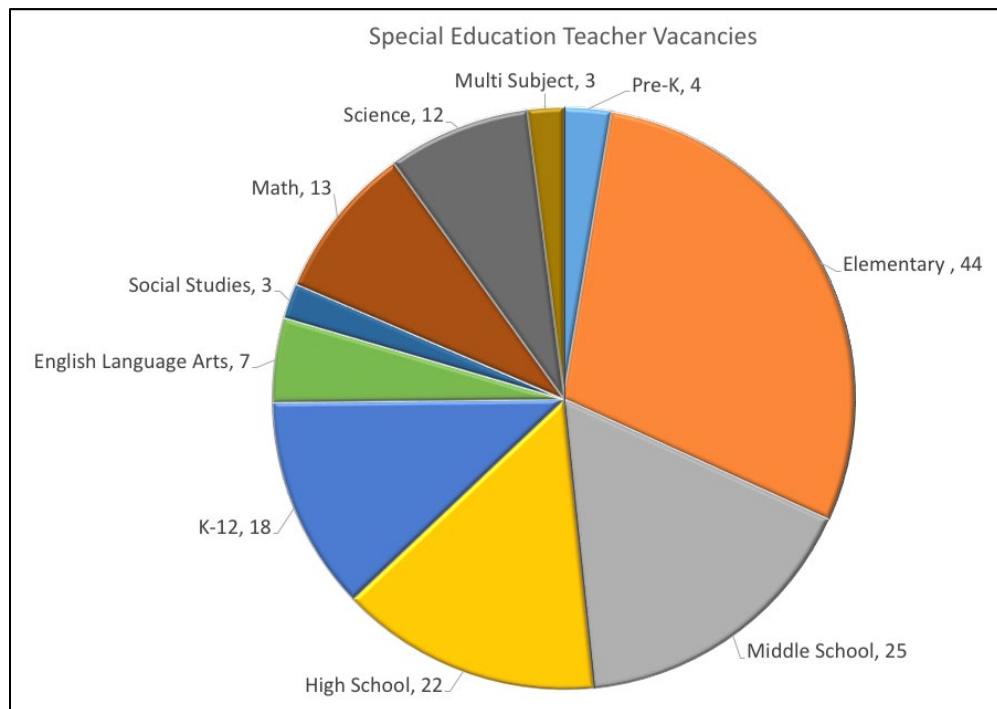


Figure Three: Special Education Teacher Vacancies by Level and Subject Area

In addition to the large number of teacher vacancies, there were **258 vacancies for educational or instructional assistants, up 30 percent** from 198 vacancies in last year’s Report. Most of these (58 percent) were for **special education assistants (149 vacancies)** with an additional 93 general educational/instructional assistant postings that did not specify an area, and 16 postings that specifically asked for a bilingual assistant. Within the 242 general and special education postings, the grade level breakdowns can be found in Figure Four below, which indicates that elementary schools have the highest need.

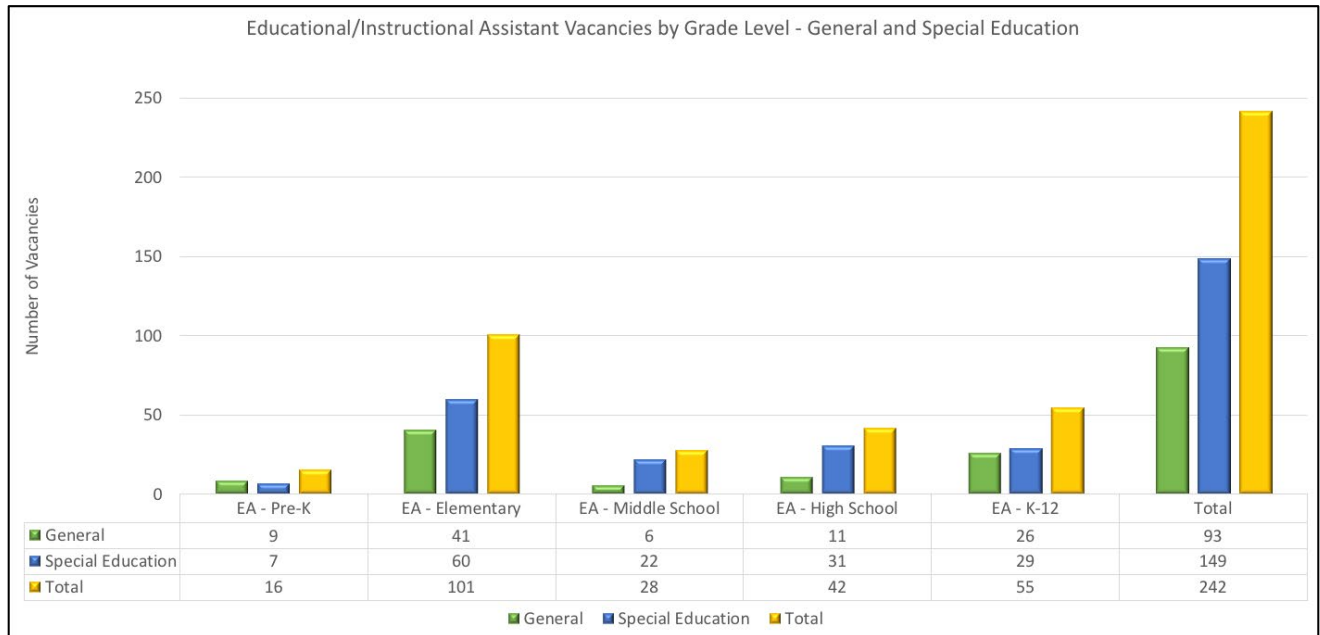


Figure Four: Educational and Instructional Assistant Vacancy Breakdown by Grade Level (Special Education and General Assistant Postings)

*Higher Education Admits and Completers*

The second half of this report looks at the number of students who completed an Educator Preparation Program (EPP; teacher education only) and the number who were admitted to a program during the last academic year (2018 - 2019). Two-year institutions offer alternative licensure programs to students who already have a bachelor’s degree, while the four-year institutions offer traditional undergraduate, graduate, and alternative licensure programs as well. Wayland Baptist University was included last year; however, this institution no longer has licensure programs in New Mexico. Additionally, among the two-year institutions in the state, only those that offered alternative licensure programs were included in the results. Institutions included in this year’s analyses are below.

Four Year Institutions

- Eastern New Mexico University
- New Mexico Highlands University
- New Mexico State University
- Northern New Mexico College
- University of New Mexico
- University of the Southwest
- Western New Mexico University

Two Year Institutions

- Central New Mexico Community College
- New Mexico Junior College
- San Juan College
- Santa Fe Community College

Across all institutions and programs, a total of **1,094 students were admitted** to an educator preparation program during the 2018 - 2019 academic year, while **746 students completed** an educator preparation program. This is a **decrease of 47 admits and 97 completers** from last year's totals. Last year's Vacancy Report cited the 2015 New Mexico Accountability Reporting System (EARS) report for prior year's data (for completers), noting there were 1,318 total completers across the state in the 2009 - 2010 academic year. This is a 43 percent decrease in the number of completers across the last ten years and a decrease of 12 percent from last year. Table Three below presents the total number of admits and completers by program type, illustrating that the breakdown of alternative and traditional students is almost equal among completers, but there were many more alternative admits last year compared to those in traditional programs.

	Admits		Completers	
	Number of Students	Percent of All Admits	Number of Students	Percent of All Completers
Alternative	625	57%	376	51%
Traditional	469	43%	370	49%
Total	1,094		746	

*Table Three: Educator Preparation Program 2018 - 2019 Admits and Completers by Program Type*

In terms of grade level and program, the number of admitted students is down slightly for early childhood, elementary, and secondary education students compared to last year's Report, with **secondary education showing the largest drop in admitted students at 13%**. Though there is a slight increase for special education and K-12 admitted student totals. In terms of completers, most areas saw a drop this year, particularly in elementary education (26% decrease) and secondary education (16% decrease). It is worth noting that there was a **13% increase in the number of special education completers** for this year's Report compared to last year's figures. The total number of admits and completers for each program can be found in Table Four below.

	Admits		Completers	
	Number of Students	Percent of All Admits	Number of Students	Percent of All Completers
Early Childhood	95	9%	64	8%
Elementary	375	34%	236	32%
Secondary	308	28%	206	28%
Special Education	240	22%	188	25%
K - 12	76	7%	52	7%
Total	1,094		746	

*Table Four: 2018 - 2019 Admits and Completers by Program/Grade Level*

Finally, it is worth examining the subject areas within the secondary and K-12 admitted and completer data to better understand what in which specific areas students are being prepared. Comparing these figures to the vacancy totals can then provide a more complete understanding of outlook for addressing these teacher needs. The subject area that had the **largest number of admits and completers was English language arts (67 admits and 52 completers)**, followed by science (70 admits and 44 completers), and social studies after that (49 admits and 37 completers). Additionally, a total of 76 students completed the requirements for a bilingual/TESOL endorsement (including students who were

enrolled in an educator preparation program and those who enrolled only in the endorsement courses and not a formal preparation program). The total number of admits and completers for each subject area can be found in Figure Four below. This list includes only subjects that had at least five admits and five completers each.

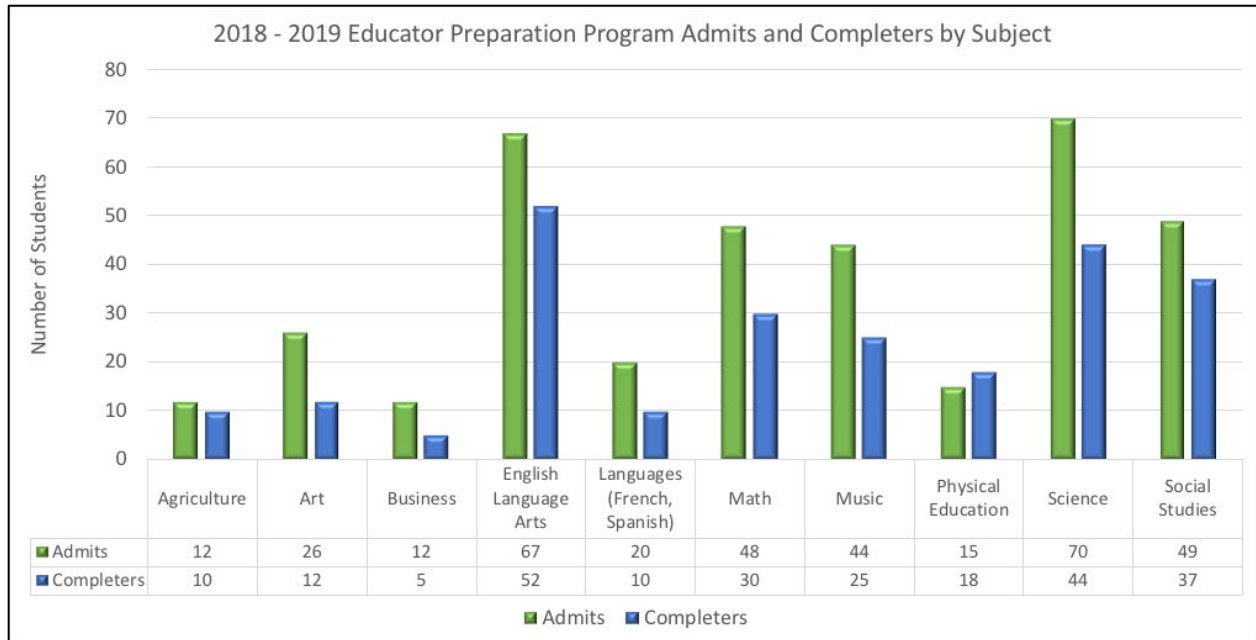


Figure Four: 2018 - 2019 EPP Secondary and K-12 Admits and Completers by Subject

### Recommendations and Main Points

This Report is meant to provide key stakeholder groups with helpful data that can inform decision making and to describe not only the scope of the educator vacancy problem, but to highlight the areas of greatest need. Before reviewing main findings from the Report, it is worth noting that there have been several recent changes in PK-12 policy that are wide reaching and include revisions to the state’s student assessment and teacher evaluation systems and results of the Yazzie/Martinez v. State of New Mexico finding. There are also new scholarships to support college students and educational assistants who are pursuing a teaching degree.

These policy changes and other teacher education initiatives are reviewed in more detail in Appendix A. Readers should keep in mind that these efforts will take time and robust evaluations to show if and how they directly impact the teacher pipeline and educator vacancies in the state.

Finally, review of the findings presented in the Report yielded the following recommendations and main points for readers:

- 1) The decrease in total teacher need from 740 last year to 644 this year is encouraging; however, this was **still a large number of open positions** that needed to be filled shortly after the school year started. Addressing the vacancy problem requires attention to how to recruit new teachers *and* how to retain current teachers in the profession, both of which are touched on in the policies and initiatives in Appendix A. These efforts should be continuously monitored, rigorously assessed, and revised as needed over time.



- 2) When breaking down the vacancies by grade level and area, **elementary teachers and special education teachers combined make up half of the total teacher need**, at 27 percent and 23 percent of all 644 teacher vacancies, respectively. These were areas of high need in last year's Vacancy Report as well, suggesting additional efforts to recruit and retain these teachers is needed.
- 3) In terms of subject areas, the **largest needs are for math, English language arts, and science teachers** with 62 vacancies in math and 46 vacancies each in language arts and science. Last year's Vacancy Report also indicated that these subjects were high areas of need, particularly math. Focusing only on secondary education (not elementary or special education), this includes 47 math vacancies, 37 English language arts vacancies, and 34 science vacancies within these larger totals. When then looking at the number of EPP admits and completers as an indicator of outlook, this suggests that addressing the math vacancies in particular will be difficult, as it is important to acknowledge that not all completers will remain in the state to teach and that half of those who graduate from an EPP will leave the profession within five years.  
(<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/ALESC%20111418%20Item%204%20.1%20-%20Local%20Teacher%20Recruitment%20and%20Retention%20Strategies.pdf> ).
- 4) Educational and instructional assistants remain in high demand with an increase of 30 percent in vacancies from last year's figures. Within these 258 vacancies, **over half (149) are for special education assistants**, and as with certified teachers, most vacancies are at the elementary level. One of the new scholarships mentioned in Appendix A is geared toward educational assistants in an effort to help them pursue a teaching degree to address the teacher shortage. It will be important to balance the need to recruit new teachers while maintaining (and increasing) a strong workforce of educational assistants, as it is clear there is a huge need for this position across the state.
- 5) Focusing on the higher education admit and completer figures, there remains a continued **decrease in the number of completers** (12 percent from last year) and a smaller, but still downward trend in the number of admitted students (four percent decrease from last year). All EPPs still had many more students admitted to their programs than the number who completed their programs this year as they did last year, suggesting a more promising pipeline, though the proof will be in the vacancies identified in next year's Report.
- 6) Also in the area of EPP admits and completer trends, last year, **more students were admitted to an alternative licensure program** than a traditional one, and the split of alternative and traditional completers was almost equal. This suggests a large demand for alternative licensure providers and is worth noting for EPPs as they examine their offerings.
- 7) This Report identified several vacancies in additional student support services outside of the need for teachers and educational assistants. In particular, there is a need for **42 speech language pathologists and 37 counselors alone**. These vacancies should be noted when considering additional action or decisions that result from this report, as these services are critical in providing students with a positive school experience that meets their diverse needs.

## Appendix A: Overview of Teacher Preparation Initiatives and Changes in PK-12 Policy

### *Yazzie/Martinez v. State of New Mexico*

In July 2018, a judge ruled that New Mexico failed to provide all students with the education and resources they need for college and career readiness, particularly Native American students, ELL students, low income students, and students with disabilities (<http://nmpovertylaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Graphic-Yazzie-Martinez-Decision.pdf>). The New Mexico Legislature increased funding for education during this year's legislative session, however, the work to address this ruling continues. One substantial spending area comes from the increase in teacher salaries that was announced earlier this year, with a six percent raise for public school staff, and new educator salaries increasing to a minimum of \$41,000 (<https://www.apnews.com/544eed07f6164a15b7945ea9846d35d0>).

### *Educators Rising Growth*

Educators Rising is a "Grow Your Own" teacher pipeline program supporting high school students interested in education and now includes additional support for collegiate chapters. When the organization was established in New Mexico in 2015, there were six high school chapters. Currently, there are 41 active high school chapters, five college chapters, and 615 registered students across New Mexico. For more information about starting a high school or college chapter, please visit: <https://educatorsrisingnm.nmsu.edu>

### *New Scholarships*

In 2019, two new scholarships were made available as part of two Acts that are aimed at supporting students and professionals interested in pursuing a teaching degree. The Grow Your Own Teacher Scholarship provides funds for eligible educational assistants who want to become licensed teachers (<https://hed.state.nm.us/financial-aid/scholarships/grow-your-own-teachers>) and the Teacher Preparation Affordability Scholarship offers funds for students who are enrolled in a teacher preparation program (<https://hed.state.nm.us/financial-aid/scholarships/teacher-preparation-affordability-scholarship-program>).

### *Changes and Review of Teacher Evaluation System and Standardized Testing*

Additional changes to the teaching landscape were announced in early 2019, with executive orders that: (1) Required the New Mexico Public Education Department to stop utilization of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and to plan for a new assessment plan to meet the requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); and (2) Called for establishing a new protocol for teacher evaluations.

Public comment sessions about these areas were held across the state and were facilitated by the New Mexico State University Collaborating for Outstanding Readiness in Education (CORE), where community members gave input and suggestions for how the state should move forward. For additional details about the community meetings, notes from these conversations, and task force membership, see <http://www.core-nmsu.org>. The most immediate changes included implementing the New Mexico Standards Based Transition Assessment of Math and English Language Arts in Spring 2019, which required less time spent on testing (<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/news/nmped-announces-statewide-mathematics-and-english-language-arts-assessment-results/>), and removal of test scores in teacher evaluations and modifications to the teacher feedback and observation process (<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Teacher-Observation-Tool-and-Plan-Updates-08.22.19-1.pdf>).

*Teacher Loan Repayment Program and Loan-For-Service Program*

The Teacher Loan Repayment Program and the Loan-For-Service Program are designed to help address the teacher shortage by providing for loan repayment or financial support for individuals who are pursuing a teaching degree or who are enhancing their current credentials. The Loan Repayment Program requires that recipients complete two years of teaching in a high needs position, and the Loan-for-Service Program requires that applicants declare their intent to practice as a teacher in a shortage area within the state. These programs are not new like those mentioned earlier in the Appendix, but are important to note in the state's continuing efforts to address the teacher shortage. For more information on these programs: <https://hed.state.nm.us/financial-aid/loan-repayment-programs/teacher> and <https://hed.state.nm.us/financial-aid/loan-service-programs/teacher>

### References

Lee, M. (2019). *New Mexico Governor Signs Spending, Pay Increases*.

<https://www.apnews.com/544eed07f6164a15b7945ea9846d35d0>

Legislative Education Study Committee (2018). *Local Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategies: Educators Rising, University of New Mexico Teacher Residency Pilot, and Teacher Loan for Service and Loan Repayment Programs*. Retrieved October 4, 2019.

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/ALESC%20111418%20Item%204%20.1%20-%20Local%20Teacher%20Recruitment%20and%20Retention%20Strategies.pdf>

New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty. *Yazzie/Martinez v. State of New Mexico Decision*. Retrieved October 4, 2019.

<http://nmpoertylaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Graphic-Yazzie-Martinez-Decision.pdf>

New Mexico Higher Education Department websites:

<https://hed.state.nm.us/financial-aid/scholarships/grow-your-own-teachers>

<https://hed.state.nm.us/financial-aid/scholarships/teacher-preparation-affordability-scholarship-program>

<https://hed.state.nm.us/financial-aid/loan-repayment-programs/teacher>

<https://hed.state.nm.us/financial-aid/loan-service-programs/teacher>

Trujillo, K. & Villa, S. (2018). *The New Mexico Educator Vacancy Report 2018*.

<https://alliance.nmsu.edu/files/2018/10/2018-New-Mexico-Educator-Vacancy-Report.pdf>