



SOAR: Southwest Outreach Academic Research Evaluation & Policy Center

2026 New Mexico Educator Vacancy Report

Date Prepared: October 15, 2026

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Introduction

The New Mexico Educator Vacancy Report has been done annually by the New Mexico State University SOAR Evaluation & Policy Center since 2015. The purpose of this report is to provide policy makers, superintendents, those in 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 and support positions discussed as well. The results are designed to facilitate informed decision making among these different groups and subsequent 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 researchers went to each school district's website to find the current job postings. This information was then grouped by position, 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 information was still not available, they called the district. Although this information changes as people are hired and new positions are posted, the data provided in this report represent openings as of September 1, 2026. 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 Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) in the state. To gather this data, EPPs in New Mexico provided SOAR 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.

Results

Vacancies

In all, there were **867 educator vacancies** for the positions in Table One below, with **403 teacher vacancies** included in this total. Last year (2025 Report) there were 604 teacher vacancies, indicating a decrease of 201 teachers, or 33 percent, and in the 2024 Report, there were 737 teacher vacancies. Table One below presents the breakdown of 2026 vacancies by position.

Position	Number of Vacancies
Teachers	403
Educational/Instructional Assistants	305
Counselors	53
Speech Language Pathologists	28
Paraprofessionals	21
Instructional Coaches	19
Administrators (Principals and Assistant Principals)	9
Emotional/Behavioral Support Providers	9
School Psychologists	9
Interventionists	6
Educational Diagnosticians	5
Total Vacancies	867

Table One: Educator Vacancies by Position

Within the teacher vacancies, the **highest need was for special education teachers** (116 vacancies; 29 percent of all teacher vacancies), and **elementary teachers** had the second highest total (101 vacancies; 25 percent of all teacher vacancies), consistent with the top areas last year as well. Compared to last year, the largest decreases were for special education teachers (216 last year and 116 this year, a 46 percent decrease) and high school teachers (102 last year and 67 this year, or a 34 percent decrease). The only group that saw an increase were resource teachers, which had 20 postings this year and nine last year.

Within the 403 teacher vacancies, **30 had bilingual or dual language** included in the job title (seven percent of all teacher vacancies). Teacher vacancy totals are in Figure One below.

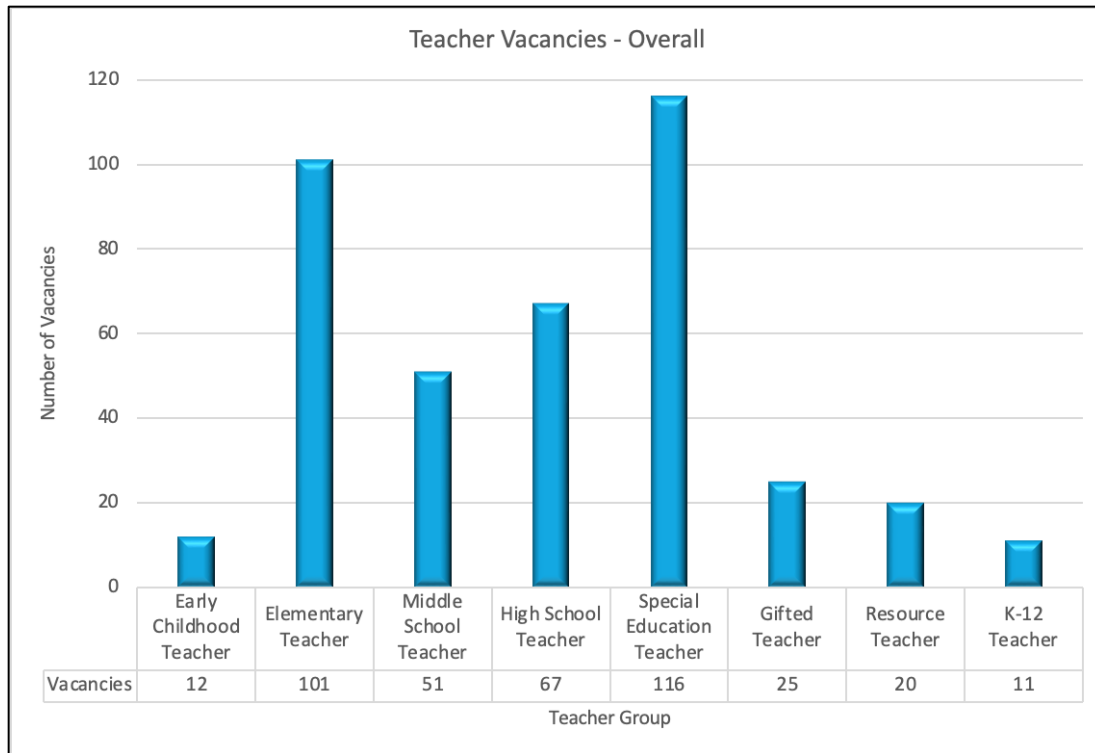


Figure One: General Breakdown of Teacher Vacancies

Using the same geographic district grouping as prior Vacancy Reports, the central region still yielded the largest number of vacancies, with 164 this year (down from 316 last year), and it is worth keeping in mind that this region includes Albuquerque and Santa Fe Public Schools. The Southeast also saw a decrease of 55 teachers compared to last year (going from 137 vacancies to 82), and the other three regions stayed relatively even compared to last year as well. Looking at individual districts, those with the highest number of teacher vacancies included Albuquerque (CE; 68 vacancies), Santa Fe (CE; 53 vacancies), Carlsbad (SE; 33 vacancies), and Espanola (NW; 23 vacancies). Table Two below lists the districts and the total number of teacher vacancies in each region.

Region	Districts
Central (CE): 164 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 (NE): 36 Teacher Vacancies	Cimarron Municipal Schools, Clayton, Des Moines Municipal Schools, Grady Municipal Schools, House, Las Vegas, Logan, Maxwell Municipal Schools, Mora, Mosquero, Peñasco ISD, Questa Independent School District, Raton, Roy Municipal, San Jon, Santa Rosa, Springer, Taos, Tucumcari, Wagon Mound, West Las Vegas
Northwest (NW): 85 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 (SE): 82 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 Sumner, 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 (SW): 36 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

Looking next at elementary, middle school, high school, and special education teacher vacancies, the **subjects with the most openings were science (24 vacancies), math (23 vacancies) and English language arts (19 vacancies)**. These were the top three areas in the prior report as well. For subjects that had at least 10 vacancies, the totals are in Figure Two below.

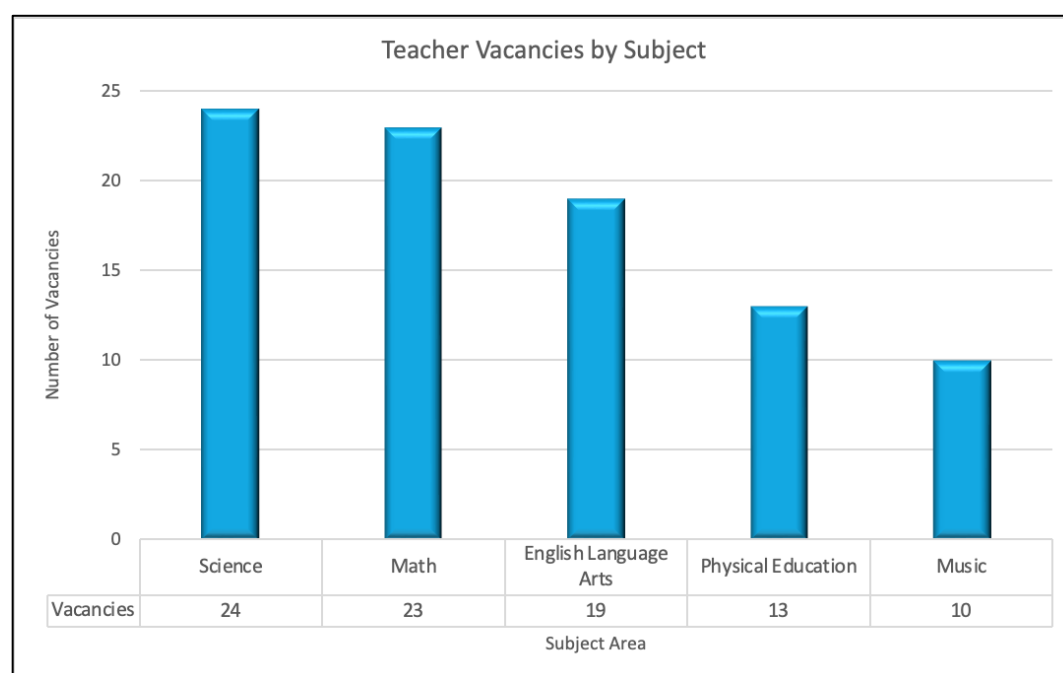


Figure Two: Teacher Vacancies by Subject Area

Among the 116 special education teacher vacancies, the largest need was for **elementary teachers** (43 vacancies; 37 percent of the total), and the next highest total was for middle school teachers (20 vacancies; 17 percent). There were also several needs for K-12 and high school teachers. Like last year, elementary teachers had the highest need among all special education postings. All special education vacancy areas with at least five openings are in Table Three.

	Number of Vacancies	Percent
Elementary School	43	37%
Middle School	20	17%
K - 12	14	12%
High School	10	9%
Pre - K	5	4%
Math	5	4%

Table Three: Top Special Education Teacher Vacancies by Level and Subject Area

In addition to teacher vacancies, there were **305 vacancies for educational or instructional assistants**, an increase of 16 positions from 289 last year. Over half (61 percent) were for **special education assistants** (185 vacancies) with 107 general education assistant postings as well (no area specified). The 13 other postings mainly included bilingual, with media, language programs, and Title I areas also listed. Within the 292 general and special education vacancies, elementary level positions continue to have the highest need, as observed in prior reports as well. The grade level breakdowns for the general and special education assistant vacancies can be found in Figure Three below.

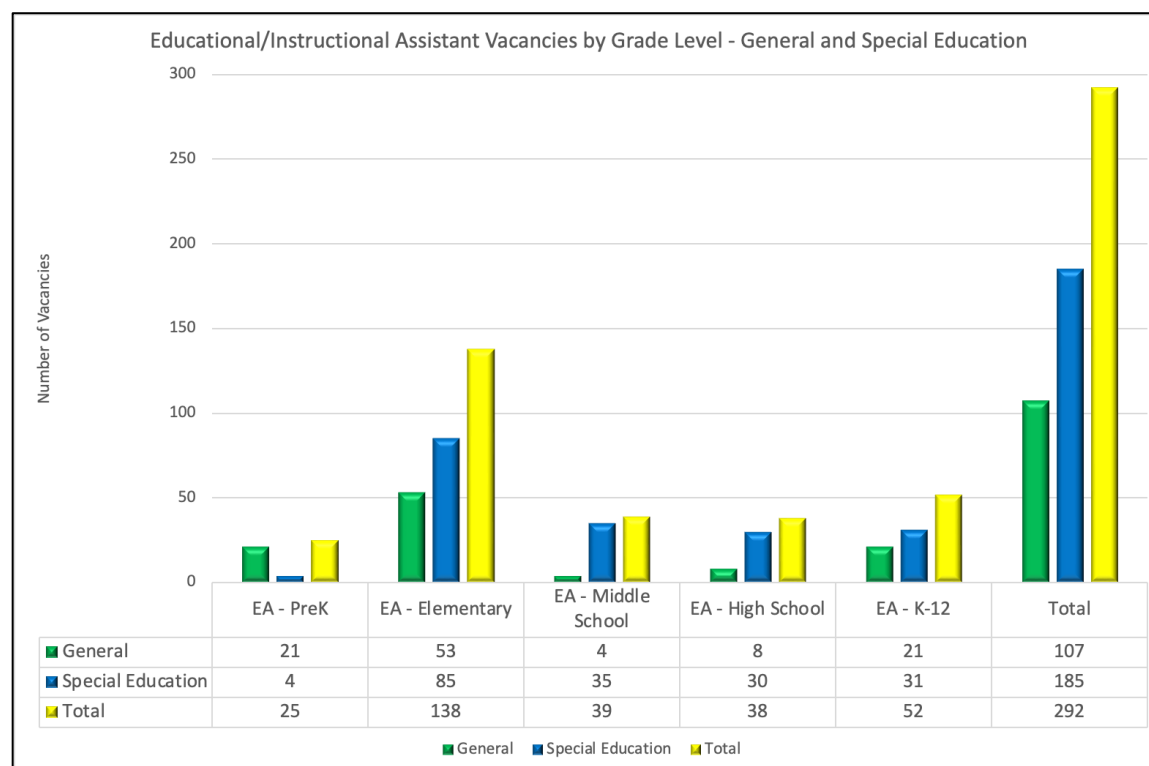


Figure Three: Educational and Instructional Assistant Vacancies by Grade Level (Special Education and General Assistant Postings)

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 (2025 - 2026). 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, or alternative licensure programs as well. Additionally, among the two-year institutions in the state, only those that offer alternative licensure programs were included in the results. Leading Educators through Alternative Pathways (LEAP) is also included. LEAP is offered by the Cooperative Educational Services (CES) and is a non-Institution of Higher Education (IHE) program. In non-IHE programs, candidates receive preparation aligned with the same standards the IHEs are required to meet. The candidates complete these requirements through monthly seminars, critical disposition assessments, and mentoring outside of a college or university. Institutions and programs included in this year's analyses are below.

Four Year Institutions

Eastern New Mexico University
 New Mexico Highlands University
 New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
 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

Non-IHE (Alternative)

Leading Educators through Alternative Pathways (LEAP)

Across all institutions and programs, a total of **1,996 students were admitted** to an educator preparation program during the 2025 - 2026 academic year, and **1,262 students completed** an educator preparation program. This is a decrease of 18 admits and an increase of 109 completers compared to last year. The portion of alternative and traditional students is similar among admits and completers compared to last year as well. Table Four below presents the total number of admits and completers by program type.

	Admits			Completers	
	Number of Students	Percent of All Admits		Number of Students	Percent of All Completers
Alternative - IHE	879	44%		530	42%
Alternative - Non IHE	223	11%		137	11%
Traditional (IHE Only)	894	45%		595	47%
Total	1,996			1,262	

Table Four: Educator Preparation Program 2025 - 2026 Admits and Completers by Program Type

In terms of teaching areas, **Elementary Education** had the **highest number** of both admits (658) and completers (389), and **Early Childhood Education** had the second highest admit total (445), while **Special Education** had the second highest completer total (305).

The top subjects in the data were social studies, science, and English language arts, with social studies yielding the most admits *and* completers. These are the same top subjects in last year's report as well,

though last year, English language arts had the most completers. Additionally, 124 students completed the requirements for a bilingual/ TESOL endorsement. The number of admits and completers for programs that had at least 10 total admits and completers each is in Table Five below.

Teaching Area	Total Admits	Total Completers
Elementary Education	658	389
Early Childhood Education	445	247
Special Education	413	305
Secondary Education: Social Studies	109	83
Secondary Education: Science	89	53
Secondary Education: English Language Arts	79	63
Secondary Education: Math	69	52
Physical Education	35	36
Music Education	31	28
Secondary Education: Spanish	11	10

Table Five: Top Areas and Subjects for EPP Admits and Completers

Main Findings

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 educator vacancies in New Mexico, but to show the areas of greatest need. Overall, review of the data in the report yielded the following main points:

- 1) There was a **33 percent decrease (201 postings) in total teacher vacancies** this year compared to last year's report. The largest changes were decreases in special education teacher vacancies (46 percent decrease) and high school teachers (34 percent decrease). The **areas with the highest vacancies were special education and elementary teachers**, and **science and math** were the top subjects of need. These areas and subjects are consistent with prior reports as well.
- 2) In terms of **EPP admits and completers**, there was a decrease of 18 admits and an increase of 109 completers compared to last year. Elementary had the highest admits and completers, while early childhood had the next highest admits and special education had the next highest completer total. For subjects, social studies had the highest admit and completer totals, which is similar to last year (last year, social studies had the highest admits and the second highest completer total after English language arts).
- 3) Looking at other positions, there was an **increase in educational/instructional assistant postings**, going from 289 last year to 305 this year. Differences across other positions varied, with some decreasing and others remaining relatively consistent from last year. These are all still important positions to assess when reviewing the results of this report.

All prior Vacancy Reports can be found on the SOAR website:

<https://alliance.nmsu.edu/soar-center/publications.html>