

# ERRORS OF ENCHANTMENT

Why is New Mexico not realizing its potential?

## More Dollars ≠ Better Scholars

Dowd Muska

June 14, 2017

It would be difficult to name a public-policy movement more ignorant — and potentially destructive — than the sue-for-higher-school-spending crusade. That’s why New Mexicans must keep close watch on the trial now underway over the consolidation of *Yazzie v. New Mexico* and *Martinez v. New Mexico*.

The cases, filed in 2014 by the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty and Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, allege that taxpayers don’t spend enough to [ensure that “every single school-age child \[is\] provided with a sufficient and uniform public education.”](#)

Some important facts to keep in mind as the trial proceeds:

There is [zero connection](#) between school expenditures and student performance.

[New Mexico spends more than its neighbors on government schools.](#) (Thirty percent more than Utah, where pupil proficiencies are stellar.)

The “fairness” and “equalization” dreams of the educrat lobby have essentially been attained in New Mexico — [just a few states surpass the Land of Enchantment in posting the lowest share of K-12 spending covered by local taxpayers.](#)

Policy by lawsuits, rather than legislation, is poor — and unaccountable — policy. As [Walter Olson](#) of the Cato Institute [noted](#): “[M]odern school-finance litigation only poses as being about educational quality. Its deeper mission is control — specifically, transferring control over spending from voters and their representatives to litigators whose loyalty is to a mix of ideologues and interest groups sharing a wish for higher spending.”