2026 NATIONAL REPORT CARD

New Mexico

CLASS OF 2026 GRADE

C

PROJECTED CLASS OF 2027 GRADE

B

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Is a high school course with personal finance concepts required to be taken as a graduation requirement?

No, a specifically identified course with personal finance concepts is not a graduation requirement for the Class of 2026. New Mexico requires students to complete 3.5 units in social studies that includes a half-unit (a half-year course) in economics, but prior standards (prior to academic year 2023-2024) did not include personal finance content for this course. The graduation requirement law also requires that personal finance be offered as an elective at each high school, this legal requirement is the reason why New Mexico received a grade C for the Class of 2026. New Mexico requires that personal finance be offered as an elective, which guarantees that all students have access to these topics.

Sources:

- NM Stat § 22-13-1.1
- Graduation Requirements
- Class of 2026 Requirements
- Social Studies Standards FAQ

PRE-K TO GRADE EIGHT EDUCATION STANDARDS

New Mexico requires financial literacy instruction as part of its approved social studies standards in grades K to eight.

Sources:

- New Mexico Social Studies Standards

PROJECTED GRADE FOR CLASS OF 2027

Grade B for the Class of 2027. In February 2022, new social studies standards were finalized that include required personal finance content for an economics course that is required to be taken for graduation. By the 2023–2024 academic year, instructional material adoption and full implementation of the new standards was required to be complete Therefore, all ninth grade students entering high school in 2023–2024 will have taken the economics course with the required financial literacy content by the time they complete high school in 2027.

Sources:

- New Mexico Social Studies Standards

HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION STANDARDS

The social studies standards, prior to the February 2022 adoption, included a very modest level of personal finance concepts in the economics strand of these standards. The new social studies standards have anchor standards and performance standards and are mandated for students in grades K to 12. The new social studies standards include economics/personal financial literacy standards for the economics course. Local school district curriculum must be aligned with these approved social studies standards. The required economics course has 58 performance standards. Twelve of the standards are related to economics topics and 45 performance standards are related to personal finance topics. Assuming a half-year course consists of 60 hours of instruction (half of a Carnegie Unit), we estimate that students taking this required economics course will receive approximately 46 hours of personal finance instruction. New Mexico requires each student

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to complete a Next Step Plan for each high school year. At the end of grades eight through eleven, each student shall prepare an interim Next Step Plan that sets forth the coursework for the grades remaining until high school graduation. Each student must complete a final Next Step Plan during the senior year and prior to graduation. The goal of the plan is to allow students to pursue a range of post-secondary opportunities and workforce opportunities and gain knowledge in entrepreneurship principles, as determined by the student's plan.

Sources:

- New Mexico Social Studies Standards (see pages 68-71)
- Next Step Plan

EXTRA CREDIT

In 2024 a law was passed that allowed local school board to set two of the 24 unit required for graduation. This applies to ninth graders entering public high school in the 2025-2026 academic year. According to Think New Mexico, since this law has been passed local school districts, representing 52.3% of students in the state, have made financial literacy a high school graduation requirement. Thirty-seven of those districts require completion of a year-long financial literacy course, while 12 require at least a semester. This data is consistent with the information on New Mexico in *NGPF's 2026 State of Financial Education Report*.

Sources:

- NMSA 1978, § 22-13-1.1 Graduation requirements; next-step plans
- Think New Mexico
- NGPF's 2026 State of Financial Education Report

CAVEAT

Specific personal finance standards for the financial literacy elective course that high schools must offer are not available on the New Mexico Public Education Department's website. It is not clear how New Mexico measures student achievement in financial literacy or how the state will monitor the local school district implementation of the state's financial literacy education requirements.