



Title: **Hobbs No. 1 in state in classroom spending**  
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# Hobbs No. 1 in state in classroom spending

**DOROTHY N. FOWLER**  
NEWS-SUN

Hobbs schools, by percent of budget, spend more on classroom education than any other school district in the state.

That is according to Think New Mexico, which released a report last week indicating a correlation between money spent on school districts' central administration and improved achievement when districts spend more money on classroom instruction.

According to Think New Mex-

## Spending

from PAGE 1

arships.

Think New Mexico used graduation and national math and reading scores as its indicators of student success. It compared success rates with the proportion of money spent for instruction versus the proportion spent for administration.

The comparison led Think New Mexico to hypothesize that if New Mexico were able to shift just 4 percent of its \$2.7 billion state education budget from administration to the classroom, it would free up more than \$100 million to be spent on instruction.

In Lea County, each of the five school districts spend at least 63 percent of their budgets on classroom instruction and 37 percent or less on administrative expenses.

Of the 89 public school districts in New Mexico, Hobbs and Lovington rank in the

ico, on average, only 57 cents of every tax dollar spent on education goes to instruction. The other 43 cents goes to administrative costs incurred by central administration and includes the cost of superintendents, human resources, public relations, purchasing, printing and other expenses that have no direct impact on students in the classroom.

Think New Mexico is a non-profit, non-partisan think tank that encouraged repeal of the state's tax on food and

state's Top 10 for allocating money to classrooms.

Hobbs ranks No. 1 in the state, spending 81 percent of its budget on instruction.

Hobbs Superintendent TJ Parks said the district has a goal of spending more in the classroom.

"We do make a conscious effort to put as much money as we can into the classroom," he said. "We actually have two fewer central office administrators than we did in 2010, when we moved into the new administration building. I appreciate the acknowledgement from Think New Mexico."

Lovington ranks No. 8, spending 76 percent of its budget on instruction.

Tatum spends 70 of the budget on instruction and ranks 44th in the state. Tatum Superintendent Buddy Little was not available to comment as of

assisted in efforts to redi-

rect millions of dollars a year from the state lottery's operating budget to full-tuition schol-

**SEE SPENDING, Page 2**

press time.

Eunice spends 69 percent of its budget on instruction and ranks 47th in the state, while Jal spends 63 percent of its budget on instruction and ranks 70th in the state.

The superintendents from the county's other school districts said they have not seen the report and declined to comment.

According to Think New Mexico's figures, 70 percent of New Mexico's annual K-12 public education spending comes from the state budget, a larger proportion than any states other than Hawaii and Vermont. Another 13.4 percent comes from the national government and the remaining 16.6 percent comes from local property taxes.

By law, revenues from local taxes can only be spent on erecting, remodeling, making additions to and furnished school buildings or purchasing

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or improving school grounds.

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## **Tops in the state**

The following 10 New Mexico school districts use the greatest percentage of their tax receipts for instruction.

1. Hobbs 81 percent
2. Santa Fe 80 percent
3. Framington 80 percent
4. Albuquerque 79 percent
5. Gadsden 78 percent
6. Las Cruces 77 percent
7. Clovis 76 percent
8. Lovington 76 percent
9. Carlsbad 76 percent
10. Roswell 76 percent

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