



Archdiocese of Santa Fe
Office of Communications/Social Media
4000 St. Joseph's Place NW | Albuquerque, NM 87120-1714
Leslie M. Radigan, Director
Voice: 505.831.8180
lradigan@archdiosf.org | archdiosf.org

STATEMENT

Most Reverend John C. Wester on the Passing of New Mexico Constitutional Amendment 1 To Provide Additional Distributions of the Permanent School Fund for Enhanced Instruction for Students at Risk of Failure, Extending the School Year, Teacher Compensation, and Early Childhood Education; Requiring Congressional Approval for Distributions for Early Childhood Education

ALBUQUERQUE – Tuesday, November 8, 2022 – IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe, has made the following statement regarding the passing of New Mexico Constitutional Amendment 1:

I am encouraged by the passage of Constitutional Amendment 1 to fund early childhood programs. For over a decade, the bishops of New Mexico have endorsed and advocated for its placement on the ballot and its passage.

Today, New Mexico sees a brighter future because of the commitment that New Mexicans have made to the health and well-being of our children and families.

New Mexicans have spoken: they will no longer accept the status quo of remaining at the bottom of all the well-being indicators for children.

I am especially optimistic about the positive impact home visiting will continue to have on women from prenatal through delivery, and on infants and toddlers; a journey that is accompanied by referral to resources and deliverance of evidence-based curriculum which will make all the difference in their lives. As in the CHI St. Joseph's Children Home Visiting model, I am pleased that there is a component in the amendment that ensures the family is connected to housing, food security, and opportunities for employment.

I congratulate the legislators for placing Constitutional Amendment #1 on the ballot and commend the Early Childhood Education and Care Department for its expansion of funding for childcare. This Constitutional Amendment will assure the continuance of this vital service.

With prayers of gratitude, I am thankful for the advocacy efforts of all who participated in this decade-long campaign.

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