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HOUSE BILL 241

**44TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION,  
2000**

INTRODUCED BY  
Mimi Stewart

FOR THE EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND ACCOUNTABILITY TASK FORCE

AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION; IMPROVING STUDENT READING  
PROFICIENCIES; CREATING A STATEWIDE READING INITIATIVE;  
CREATING THE PUBLIC SCHOOL READING PROFICIENCY FUND; MAKING  
APPROPRIATIONS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. READING INITIATIVE--DESIGN.--

A. The state department of public education shall design and implement a statewide reading initiative to improve reading proficiency in the state. The design of the reading initiative shall be based upon quality, research-based reading programs shown to improve reading proficiency and shall include the following:

(1) consistent assessment and evaluation of student reading levels;

(2) appropriate professional staff

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1 development to assist classroom certified instructional staff  
2 in the instruction of reading programs;

3 (3) extra time in the student's day or year  
4 for implementation of reading programs; and

5 (4) rewards provided to certified school  
6 instructors in schools that improve student reading  
7 proficiency.

8 B. The state department of public education shall  
9 use national experts to work with the department to develop  
10 an immediate reading initiative and a long-term plan for  
11 sustained reading improvement.

12 C. The state department of public education shall  
13 involve local school district personnel, especially certified  
14 elementary reading specialists, parents and other interested  
15 persons in the design of the reading initiative.

16 Section 2. PUBLIC SCHOOL READING PROFICIENCY FUND--  
17 CREATED.--The "public school reading proficiency fund" is  
18 created in the state treasury. The fund shall consist of  
19 appropriations, gifts, grants and donations. The fund shall  
20 be administered by the state department of public education,  
21 and money in the fund is appropriated to the department to  
22 distribute awards to local schools that implement innovative,  
23 research-based reading programs. The state department of  
24 public education shall develop procedures and rules for the  
25 application and award of money from the fund, including  
criteria upon which to evaluate innovative, research-based  
reading programs. Disbursements of the fund shall be made by

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1 warrant of the department of finance and administration  
2 pursuant to vouchers signed by the superintendent of public  
3 instruction. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance  
4 remaining in the fund at the end of any fiscal year shall not  
5 revert but shall remain to the credit of the fund.

6 Section 3. APPROPRIATIONS.--

7 A. Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) is  
8 appropriated from the general fund to the state department of  
9 public education for expenditure in fiscal years 2001 and  
10 2002 for the purpose of designing an immediate statewide  
11 reading initiative and long-range plan for sustained reading  
12 improvement, including the use of national experts in the  
13 design process. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance  
14 remaining at the end of fiscal year 2002 shall revert to the  
15 general fund.

16 B. One million dollars (\$1,000,000) is  
17 appropriated from the general fund to the public school  
18 reading proficiency fund for expenditure in fiscal year 2001  
19 and subsequent fiscal years to carry out the purpose of the  
20 public school reading proficiency fund. Any unexpended or  
21 unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year  
22 shall not revert to the general fund.

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