

A JOINT MEMORIAL

EXPRESSING SUPPORT OF NEW MEXICO PROJECT 2012 AS AN INNOVATIVE AND CRITICAL PLAN TO IMPROVE MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE EDUCATION IN NEW MEXICO PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

WHEREAS, education is the key to the twenty-first century, both in terms of economic prosperity and personal achievement; and

WHEREAS, today's "new economy" is knowledge-based, entrepreneurial and globally competitive to an extent that was almost unimaginable even a decade ago, yet New Mexico students lag significantly in most measures of elementary and secondary academic success, thus imperiling both their individual prospects and those of the state; and

WHEREAS, a competitive, technically capable work force is essential to New Mexico's economic future, and a reasonable level of mathematics and science awareness among its population is an ever more important part of good civic decision-making; and

WHEREAS, in recent years the state has made significant strides in improving teacher pay, increasing professional development opportunities and elevating teacher qualification and certification standards, and the state's mathematics and science curricular standards are now among the best in the nation; and

WHEREAS, the legislature funded a mathematics and science bureau in the public education department, which the secretary of public education created in July 2006, and the Mathematics and Science Education Act was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor in 2007; and

WHEREAS, in 2006-2007, the New Mexico mathematics and science advisory council developed a strategic action plan for advancing mathematics and science education that will increase student interest, participation and achievement in mathematics and science; raise public awareness and support for the importance of mathematics and science in New Mexico's economic health and security; and establish effective collaborations with internal and external partners; and

WHEREAS, from that strategic action plan arose "New Mexico project 2012", which is a comprehensive six-part proposal that uses one of the most important resources the state has, its nationally and internationally recognized scientists, mathematicians and engineers; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico project 2012 proposes to use subject-matter experts from the state's national laboratories and the private sector as New Mexico project 2012 volunteers to give lectures or other classroom assistance in their areas of expertise and to mentor public school teachers in mathematics and science in order to improve the knowledge, competence and confidence of public school students and

teachers in mathematics and science; and

WHEREAS, the goal of New Mexico project 2012 is simple yet dramatic: in five years, New Mexico's public elementary and secondary school students will be among the nation's leaders in mathematics and science academic achievement; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the New Mexico project 2012 is to:

A. improve mathematics and science content study in the pre-service education of elementary and secondary teachers to prepare them well to teach a modern mathematics or science curriculum;

B. expand professional development and in-service opportunities for mathematics and science teachers so they may stay abreast of rapidly changing ideas about mathematics and science teaching and new mathematics and science content;

C. draw on the extensive mathematics and science expertise of New Mexico's very large community of mathematicians, scientists and engineers to provide specialized content knowledge; to give students needed tutoring, mentoring and career advice; and to help in providing professional development activities for teachers;

D. provide quality distance learning opportunities for New Mexico's rural communities via the innovative digital education and learning in New Mexico system, known as "IDEAL-NM", and related projects, television programming and

broadband internet access;

E. assist in the evaluation of current strategies used in the public schools and classrooms for teaching and learning mathematics and science; and integrate those subjects with other essential skills such as inquiry-based learning aptitude and writing and literacy acquisition; and

F. build a statewide "education community" that includes students, parents, teachers, school administrators and boards, state and local governments and the business community, all united toward this exciting goal; and

WHEREAS, the legislature, the governor, the congressional delegation and the New Mexico business community have all made clear their commitment to revolutionary improvements in education generally and in mathematics and science education in particular;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it express its support of New Mexico project 2012 and that it encourage all the other important participants, from the governor and the secretary of public education to school districts, teachers, students, parents and business and community leaders, to show their commitment to New Mexico's current and future generations of young people by supporting and aiding the implementation of New Mexico project 2012; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education

department, the legislative education study committee, the coalition of school administrators, statewide teacher organizations and other interested groups unite to undertake a creative and effective public relations effort to enable young people and the state to realize a rewarding future; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the governor, the public education department, the legislative education study committee and the coalition of school administrators for appropriate distribution.