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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY TO STUDY
VARIOUS SCHOOL CALENDARS USED OR ALLOWED IN NEW MEXICO AND
THEIR EFFECTS ON STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT, TEACHERS,
SCHOOL OPERATIONS AND SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGETARY NEEDS.

WHEREAS, the Public School Code requires that each
school district provide a minimum number of instructional
days per school year, adjusted according to grade level; and

WHEREAS, the Public School Code provides an equivalence
between the minimum number of instructional days and hours or
authorizes the public education department to do so; and

WHEREAS, local school boards determine school policy in
general, including school calendars; and

WHEREAS, school districts currently operate based on a
variety of school calendar models, including calendars
composed of four-day weeks as well as year-round or
extended-year calendars; and

WHEREAS, the Variable School Calendar Act permits school
districts to operate pursuant to extended-year school
calendars but does not address all of the calendars used in
practice; and

WHEREAS, in the past, to meet the instructional time
requirements in law, some schools have added small increments
of time to individual school days to compensate for time lost

1 due to inclement weather, to allow early dismissal on one day
2 of the week or to provide time for teacher professional
3 development and other activities; and

4 WHEREAS, the public education department notes that it
5 is questionable whether students receive the benefit of
6 instructional hours with such incremental increases; and

7 WHEREAS, legislation was enacted in 2009 to require,
8 effective school year 2010-2011, a school year to consist of
9 one hundred eighty full instructional days for a regular
10 school year and one hundred fifty full instructional days for
11 a variable school year; and

12 WHEREAS, there are inconsistencies between this
13 legislation and the Variable School Calendar Act;

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
15 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the office of education
16 accountability, in collaboration with the public education
17 department; school districts and charter schools, including
18 school boards and governing bodies; teacher and other school
19 employee representatives; and parent representatives be
20 requested to study current practices and issues related to
21 school calendars and the length of a school day, including
22 scheduling and making up time lost due to inclement weather
23 or pandemic illness; scheduling teacher planning time and
24 professional development activities; and the impact of
25 various school calendar options and scheduling practices on

1 teachers, on learning time and achievement of students, on
2 school operations and on school district budgetary needs; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study examine the need,
4 if any, to amend current law, including the Variable School
5 Calendar Act, to reflect the full range of appropriate school
6 district calendar options that encourage effective uses of
7 and limit intrusions into instructional time; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the office of education
9 accountability report its findings and recommendations, if
10 any, to the legislative education study committee before
11 October 31, 2010; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
13 transmitted to the director of the office of education
14 accountability, the secretary of public education and the
15 director of the legislative education study committee. _____

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