HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 21

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2011

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

URGING THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR ACCREDITATION OF TEACHER
EDUCATION AND ITS PARTNERS, INCLUDING THE ASSOCIATION FOR
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL, THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AND THE INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION,
TO INCLUDE IN THEIR ACCREDITATION STANDARDS IMPROVED CURRICULAR
SPECIFICATIONS FOR TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS, PARTICULARLY
FOR TEACHERS WHO WILL BE TEACHING CHILDREN HOW TO READ.

WHEREAS, reading is the fundamental skill upon which all formal education depends; and

WHEREAS, low reading achievement, more than any other factor, is the root cause of chronically low-performing schools, which harms students and contributes to the loss of public confidence in the public school system; and

WHEREAS, reading is an invention and children must be .183650.1

taught to read, which means that teachers must understand the basic psychological processes of reading, how children develop reading skills, how good readers differ from poor readers, how the English language is structured in spoken and written forms and the validated principles of effective reading instruction; and

WHEREAS, it is expected that other complex and demanding professions, such as medicine and engineering, and professionals, such as physicians, pilots, engineers, even optometrists and art therapists, meet stringent training and preparation standards, but teachers are expected to teach without the underpinnings of scientific research or training in evidence-based methodologies; and

WHEREAS, such a teacher preparation strategy may possibly work for teaching history or physical education, but it has proven to be woefully inadequate for training teachers how to teach reading; and

WHEREAS, there is a chronic gap between what teachers need in terms of training and what they have been given; and

WHEREAS, the accreditors of colleges of education must be much more involved in ensuring that teachers receive better, more effective training, particularly in teaching reading, and they must require that colleges of education train teachers to carry out deliberate instruction in reading, spelling and writing;

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the national council for accreditation of teacher education and its partners, including the association for childhood education international, the national council of teachers of English and the international reading association, be urged to improve curricular specifications for teacher preparation programs, particularly for teachers who will be teaching children how to read; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that accreditation of teacher preparation programs be more stringent, be research-based and delineate competencies tied to licensure; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to be accredited, a teacher preparation program's core reading curriculum should prepare teachers by focusing on knowledge of language structure, the importance of aligning instruction with student characteristics and the importance of skilled teaching behavior in domains validated by research; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the national council for accreditation of teacher education, the association for childhood education international, the national council of teachers of English, the international reading association, the deans of the colleges of education at New Mexico's public post-secondary educational institutions and the secretary of public education.