

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC EDUCATION; ESTABLISHING A SEAL TO DENOTE PROFICIENCY IN TWO OR MORE LANGUAGES; CREATING THE BILINGUAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL.

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

SECTION 1. A new section of the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act is enacted to read:

"SEAL OF BILINGUAL PROFICIENCY.--

A. The department shall, with the advice and consent of the bilingual education advisory council, establish a statewide seal of bilingual proficiency. The seal shall serve as a capstone on a high school diploma or general equivalency degree of a student who meets the bilingual and biliteracy standards set by the bilingual education advisory council. A school district, charter school or other school may provide a graduating student with the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading and writing two or more languages to earn the seal.

B. The bilingual education advisory council and the department shall consult and collaborate with an Indian nation, tribe or pueblo to develop an appropriate recognition to honor and designate proficiency in the native language of that Indian nation, tribe or pueblo."

SECTION 2. A new section of the Bilingual Multicultural

HB 541
Page 1

Education Act is enacted to read:

"BILINGUAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL--CREATED--
DUTIES.--

A. The "bilingual education advisory council" is created and shall advise the department on the implementation of the provisions of the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act and on all matters related to the education of linguistically and culturally diverse students. The council shall consist of twelve members proficient in one or more languages other than English with at least:

(1) two representatives from Indian nations, tribes or pueblos;

(2) one representative who is a parent; and

(3) nine representatives who are from different geographical areas of New Mexico and different education areas, such as institutions of higher education, local education agencies, charter schools and tribal schools, one of whom is an expert in English as a second language instruction.

B. The initial members of the council shall be appointed by a committee consisting of the director of the bilingual multicultural education bureau of the department, two members appointed by the director who are also members of the Indian education advisory council and two members appointed by the director who are also members of the Hispanic

education advisory council; thereafter the secretary shall appoint the members of the council.

C. The initial members shall draw lots to determine which four members shall serve one-year terms, two-year terms and three-year terms; thereafter, each member of the council shall serve a three-year term. Terms shall be staggered so that the term of no more than four members expires in one year.

D. A majority of the members of the council constitutes a quorum. The council shall elect a chair from its membership.

E. Members of the council are entitled to receive per diem and mileage as provided for nonsalaried public officers in the Per Diem and Mileage Act for five meetings per year.

F. The council shall:

(1) meet quarterly;

(2) hold an annual meeting with members of the Hispanic education advisory council and the Indian education advisory council to exchange information, collaborate on joint initiatives and discuss and plan for future needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students;

(3) develop the criteria and process for awarding the seal of bilingual proficiency;

