SENATE BILL 115

51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2014

INTRODUCED BY

Michael Padilla

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; REQUIRING A SOCIAL WORKER IN EVERY HIGH-POVERTY PUBLIC SCHOOL; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

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

SECTION 1. A new section of the Public School Code is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] SOCIAL WORKER IN EVERY HIGH-POVERTY PUBLIC SCHOOL--DEFINITION--IMPLEMENTATION--EXCEPTION.--

A. As used in this section, "high-poverty public school" means a public school in which eighty-five percent or more of the students are eligible for free or reduced-fee meals.

B. Except as provided in Subsection C of this section, the department shall verify that every high-poverty public school in New Mexico has employed a licensed social

1   worker. Employing social workers in every high-poverty public

2   school shall be phased in over a three-year period as

3   determined by department rule as follows:

4   (1)   effective with the 2014-2015 school year,

5   one-third of New Mexico's high-poverty public schools shall

6   employ a social worker;

7   (2)   effective with the 2015-2016 school year,

8   two-thirds of New Mexico's high-poverty public schools shall

9   employ a social worker; and

10   (3)   effective with the 2016-2017 school year,

11   every New Mexico high-poverty public school shall employ a

12   social worker.

13   C.   The department may develop exceptions to the

14   requirements of this section for small rural school districts

15   with a MEM of 200 or less."

16   **SECTION 2.** APPROPRIATION.--Three million dollars

17   ($3,000,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the

18   public education department for expenditure in fiscal year 2015

19   for the purpose of implementing the requirement that every

20   high-poverty public school shall employ a licensed social

21   worker. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at

22   the end of fiscal year 2015 shall revert to the general fund.

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