

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 17

2 **52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2016**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND LOCAL SCHOOLS TO
12 ESTABLISH FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS IN SCHOOL
13 DISTRICTS.

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15 WHEREAS, the legislature finds that the engagement and
16 support of families and community partners in the education of
17 children is an integral part of improving academic achievement
18 and is therefore critical to student success; and

19 WHEREAS, properly constructed family and community
20 engagement programs resulting from collaborative decision-
21 making processes can play an important and effective role in
22 the participation of families and community partners in schools
23 and in improving children's learning; and

24 WHEREAS, the legislature confirms its commitment to the
25 rights of students, families, community partners and school

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1 employees to nondiscriminatory treatment, including freedom
2 from harassment and retaliation based on disability, race,
3 ethnicity, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity,
4 national origin or ancestry, religion, age, veteran status,
5 immigration status and any other protected status as defined by
6 law in all of its programs and activities; and

7 WHEREAS, the goals of family and community engagement
8 programs are to:

9 A. utilize the histories and cultures of children,
10 families and communities as the foundation of educational
11 programs that prepare every student for academic success;

12 B. engage families from diverse cultures in a
13 positive way in their children's education by:

14 (1) fostering safe and welcoming school
15 environments for children, families and community partners;

16 (2) building effective and consistent methods
17 of communications between schools and families;

18 (3) supporting families in developing skills
19 that enhance their children's academic efforts and their
20 development as responsible members of society; and

21 (4) helping school professionals and community
22 partners to learn to work comfortably with diverse families and
23 to view these families as valuable sources of information about
24 their children;

25 C. inform families that they can directly affect

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1 the success of their children's learning and offer families
2 various techniques and strategies to improve their children's
3 academic success or to assist their children in learning at
4 home, if they desire; and

5 D. integrate family and community engagement
6 programs into a school's master plan for academic
7 accountability;

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
9 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that local school boards statewide, in
10 conjunction with parents, teachers, administrators and
11 community partners, be requested to establish a family and
12 community engagement program for each school in the school
13 district to:

14 A. ensure that parents, families and community
15 partners participate in the planning, design, implementation
16 and evaluation of the family and community engagement program;

17 B. provide for regular and periodic programs
18 throughout the school year that offer learning opportunities
19 for families, school personnel and community partners in areas
20 such as:

21 (1) the ability of families and community
22 partners to directly affect the success of a child's learning
23 through the support given at home, at school and by the
24 community;

25 (2) home activities, strategies and materials

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1 that can be used to assist and enhance the learning of children
2 at home and at school;

3 (3) the developmental needs of children,
4 positive guidance techniques and ways for families, teachers
5 and community partners to build healthy relationships with
6 children; and

7 (4) the ability of families and schools to
8 develop consistent and effective communications concerning the
9 progress of the children in school and concerning school
10 programs;

11 C. prepare an annual statement identifying specific
12 objectives of the program; and

13 D. conduct an annual review and assessment of the
14 program's progress in meeting its objectives, which shall be
15 made available to families and the community; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a family and community
17 engagement program may include any of the following:

18 A. a plan to encourage participation by families
19 from diverse cultures;

20 B. a program that builds on parenting strengths,
21 that helps families develop the skills that they desire and
22 that facilitates networks to support families in effectively
23 nurturing their children;

24 C. a communication element that provides an
25 effective two-way communication process to enable school staff

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1 to reach families, both individually and collectively, and to
2 ensure that families and school staff communicate back and
3 forth about their children;

4 D. a home learning element that provides for
5 families and school staff to work together in developing
6 learning goals and that offers opportunities for learning
7 activities at home and in the community;

8 E. a volunteer element that recruits and organizes
9 volunteer participation from families and the community at
10 large;

11 F. a governance and advocacy element that provides
12 a democratic governance structure that ensures that families
13 are partners in policymaking about school programs and that
14 family representatives are elected to act as advocates or
15 decision-makers for other parents and families;

16 G. a community outreach element that establishes
17 partnerships with individuals and organizations in the
18 community; or

19 H. a plan to encourage parents to visit schools,
20 which may include providing an area designated as a family
21 center in each school; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in order to institutionalize
23 family and community engagement programs across the state, the
24 public education department be requested to establish
25 structures and positions with well-defined responsibilities and

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1 accountability to promote genuine family and community
2 engagement according to the following standards for family-
3 school partnerships:

4 A. welcoming all families. Families shall be
5 active participants in the life of the school and feel
6 welcomed, valued and connected to each other, to school staff
7 and to what students are learning and doing in school;

8 B. communicating effectively. Families and schools
9 shall engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication
10 about student learning;

11 C. supporting student success. Families and school
12 staff shall continuously collaborate and support students'
13 learning and healthy development both at home and at school and
14 have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and
15 skills to do so effectively;

16 D. speaking up for every child. Families shall be
17 advocates for their own and other children to ensure that
18 students are treated fairly and have access to learning
19 opportunities that will support their success;

20 E. sharing power. Families and school staff shall
21 be equal partners in decisions that affect children and
22 families and together inform, influence and create policies,
23 practices and programs; and

24 F. collaborating with the community. Families and
25 school staff shall collaborate with community members to

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1 connect students, families and staff to expand learning
2 opportunities, community services and civic participation; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
4 transmitted to the secretary of public education and the
5 superintendents and school boards of school districts
6 statewide.

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