

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 11

2 **53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2017**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT
12 OF HEALTH TO COLLECT CURRENT DATA ON THE STATUS OF ELEMENTARY
13 SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOR INCREASED
14 WEEKLY PHYSICAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTION.

15
16 WHEREAS, in 2015, the national center for health
17 statistics reported that more than seventeen percent of
18 children in the United States were obese, an increase of nearly
19 two percent over a ten-year period; and

20 WHEREAS, research shows that people who are obese in
21 childhood are far more likely to be obese in adulthood, thus
22 increasing their risk for adverse health effects, such as heart
23 disease and diabetes, and affecting their eligibility for
24 employment in certain jobs; and

25 WHEREAS, the United States department of health and human

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1 services recommends that children and adolescents get at least
2 sixty minutes of physical activity daily, which should include
3 equal parts vigorous aerobic activity, muscle-strengthening
4 activity and bone-strengthening activity; and

5 WHEREAS, student data from a 2011 New Mexico youth risk
6 and resiliency survey of high school students reveal that only
7 twenty-eight and one-half percent of students attend physical
8 education classes daily; and

9 WHEREAS, the 2016 session of the New Mexico legislature
10 assembled a task force of experts in elementary education,
11 health and wellness and physical education pedagogy, as well as
12 members of the legislative education study committee, to
13 evaluate the feasibility of requiring a minimum of one hundred
14 fifty minutes of physical education per school week; and

15 WHEREAS, the task force found that research indicates that
16 physical activity is a better approach than nutrition alone in
17 preventing obesity and type two diabetes in children; and

18 WHEREAS, the task force also found that students who are
19 physically active tend to have better grades, attendance and
20 cognitive performance than students who are inactive because
21 exercise increases brain activity and improves memory; and

22 WHEREAS, state standards require elementary school
23 students to participate in physical education; and

24 WHEREAS, legislative education study committee staff found
25 that appropriations made in fiscal years 2007 and 2008 provided

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1 enough funding for only about one-half of the elementary school
2 programs in New Mexico and that approximately twenty-two
3 million dollars (\$22,000,000) would be needed for full funding
4 of elementary school physical education programs statewide; and

5 WHEREAS, the development of an effective plan for
6 increasing weekly physical education in New Mexico public
7 schools continues to require specific information;

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
9 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the public education department and
10 the department of health be requested to work with the
11 legislative education study committee to answer essential
12 questions related to establishing an effective plan for
13 increased weekly physical education in the state's elementary
14 schools; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
16 department be requested to collect and report information to
17 the legislative education study committee about the frequency
18 of elementary school students' attendance in physical education
19 classes, distinguishing those that offer classes daily, weekly
20 or biweekly; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
22 department be requested to report information to the
23 legislative education study committee about the New Mexico
24 elementary schools that receive funding for physical education
25 and the amount of funding they receive; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
2 department and department of health be requested to report to
3 the legislative education study committee by November 1, 2017;
4 and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
6 transmitted to the secretaries of public education and health,
7 the chair of the legislative education study committee and the
8 director of the legislative education study committee.