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HOUSE MEMORIAL 29

56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2024

INTRODUCED BY

Yanira Gurrola and Raymundo Lara and G. Andrés Romero
and Joy Garratt and Elizabeth "Liz" Thomson

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE TO STUDY
COMPENSATION AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE
RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF NEW MEXICO PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS.

WHEREAS, fewer than one in four students in New Mexico
scored proficient in reading and math on the 2022 national
assessment of educational progress, ranking the state lowest in
the nation; and

WHEREAS, the percentages of economically disadvantaged
students, English learners, Native American students and
students with disabilities scoring proficient on statewide
assessments in New Mexico continue to fall short of statewide
averages; and

WHEREAS, a wealth of research demonstrates that teachers
have a greater impact on student achievement than any other

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1 school-based factor; and

2 WHEREAS, a finding of the consolidated *Yazzie/Martinez v.*
3 *State of New Mexico* lawsuit pointed out a critical need for
4 highly effective educators serving students with disabilities,
5 economically disadvantaged students, English language learners
6 and Native American students; and

7 WHEREAS, New Mexico continues to suffer from teacher
8 shortages in hard-to-staff areas, and the turnover rate of
9 teachers in New Mexico has increased over the past three years;
10 and rather than choosing traditional teacher licensure
11 pathways, more teacher candidates are completing alternative
12 licensure pathways, which provide little to no classroom
13 experience prior to teaching; and

14 WHEREAS, following the increases in teacher compensation
15 enacted by the legislature in 2022, teacher salaries in New
16 Mexico are now regionally competitive, but salaries remain
17 about five thousand dollars (\$5,000) below the projected
18 national average; and

19 WHEREAS, although the teacher pipeline grew following the
20 legislative action raising teacher salary minimums, the salary
21 increases were accompanied by continued concerns regarding
22 salary compaction; and

23 WHEREAS, despite increases, New Mexico teacher salaries
24 have not kept pace with rising costs of living, and the average
25 teacher salary in the state falls below a living wage in New

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1 Mexico's highest living wage counties; and

2 WHEREAS, national research indicates that competitive
3 compensation is a key contributor to successful teacher
4 recruitment and retention; and

5 WHEREAS, national research also indicates that teacher
6 differential compensation can be an effective mechanism to
7 reduce teacher shortages among hard-to-staff positions, such as
8 bilingual and special education teachers; and

9 WHEREAS, credential differentials for endorsements and
10 certifications, such as the *Teaching English to Speakers of*
11 *Other Languages* certificate and reading endorsements, as are
12 provided to national board for professional teaching standards
13 certified school personnel, could prove effective incentives
14 for teachers to pursue these valuable accreditations; and

15 WHEREAS, studies suggest that additional career
16 advancement opportunities for teachers and innovative staffing
17 patterns may reduce teacher attrition and improve student
18 outcomes, and pilot programs of such initiatives in New Mexico
19 public schools show promising initial impacts on student
20 achievement;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
22 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative
23 education study committee be requested to study compensation
24 and career advancement opportunities for New Mexico public
25 school teachers, including salary differential pay based on

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1 teacher credentials or staffing needs; costs of living and
2 housing availability statewide; and career advancement
3 opportunities that do not require teachers to leave the
4 classroom and that better support the needs of teachers and
5 students; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in performing the work for the
7 study, the legislative education study committee be requested
8 to work with representatives from the public education
9 department, the legislative finance committee, the higher
10 education department, teacher unions, teacher preparation
11 programs and the leadership of school districts and charter
12 schools; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education
14 study committee be requested to submit a copy of its research
15 findings and recommendations to the governor and the
16 legislature and to publish its report by December 31, 2024; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
18 transmitted to the director of the legislative education study
19 committee and the secretary of public education for appropriate
20 distribution.