

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE AND THE STATE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF
ESTABLISHING A PERMANENT FUNDING MECHANISM FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL
LIBRARY MATERIALS ACQUISITION.

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WHEREAS, the New Mexico legislature understands and appreciates the importance of the work of the New Mexico task force for school libraries, a collaborative effort of the New Mexico library association, the New Mexico state library, the state department of public education and the educational and community stakeholders to improve New Mexico school libraries and to ensure educational excellence and equity of educational opportunity for all New Mexico public school students; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico legislature considers literacy development and improved student academic performance to be New Mexico's top educational priorities; and

WHEREAS, national educational research has clearly established the relationship between quality of school library collections and student literacy and academic achievement levels; and

WHEREAS, national educational research relating quality of collections to academic achievement has been confirmed specifically for New Mexico in a study for which the preliminary results were released in November 2001; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico task force for school libraries reported to the legislative education study committee in 2000 on the development of public school library program standards, the deficiencies of New Mexico school library collections

and the need for improving school library collections and requested additional funding for these purposes in November 2000; and

WHEREAS, maintaining adequate school libraries requires a stable level of funding;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative education study committee and the state department of public education, with participation of professional school librarians and library associations, be requested to study the feasibility of the establishment of a permanent funding mechanism for school library material similar to the instructional material fund that guarantees equitable access to textbooks and other instructional materials; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include as a fiscal criterion the cost of one book per student per year for each New Mexico public school student for library acquisitions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education study committee and the state department of public education be requested to report their findings and recommendations to the legislature by November 2003; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the members of the legislative education study committee and to the superintendent of public instruction.

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