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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO STUDY THE BENEFITS OF
SMALLER SCHOOLS AS WELL AS METHODS TO REDUCE SCHOOL SIZE.

WHEREAS, since World War II, the number of schools nationwide has declined
seventy percent, while the average school enrollment has grown five-fold, and one in
four secondary schools has more than one thousand students; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that smaller schools lead to more innovative
instructional practices, improved student achievement, improved attendance and
decreased disruptive behavior, as well as a greater sense of ownership and pride in
the school by students; and

WHEREAS, a 1992 study indicates that students in smaller schools are more
likely to be involved in extracurricular activities and hold positions of responsibility in
those activities; and

WHEREAS, a recent study indicates that dropout rates in smaller schools are
lower than those in larger schools with more than six hundred students; and

WHEREAS, administrators and faculty in smaller schools are more accessible
and accountable to the community than those in larger schools;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state board of education be requested to study the
benefits of smaller schools as well as methods to reduce school size; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state board of education include in the
study:

A. the cost of reaching the size of two hundred fifty students for
elementary schools, four hundred twenty-five students for middle schools and six
hundred students for high schools; and

B. options for school districts such as class load waivers, virtual
classrooms, potential charter schools at business sites, scheduling options, methods

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1 of identifying donated or subsidized facilities and other resourceful ideas; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state board of education report its
3 findings to the legislative education study committee by November 1, 2003; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the
5 superintendent of public instruction, the state board of education and the director of
6 the legislative education study committee.

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