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HOUSE MEMORIAL 03

47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2005

INTRODUCED BY

Ray Begaye

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A STUDY OF MEANS TO ELEVATE THE STANDING OF THE
INDIAN EDUCATION DIVISION OF THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

WHEREAS, administering education programs for New Mexico's
Indian children requires government-to-government agreements
with sovereign Indian nations and direct communications with
federal agencies involved with Indian education; and

WHEREAS, federal law establishes a complex of programs
available only to Indian children and requirements demanded
only of Indian educational programs; and

WHEREAS, the Indian education division of the public
education department administers these programs and represents
the interests of Indian students with the bureau of Indian
affairs and other federal agencies; and

WHEREAS, the dropout rate for Indian children in New

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1 Mexico schools exceeds that for other groups; and

2 WHEREAS, poverty in areas with a high concentration of
3 Indian children exceeds that in other areas; and

4 WHEREAS, the number of failing and probationary schools on
5 New Mexico's Indian lands exceeds the percentage of those in
6 other areas; and

7 WHEREAS, meeting the performance requirements of the
8 federal No Child Left Behind Act will be difficult for New
9 Mexico's schools with high concentrations of Indian children
10 without focused programs and resources; and

11 WHEREAS, recognition of the importance of Native American
12 languages, cultures and customs should be seen as an
13 acknowledgment of the importance of New Mexico's own roots
14 rather than as appreciation for a "foreign" culture or
15 language; and

16 WHEREAS, the problems of teachers of Indian children in
17 schools on New Mexico's Indian lands are in many ways distinct
18 from those of other teachers; and

19 WHEREAS, the needs and priorities of Indian education,
20 Indian students and Indian teachers deserve elevation in the
21 public education department's organization;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
23 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the public
24 education department be requested to analyze means of elevating
25 the status of the Indian education division; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the secretary of education and
2 the deputy superintendent of Indian education be requested to
3 prepare and issue a joint report on ways the authority,
4 funding, scope, staffing and responsibilities of the Indian
5 education division can be enhanced and to present the report to
6 the legislative Indian affairs committee at its October 2005
7 meeting; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of the report be
9 transmitted to the leader of each New Mexico tribe and pueblo,
10 to schools whose Native American student population is at least
11 five percent, to the school boards of Central consolidated
12 schools, Gallup-McKinley county schools, Grants-Cibola county
13 schools, Farmington municipal schools and Bloomfield schools
14 and to the Navajo Nation Indian education department; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of the report be
16 transmitted to the secretary of public education and the deputy
17 superintendent of Indian education.