

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY TO EXAMINE ISSUES RELATED TO TURNOVER AND EMERGENCIES RESULTING FROM PREDICTED SHORTAGES OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS, NURSES AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL IN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS.

WHEREAS, school counselors, nurses and other professional instructional support personnel are essential to children's learning in New Mexico schools; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico schools must recruit and retain qualified school counselors, nurses and other professional instructional support personnel to cope more adequately with the demands of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; and

WHEREAS, school counselors play a critical role in helping students focus on academic, personal, social and career development, particularly through the next-step planning process, so that students may achieve success in school and be prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society; and

WHEREAS, nationally, forty-six percent of the nursing workforce is over fifty years of age; and

WHEREAS, the federal health resources and services

administration predicts that New Mexico will be able to meet only sixty-four percent of the state's demand for nurses in all capacities by 2020; and

WHEREAS, school counselors, nurses and other professional instructional support personnel in New Mexico school districts currently average more than fourteen years of experience; and

WHEREAS, school districts have a difficult time attracting and retaining qualified school counselors, nurses and other professional instructional support personnel due to competition for their services from the private sector; and

WHEREAS, many school counselors, nurses and other professional instructional support personnel can choose employment in a variety of settings other than public schools, such as hospitals, pediatric clinics, rehabilitation facilities, mental health centers and nursing homes;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the public education department and the office of education accountability be requested to examine issues related to turnover and emergencies resulting from predicted shortages of school counselors, nurses and other professional instructional support personnel in public school districts and charter schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department and the office report their findings and recommendations, if any, to

the legislative education study committee prior to the first session of the forty-ninth legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of public education, the director of the office of education accountability and the secretary of finance and administration.