

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 11

2 **49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 Clinton D. Harden

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO STUDY AUTISM  
12 SPECTRUM DISORDERS AND TO DETERMINE HOW TO PROVIDE BEST  
13 PRACTICE SERVICES TO ALL CHILDREN WITH AUTISM IN PUBLIC  
14 SCHOOLS.

15  
16 WHEREAS, autism spectrum disorders are neurobiological  
17 disorders that interfere with the normal development of  
18 communication, behavior, learning and social interaction  
19 skills; and

20 WHEREAS, the United States centers for disease control and  
21 prevention reports that autism spectrum disorders are the  
22 second most common type of developmental disability and are  
23 seen in all ethnic, racial and socioeconomic groups throughout  
24 the world; and

25 WHEREAS, the autism society of America reports that autism

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1 spectrum disorders are the fastest growing developmental  
2 disability, with an annual cost of ninety billion dollars  
3 (\$90,000,000,000); and

4 WHEREAS, experts attest that the cost of lifelong care for  
5 an individual with an autism spectrum disorder may be reduced  
6 by two-thirds with early diagnosis, intervention and education;  
7 and

8 WHEREAS, early autism spectrum disorder diagnosis and  
9 intervention is instrumental in determining success; and

10 WHEREAS, the national research council report on *Educating*  
11 *Children with Autism* recommends, as a best practice, teaching  
12 individuals with autism a minimum of twenty-five hours per week  
13 through active engagement begun as early as possible; and

14 WHEREAS, children with autism need specialized teaching  
15 methods; and

16 WHEREAS, the usual teaching methods that work with other  
17 students, including students with other disabilities, are not  
18 necessarily successful with students with autism; and

19 WHEREAS, specialized training is needed for school  
20 personnel working with children with autism; and

21 WHEREAS, children with autism are all different and  
22 require an individualized approach with a menu of programs  
23 available;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
25 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the public education department

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1     conduct a study to determine how to provide best practice  
2     services to all children with autism in the public schools  
3     through the use of highly qualified New Mexico autism  
4     specialists in the development and implementation of the  
5     individualized education plans of all students with an autism  
6     spectrum disorder statewide; and

7             BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education  
8     department develop a written plan for showing steps on how the  
9     public education department will work actively, collaboratively  
10    and cooperatively with other state agencies, groups and  
11    stakeholders, including, but not limited to, the department of  
12    health, the human services department, the children, youth and  
13    families department, the autism task force, the New Mexico  
14    developmental disabilities planning council, the behavioral  
15    health planning council of New Mexico, the New Mexico autism  
16    society and the autism programs at the university of New Mexico  
17    center for development and disability in order to develop and  
18    implement appropriate systems of care for all students with  
19    autism spectrum disorder; and

20            BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education  
21    department report its findings, including the written plan, to  
22    the legislative education study committee by September 30,  
23    2009; and

24            BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
25    transmitted to the secretaries of health, human services and

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1 children, youth and families and to representatives from the  
2 autism task force, the New Mexico developmental disabilities  
3 planning council, the behavioral health planning council of New  
4 Mexico, the New Mexico autism society and the autism programs  
5 at the university of New Mexico center for development and  
6 disability.

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