

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO STUDY THE ALIGNMENT AMONG STATE ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS, SCHOOL DISTRICT CURRICULA AND TEACHER PREPARATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

WHEREAS, the state has developed rigorous academic content standards to ensure that all New Mexico elementary, middle or junior and high school students consistently receive a high-quality public education that prepares them for higher education or the workplace; and

WHEREAS, Section 22-13-1.6 NMSA 1978 provides that:

"A. Each school district shall align its curricula to meet the state standards for each grade level and subject area so that students who transfer between public schools within the school district receive the same educational opportunity within the same grade or subject area.

B. Each school district's aligned grade level and subject area curricula shall be in place as follows:

(1) for mathematics, by the 2008-2009 school year; and

(2) for language arts and science, by the 2009-2010 school year.

C. Professional development relating to curricula for classroom teachers and educational assistants shall be

aligned with state standards by each school district."; and

WHEREAS, proper alignment among academic content standards, curricula and professional development is integral to ensuring that investments of public resources in education will lead students to academic success; and

WHEREAS, the state has signed a national memorandum of agreement with the common core state standards initiative to develop common standards for English, language arts and mathematics for kindergarten through twelfth grade, which initiative calls for fewer, clearer and higher academic standards that are aligned with college and work expectations, that are internationally benchmarked, that are rigorous and that are research-based; and

WHEREAS, proper alignment of curricula between grades helps ensure that students are adequately prepared to meet state academic content standards at every grade; and

WHEREAS, preparing teachers with essential pedagogical skills and a better understanding of New Mexico academic content standards should enable more effective standards-based instruction; and

WHEREAS, no comprehensive study has been conducted to evaluate the alignment of school district curricula and professional development to state academic content standards;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the public

education department be requested to study the alignment of school district curricula and professional development in mathematics, language arts and science to state academic content standards in those subject areas; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include a review and recommendations of:

A. the extent to which district curricula are aligned with New Mexico academic content standards and the standards developed by the common core state standards initiative;

B. whether local curricula are aligned to state academic content standards between grades in such a way as to ensure that students are adequately prepared at each grade level to meet the state's academic expectations; and

C. the extent to which both teacher preparation programs and professional development courses in New Mexico provide sufficient knowledge of New Mexico's academic content standards and teach effective instructional strategies for students to meet those standards; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education department work with the office of education accountability, the department of finance and administration, and the legislative education study committee to design the study; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education department present the results of the study and its

recommendations to the legislative education study committee, the legislative finance committee and all school districts and state-chartered charter schools by December 2010; and

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