

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 16

49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2010

INTRODUCED BY

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FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO DEANS AND DIRECTORS OF COLLEGES OF
EDUCATION TO CREATE A WORK GROUP TO STUDY READING CURRICULA IN
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

WHEREAS, literacy is fundamental to achieving success in
education, economic endeavors and civic life; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, New Mexico was fifth lowest among all
states in the nation in fourth-grade reading, with only
twenty-four percent of fourth-grade public school students
proficient or advanced in reading on the national assessment of
educational progress; and

WHEREAS, the performance of New Mexico fourth-grade
students in reading on that assessment was no better in 2007
than it was in 1992; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, New Mexico was third lowest among all

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1 states in the nation in eighth-grade reading, with only
2 eighteen percent of eighth-grade public school students
3 proficient or advanced in reading on the national assessment of
4 educational progress; and

5 WHEREAS, the performance of New Mexico eighth-grade
6 students in reading on that assessment was poorer in 2007 than
7 in 1998; and

8 WHEREAS, research has shown that the single most
9 significant school-related factor in student achievement is
10 teacher quality; and

11 WHEREAS, New Mexico teacher preparation programs have
12 traditionally prepared a major share of the new teachers for
13 New Mexico classrooms; and

14 WHEREAS, in 2000, the national reading panel conducted a
15 comprehensive survey of scientifically valid educational
16 research on reading instruction for children and identified
17 five essential components, which are phonemic awareness,
18 phonics, fluency, vocabulary development and reading
19 comprehension; and

20 WHEREAS, in 2001, legislation was enacted in New Mexico
21 requiring the public education department to withhold program
22 approval from a college of education or teacher education
23 program that fails to offer a course on teaching reading that
24 is based on current scientifically based reading research; that
25 aligns with department-adopted reading standards; that includes

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1 strategies and assessment measures to ensure that beginning
2 teachers are proficient in teaching reading; and that was
3 designed after seeking input from experts in the education
4 field; and

5 WHEREAS, in 2009, the national council on teacher quality
6 published an evaluation of reading preparation in eight New
7 Mexico undergraduate elementary teacher preparation programs
8 that found that most programs in New Mexico do not prepare
9 candidates to teach the science of reading and that the
10 programs use a variety of reading textbooks, most of which do
11 not address the science of reading; and

12 WHEREAS, it is of paramount importance to every resident
13 of New Mexico to have confidence that every graduate of a
14 teacher preparation program in the state has received the best
15 possible instruction in the teaching of reading and is
16 well-prepared to teach students to be proficient readers, able
17 to manage rigorous content in later grades;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
19 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico deans and directors of
20 colleges of education be requested to form a work group to
21 examine the curricula and assigned text materials of all
22 required reading courses in programs that prepare teachers for
23 state licensure and to determine if those courses meet the
24 statutory requirement that they be based on current
25 scientifically based research; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group include not
2 only three deans or directors of undergraduate teacher
3 preparation programs and alternative teacher licensure programs
4 and three members of the legislative education study committee,
5 but also such other representatives as those six members
6 designate; and that the work group establish the methodology
7 for the study, including the qualifications of reading experts
8 to review the curricula and materials, the process by which the
9 reviews will be conducted, the scope of work of the reading
10 experts and the standards to be used to evaluate the curricula
11 and materials, and the timetable for completion of the study;
12 and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group report the
14 results of its study, with findings and recommendations, to the
15 appropriate interim legislative committee and the governor by
16 November 1, 2010; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
18 transmitted to the New Mexico deans and directors of colleges
19 of education and the executive director of the legislative
20 education study committee.

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