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SENATE MEMORIAL 86

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2012

INTRODUCED BY

Howie Morales

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE AND THE
LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE RECENT
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE A-B-C-D-F SCHOOLS RATING SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, in 2011, the legislature passed, and the governor
signed, Senate Bill 427, the A-B-C-D-F Schools Rating Act (Laws
2011, Chapter 10); and

WHEREAS, the legislation created a new state public school
accountability system that operates side by side with existing
school and school district accountability systems based on
adequate yearly progress, which was established pursuant to the
federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001, also
known as the No Child Left Behind Act; and

WHEREAS, the schools rating system requires all public
schools to be graded with a letter grade of A, B, C, D or F

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1 annually by the public education department, pursuant to
2 department rules; and

3 WHEREAS, the public education department adopted rules for
4 the schools rating system in December 2012; and

5 WHEREAS, preliminary grades were issued for New Mexico
6 schools in January 2012; and

7 WHEREAS, education stakeholders report that the specific
8 and technical details of the schools rating system are unclear
9 and lack transparency; and

10 WHEREAS, concerns have been expressed to the department
11 regarding attempts in the rating system to adjust school grades
12 based on student demographics;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
14 OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative education study committee
15 and the legislative finance committee, with the assistance of
16 the public education department, be requested to form a work
17 group of education stakeholders to review the recent
18 implementation of the A-B-C-D-F schools rating system; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group be requested to
20 examine:

21 A. the technical details of the formula used to
22 calculate school grades, including, but not limited to, the
23 working matrices used to grade schools, the methodology used to
24 determine statistical peer groups, all data and tools used to
25 determine school grades and the technical step-by-step

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1 instructions used by department staff for assigning school
2 grades;

3 B. what information and data are available to
4 school districts and charter schools regarding each district's
5 or school's respective grade, and what further information
6 should be available to provide for a more transparent schools
7 rating system;

8 C. the extent to which department rules implement
9 the provisions of Senate Bill 427;

10 D. whether department rules depart from the
11 provisions of Senate Bill 427;

12 E. whether the grade calculations can be simplified
13 so that school officials, teachers, parents and policymakers
14 can readily understand the elements of a calculated school
15 grade;

16 F. alternate value-added models and their
17 implications for measuring school growth; and

18 G. how the formula used to calculate school grades
19 takes into account factors such as charter status, urban or
20 rural location and student socioeconomic status; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group be requested to
22 report its findings and recommendations to the legislative
23 education study committee and the legislative finance committee
24 by October 31, 2012; and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be

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1 transmitted to the directors of the legislative education study
2 committee and the legislative finance committee and to the
3 secretary-designate of public education.

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