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HOUSE BILL 310

51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2013

INTRODUCED BY

Mimi Stewart and William Soules

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; CHANGING ELIGIBILITY FOR THE K-3 PLUS PROGRAM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 22-13-28 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2007, Chapter 12, Section 1, as amended) is amended to read:

"22-13-28. K-3 PLUS--ELIGIBILITY--APPLICATION--REPORTING AND EVALUATION.--

A. The six-year K-3 plus pilot project has demonstrated that increased time in kindergarten and the early grades narrows the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and other students and increases cognitive skills and leads to higher test scores for all participants.

B. The "K-3 plus" program is created in the department to provide funding for additional educational time

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1 for disadvantaged students in kindergarten through third grade.
2 K-3 plus shall be administered by the department and shall
3 provide the funding for approved full-day kindergarten and
4 grades one through three to be extended by at least twenty-five
5 instructional days, beginning up to two months earlier than the
6 regular school years.

7 C. K-3 plus shall be conducted in high-poverty
8 public schools. For the purposes of K-3 plus, "high-poverty
9 public school" means a public school in which [~~eighty-five~~
10 eighty percent or more of the students are eligible for free or
11 reduced-fee lunch at the time the public school applies for the
12 program or an elementary school with a D or F grade the
13 previous year.

14 D. The department shall promulgate rules for
15 application requirements and procedures and criteria for
16 evaluating applications. In evaluating applications for K-3
17 plus, the department shall grant priority to those schools with
18 research-based, scientific reading strategies and programs. An
19 applicant shall demonstrate that its K-3 plus program will meet
20 all department standards and employ only qualified teachers and
21 other staff.

22 E. K-3 plus programs shall be funded at no less
23 than thirty percent of the unit value per student. Up to two
24 percent of the money received by a school district shall be
25 used for student recruitment and to ensure regular attendance

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1 by K-3 plus students.

2 F. Schools that are awarded funding for K-3 plus
3 for the next school year shall be notified by April 15 of the
4 calendar year.

5 G. The department shall provide additional
6 professional development for K-3 plus teachers in how young
7 children learn to read. Teachers and educational assistants
8 shall be paid at the same rate and under the same terms for K-3
9 plus as teachers and educational assistants are paid for
10 regular educational programs.

11 H. Students participating in K-3 plus shall be
12 evaluated at the beginning of K-3 plus, and their progress
13 shall be measured through standardized assessments as follows:

14 (1) in literacy, an assessment approved and
15 provided by the department that measures the acquisition of
16 reading skills, including phonological awareness, phonics,
17 spelling, reading fluency, vocabulary and comprehension in
18 kindergarten and in grades one through three; and

19 (2) in numeracy, in grades three and four.

20 I. The department shall establish reporting and
21 evaluation requirements for participating schools, including
22 student and program assessments. The department shall report
23 annually to the legislature and the governor on the efficacy of
24 K-3 plus.

25 J. The department may use up to four percent of any

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1 appropriation made by the legislature for K-3 plus for
2 professional development for participating educators and
3 department administrative costs.

4 K. The department shall develop and disseminate
5 information on best practices in the areas of student
6 recruitment, retention and academic success of early learners.

7 L. The secretary shall appoint a "K-3 plus advisory
8 committee" composed of representatives of school districts that
9 participate in K-3 plus and other stakeholders. The advisory
10 committee shall meet twice a year to advise the department on
11 K-3 plus implementation."