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SENATE MEMORIAL 90

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2015

INTRODUCED BY

John M. Sapien

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO CONVENE A HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS EDUCATION TASK FORCE AND TO REQUIRE OTHER STUDIES BY THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

WHEREAS, the growth of New Mexico's economy depends on science, technology, engineering and mathematics expertise, including health care, energy development, national laboratories and high-technology companies; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico partnership for math and science education and New Mexico first have formed a collective impact team that has worked to research and advance sound policies and practices regarding science, technology, engineering and mathematics education in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, there has been support by members of the
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1 legislature for a voluntary target of a twenty-five percent
2 increase in the number of high school students measurably
3 proficient in mathematics by 2020; and

4 WHEREAS, fewer than fifty percent of New Mexico high
5 school students are proficient in mathematics as currently
6 measured by the New Mexico standards-based assessment; and

7 WHEREAS, New Mexico high school graduation requirements
8 include four credits of mathematics culminating in algebra II;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, New Mexico students will begin taking new
11 standardized assessments in 2015 aligned with the state content
12 standards, administered through the partnership for assessment
13 of readiness for college and careers, which in high school
14 requires a proficiency equivalent to algebra II; and

15 WHEREAS, parents are currently permitted to opt students
16 out of the algebra II requirement through a waiver process,
17 established by rule, that varies between school districts; and

18 WHEREAS, those students are less likely to pass standards-
19 based assessments aligned with state content standards for
20 college and career exams; and

21 WHEREAS, there has also been support by members of the
22 legislature for a voluntary target to increase the number of
23 new mathematics and science teachers by the year 2020; and

24 WHEREAS, the educational accountability reporting system
25 report collects essential measurement data on the preparation

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1 of New Mexico educators, including mathematics and science
2 teachers, but has not been updated since the 2011-2012 academic
3 year;

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
5 OF NEW MEXICO that the public education department be requested
6 to convene a high school mathematics education task force; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the high school mathematics
8 education task force include secondary mathematics teachers,
9 post-secondary faculty, representatives from the higher
10 education department, representatives of the New Mexico school
11 superintendents' association and the private sector; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to
13 review policies, practices and causes associated with students
14 who use the algebra II waiver; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
16 department and higher education department be requested to
17 review internal resources and assess whether it is feasible for
18 the educational accountability reporting system to be updated
19 more frequently and with more current data and whether it would
20 be advantageous for current and previous versions of the report
21 to be posted in a single searchable location online; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the higher education
23 department be requested to research the potential financial and
24 academic impacts of revising the funding formula for the higher
25 education department to include incentives for institutions of

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1 higher education to award degrees to education students who
2 commit to teaching science and mathematics; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in 2015 through 2017, the
4 high school mathematics education task force, the public
5 education department and the higher education department be
6 requested to prepare reports and present their findings to the
7 legislative education study committee and any other appropriate
8 interim committees each November 1; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
10 transmitted to the governor, the secretary of higher education,
11 the secretary of public education, the legislative education
12 study committee, the legislative finance committee, the chair
13 of the public education department's mathematics and science
14 advisory council and the New Mexico partnership for math and
15 science education.