

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 21

2 **53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2018**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE AND THE
12 LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE COST OF AND ISSUES
13 WITH THE REDISTRICTING OF LARGE SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

14
15 WHEREAS, the legislature in 2002 passed a bill to require
16 the redistricting of all school districts over thirty-five
17 thousand students; and

18 WHEREAS, that bill, House Bill 153, was vetoed by the
19 governor on the basis that the new law would require the
20 Albuquerque public school district to redistrict into three
21 smaller districts of fewer than thirty-five thousand students
22 each; and

23 WHEREAS, from a study conducted between 1993 and 1995 by
24 BDM education technologies and research and polling,
25 incorporated, for the state department of public education, on

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1 the question of decentralization of the Albuquerque public
2 school district, the following arguments in favor of
3 redistricting for smaller districts were put forward:

4 A. greater community control and influence over
5 public education;

6 B. more effectiveness in integrating with
7 communities;

8 C. providing greater community input at the local
9 level;

10 D. providing local public schools with more field
11 and resource personnel;

12 E. providing efficient maintenance and support for
13 local public schools;

14 F. reducing administrative span of control;

15 G. providing greater linkages between local public
16 schools and the central school board;

17 H. redirecting spending for local public school
18 needs; and

19 I. providing greater curriculum continuity; and

20 WHEREAS, BDM education technologies also presented the
21 following arguments in favor of large districts:

22 A. greater political influence because of the local
23 district's political clout at the state and federal levels;

24 B. the ability to offer a broader curriculum;

25 C. attracting a more varied and talented pool of

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1 teachers; and

2 D. savings in administrative costs, freeing more
3 funds for instructional costs; and

4 WHEREAS, although BDM education technologies concluded
5 that New Mexico school data validate the arguments against
6 decentralizing the Albuquerque public school district,
7 educational research referenced in the state's 2005-2008
8 funding formula study indicates that smaller school and
9 district sizes are educational virtues for nearly all student
10 populations and are generally associated with positive academic
11 results; and

12 WHEREAS, the funding formula study showed that the most
13 effective economies of scale were seen in school districts of
14 between ten and twenty-three thousand students; and

15 WHEREAS, other research shows that reducing the size of a
16 school district will not alone improve academic performance and
17 graduation rates; everyone involved, from students and teachers
18 to parents and the community, must improve the new district's
19 culture and have a stake in the school's or school district's
20 success; and

21 WHEREAS, this continuing concern about large school
22 districts, particularly the Albuquerque public school district,
23 which is the state's largest at approximately ninety thousand
24 students, needs to be addressed so that the legislature and
25 other education policymakers may make informed decisions about

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1 how to improve public school outcomes for students and parents
2 and the communities in which they reside;

3 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
4 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative education study
5 committee and the legislative finance committee be requested to
6 undertake a study of the costs and benefits of redistricting
7 large school districts, as well as other issues, including
8 programmatic, fiscal and capital needs; debt between old and
9 new districts; and social and community concerns; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
11 department and the center for education policy research at the
12 university of New Mexico be requested to assist the committees
13 in their study; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committees report to the
15 first session of the fifty-fourth legislature; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
17 transmitted to the legislative education study committee and
18 the legislative finance committee.