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HOUSE BILL 574

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019

INTRODUCED BY

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AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; CREATING A DRUG COUNSELING PILOT PROJECT; PROVIDING POWERS AND DUTIES; REQUIRING BENCHMARKS, PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND EVALUATIONS; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

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

SECTION 1. A new section of the Public School Code is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] DRUG COUNSELING PILOT PROJECT--PURPOSE--REPORTING AND EVALUATION.--

A. The "drug counseling pilot project" is created as a five-year pilot project in the Rio Rancho public school district. The purpose of the pilot project is to determine whether having licensed alcohol and drug abuse counselors available to students in public schools:

(1) helps alleviate the growing addiction

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1 crisis facing youth and young adults in New Mexico;

2 (2) improves school attendance and lowers
3 truancy rates; and

4 (3) better prepares students to set and
5 achieve goals toward a drug-free life.

6 B. The Rio Rancho public school district, in
7 consultation with the department, shall design the pilot
8 project, including benchmarks and performance measures and
9 pilot project, student and personnel evaluations to test the
10 efficacy of having alcohol and drug abuse counselors in public
11 schools.

12 C. The Rio Rancho public school district shall
13 employ at least three licensed alcohol and drug abuse
14 counselors who are licensed by the counseling and therapy
15 practice board or school counselors who specialize in alcohol
16 and substance abuse and are licensed by the public education
17 department for the term of the pilot project. The counselors
18 shall act as a resource for students struggling with drug abuse
19 or addiction. The school district shall decide how to deploy
20 the counselors, whether by referral of a teacher or some other
21 method.

22 D. The Rio Rancho public school district and the
23 department shall seek public and private gifts, grants and
24 donations to benefit the pilot project.

25 E. During the term of the pilot project, the Rio

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1 Rancho public school district and the department shall provide
2 annual reports to the appropriate legislative committees. At
3 the end of the pilot project, a final report and
4 recommendations shall be submitted to the governor and the
5 legislature."

6 SECTION 2. A new section of the Public School Code is
7 enacted to read:

8 "[NEW MATERIAL] DRUG COUNSELING PILOT PROJECT FUND.--The
9 "drug counseling pilot project fund" is created as a
10 nonreverting fund in the state treasury. The fund consists of
11 appropriations, gifts, grants, donations and income from
12 investment of the fund. The fund shall be administered by the
13 department, and expenditures from the fund shall be by warrant
14 of the secretary of finance and administration pursuant to
15 vouchers signed by the secretary of public education or the
16 secretary's designated representative. Money in the fund shall
17 be used to pay salaries and benefits for at least three alcohol
18 and drug abuse counselors employed by the Rio Rancho public
19 school district for the term of the pilot project and necessary
20 supplies and equipment for the counselors or pilot project.
21 Money in the fund may be used by the Rio Rancho public school
22 district, with the approval of the department, to purchase
23 additional goods and services necessary for the success of the
24 pilot project. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance
25 remaining at the end of the pilot project shall not revert to

.211983.1

1 the general fund until the pilot project is complete."

2 SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION.--Three hundred thousand dollars
3 (\$300,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the drug
4 counseling pilot project fund for expenditure in fiscal year
5 2020 to fund the drug counseling pilot project. Any unexpended
6 or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year
7 2020 shall not revert to the general fund until the pilot
8 project is complete.

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