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HOUSE MEMORIAL 72

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

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CREATION OF A MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE
TO DEVELOP A DEFINITION OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION AND TO
PROVIDE A REPORT ON THE STATUS OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN
NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, a free, public and sufficient education is
guaranteed for all children of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, New Mexicans honor their heritage, cultures and
languages as evidenced in the Hispanic Education Act, the
Indian Education Act and the Bilingual Multicultural Education
Act; and

WHEREAS, part of the significant inheritance of New
Mexico's children is New Mexico's tapestry of diverse knowledge
systems and history of multicultural communities; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico's children bring a diversity of assets

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1 and strengths to their learning from their communities of
2 origin and are the state's treasure; and

3 WHEREAS, according to the *2018 New Mexico Kids Count Data*
4 *Book*, published by New Mexico voices for children, seventy-six
5 percent of New Mexico's public school student population
6 consists of children of color, many of whom are underachieving
7 academically; and

8 WHEREAS, New Mexico ranks fiftieth in reading proficiency
9 and forty-ninth in math proficiency among the states; and

10 WHEREAS, education week quality counts 2019 ranks New
11 Mexico as fiftieth on its "chance-for-success index", which
12 grades the nation and states on thirteen indicators, capturing
13 the critical role that education plays as a person moves from
14 childhood through the kindergarten through twelfth grade system
15 and into college and the workforce; and

16 WHEREAS, Hispanic, Native American and African American
17 students are dropping out of high school or post-secondary
18 education in numbers that severely threaten the social and
19 economic welfare of the state; and

20 WHEREAS, these students represent a significant portion of
21 New Mexico's future workforce; and

22 WHEREAS, technological innovations continue to create jobs
23 for a skilled workforce, and New Mexico's students must be
24 prepared for the jobs of the future; and

25 WHEREAS, a well-educated workforce and citizenry is widely

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1 viewed as the basis for economic stability and competitiveness;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, New Mexico is one of the most diverse states in
4 the nation, and this diversity is reflected in the strengths
5 and needs of New Mexico's students; and

6 WHEREAS, the ability of highly qualified teachers to
7 address the learning needs of all New Mexico's students,
8 including those students who learn differently as a result of
9 disability, culture, language or socioeconomic status, forms
10 the framework for the New Mexico teacher competencies for
11 licensure levels one, two and three-A assessment criteria
12 benchmarks; and

13 WHEREAS, all teachers in New Mexico must recognize student
14 diversity and create an atmosphere conducive to the promotion
15 of positive student involvement and self-concept; and

16 WHEREAS, level one teachers at the provisional level must
17 demonstrate sensitivity and responsiveness to the personal
18 ideas, learning needs, interests and feelings of students with
19 disabilities or from culturally and linguistically diverse
20 backgrounds; and

21 WHEREAS, level three-A teachers at the mastery level must
22 demonstrate an awareness of the influences of context,
23 disability, language and culture on student learning; and

24 WHEREAS, witnesses in the consolidated cases of *Yazzie v.*
25 *State of New Mexico* and *Martinez v. State of New Mexico* have

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1 provided testimony on the benefits of multicultural education
2 to New Mexico students; and

3 WHEREAS, multicultural education supports all students
4 academically, culturally and personally, reversing low academic
5 expectations, poor student-teacher relationships and
6 marginalizing programming, such as remedial classwork, that
7 commonly leads students to drop out; and

8 WHEREAS, students of teachers who believed and acted on
9 principles of culturally responsive teaching made greater gains
10 in reading than students of teachers whose beliefs and teaching
11 were not consistent with culturally responsive teaching; and

12 WHEREAS, evidence has revealed that a well-designed
13 multicultural education can have a positive impact on students'
14 cross-racial attitudes and understanding; and

15 WHEREAS, testimony has revealed that a lack of
16 professional development in culturally responsive, or
17 multicultural, pedagogy has been observed in school districts
18 in recent years; and

19 WHEREAS, culturally and linguistically responsive
20 approaches to teaching could be more clearly defined; and

21 WHEREAS, New Mexico only began to adopt standards for
22 multicultural education in 2017; and

23 WHEREAS, providing a multicultural education to
24 preschoolers is an important part of preparing a child to be
25 successful; and

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1 WHEREAS, the state must develop and support twenty-first
2 century multicultural education for all students;

3 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
4 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the public
5 education department be requested to convene a multicultural
6 education task force to develop a definition of multicultural
7 education and to provide a report on the status of
8 multicultural education in New Mexico; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
10 department be requested to include as members of the task force
11 representatives who have technical knowledge of and expertise
12 in multicultural education, including the following:

13 A. two enrolled members of Indian nations, tribes
14 or pueblos;

15 B. five members who are kindergarten through
16 twelfth grade teachers, school principals, superintendents,
17 board members, other education administrators or higher
18 education faculty who are from different ethnic or religious
19 groups and of different geographical areas of the state, with
20 at least one representing special education;

21 C. five parents of multicultural students, who
22 encompass diverse racial, ethnic, nationality, language,
23 religious, class, gender, sexual orientation and exceptionality
24 groups, with students enrolled in multicultural education
25 programs in public schools and charter schools;

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1 D. at least three multicultural education students;

2 E. at least one member of the senate, appointed by
3 the president pro tempore of the senate; and

4 F. at least one member of the house of
5 representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of
6 representatives; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education
8 study committee and the legislative finance committee be
9 requested to assist the task force; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the multicultural education
11 task force be requested to present its findings and
12 recommendations to the appropriate interim legislative
13 committee by November 1, 2019; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the secretary of public education, the secretary
16 of higher education, the chair of the legislative education
17 study committee and the chair of the legislative finance
18 committee.