HOUSE MEMORIAL 20

56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2024

INTRODUCED BY

G. Andrés Romero and Yanira Gurrola and Raymundo Lara

and Tara Jaramillo and Cristina Parajón

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE TO STUDY

CLASS SIZE REDUCTIONS FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE

CLASSES.

WHEREAS, fewer than one in four students in New Mexico

scored "proficient" in reading and math on the national

assessment of educational progress tests in 2022, ranking New

Mexico the lowest in the nation for student reading and math

proficiency; and

WHEREAS, a large proportion of kindergarten through

twelfth grade students in New Mexico are at-risk, with one in

four children living in poverty and higher than national

averages of students identified as English language learners or

students with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the percentages of kindergarten through twelfth

1   grade economically disadvantaged students, English language

2   learners, Native American students and students with

3   disabilities scoring "proficient" on statewide assessment tests

4   in New Mexico continue to fall below statewide proficiency

5   averages; and

6   WHEREAS, kindergarten through twelfth grade teachers in

7   New Mexico and across the nation report a marked impact of the

8   coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic on students' social,

9   emotional and behavioral development, resulting in increased

10   disruptions of instructional time and demands on teachers and

11   support staff; and

12   WHEREAS, a finding in the consolidated *Yazzie/Martinez v.*

13   *State of New Mexico* lawsuit pointed out the critical need for

14   highly effective educators to serve kindergarten through

15   twelfth grade students with disabilities, Native American

16   students, economically disadvantaged students and English

17   language learners; and

18   WHEREAS, national research indicates that reducing

19   kindergarten through twelfth grade class sizes can be an

20   effective means to improve educational outcomes, increase

21   student engagement and improve classroom behavior, particularly

22   in early elementary grades, among at-risk students and in

23   classes with less experienced or effective teachers; and

24   WHEREAS, the turnover rate for kindergarten through

25   twelfth grade teachers in New Mexico has increased over the

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1   past three years, and more kindergarten through twelfth grade

2   teacher candidates are completing alternative licensure

3   pathways than traditional licensure pathways, with little or no

4   classroom experience prior to teaching; and

5   WHEREAS, reducing kindergarten through twelfth grade class

6   size maximums would require hiring additional teachers and

7   administrative assistants while New Mexico continues to face

8   shortages in those areas;

9   NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF

10   REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative

11   education study committee be requested to study kindergarten

12   through twelfth grade class size reductions, including the

13   potential effects on student outcomes, staffing and funding;

14   and

15   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education

16   study committee be requested to work with representatives from

17   the public education department, the higher education

18   department, the legislative finance committee, the early

19   childhood education and care department, school district and

20   charter school leadership, teachers' unions and educator

21   preparation programs; and

22   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education

23   study committee be requested to submit its research findings

24   and recommendations to the governor and the legislature and to

25   publish its report by December 31, 2024; and

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1   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be

2   transmitted to the director of the legislative education study

3   committee, the secretary of public education, the secretary of

4   higher education and the secretary of early childhood education

5   and care.

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