

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; PROVIDING FOR EVEN START FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMS; PROVIDING FOR BENCHMARKS, PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND EVALUATIONS.

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:

"EVEN START FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM - CREATED - - GUIDELINES - - BENCHMARKS, PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND EVALUATIONS. - -

A. The "even start family literacy program" is created in the department of education to provide funding for preschool reading readiness and parenting education. The purpose of the program is to support the educational and developmental needs of students in preschool; address cultural diversity; and provide family support that leads to improved literacy, improved ability for students to succeed in school and economic self-sufficiency. Priority for funding shall be provided to those public schools that have the highest proportion of limited English proficient students, students living in poverty and Native American students.

B. The department of education shall develop even start family literacy program benchmarks and performance

standards, guidelines for program approval and funding approval criteria. The department shall disseminate the program information in all public schools and shall provide technical assistance to public schools in developing proposals.

C. The department of education shall distribute money to public schools with approved even start family literacy programs that meet the specified criteria based upon actual program costs to ensure the implementation of performance based budgeting measures.

D. Public schools that receive even start family literacy program funds shall annually evaluate and report to the department of education the results of the program, including the number of children and families served, the services provided and the gains achieved by the children and their families.

E. If the department of education determines that a local even start family literacy program is not meeting benchmarks and performance standards, the department shall notify the public school that continued failure to meet benchmarks and performance standards will result in cessation of funding for the program for the next school year.

F. The department of education shall compile the results of the even start family literacy program and report annually to the legislative education study committee. "

