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HOUSE BILL 43

**47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2006**

INTRODUCED BY

Mimi Stewart

FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; EXTENDING THE KINDERGARTEN PLUS  
PILOT PROJECT; EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

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

Section 1. Section 22-2-20 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2003,  
Chapter 130, Section 1) is amended to read:

"22-2-20. KINDERGARTEN PLUS--PILOT PROJECT--ELIGIBILITY--  
APPLICATION--REPORTING AND [EVACUATION] EVALUATION--CREATING A  
FUND.--

A. The "kindergarten plus" pilot project is created  
as a [~~three-year~~] six-year study that extends the kindergarten  
year by up to four months for participating students and  
measures the effect of additional time on literacy, numeracy  
and social skills development. The purpose of kindergarten  
plus is to demonstrate that increased time in kindergarten

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1 narrows the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and  
2 other students and increases cognitive skills and leads to  
3 higher test scores for all participants.

4 B. The pilot project shall be administered by the  
5 department [~~of education~~] and shall provide the funding for  
6 approved full-day kindergarten programs to be extended by at  
7 least forty instructional days, beginning approximately two  
8 months earlier and ending approximately two months later than  
9 other classes. For the first year, the pilot project shall  
10 begin July 1 and run two hundred twenty instructional days; in  
11 the second and third years, kindergarten plus may begin or end  
12 at any time that provides for the same number of instructional  
13 days.

14 C. Kindergarten plus shall be conducted in the  
15 Albuquerque, Gallup-McKinley, Gadsden and Las Cruces school  
16 districts and may be conducted in any other school district  
17 with high-poverty schools. For the remainder of the pilot  
18 project, the original pilot school districts may expand their  
19 kindergarten plus programs by adding additional classes or  
20 schools or both. Full-day kindergarten programs in high-  
21 poverty public schools in those school districts are eligible  
22 to apply for kindergarten plus. For the purposes of  
23 kindergarten plus, "high-poverty school" means a public school  
24 in which eighty-five percent or more of the students are  
25 eligible for free or reduced fee lunch. [~~If enough eligible~~

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1 ~~high-poverty schools in those school districts do not qualify~~  
2 ~~for the pilot project for the amount of funding available, the~~  
3 ~~department of education may extend eligibility to high-poverty~~  
4 ~~schools in other school districts.]~~

5 D. The department [~~of education~~] shall determine  
6 application requirements and procedures and criteria for  
7 evaluating applications. An applicant must demonstrate that  
8 its kindergarten plus program will meet all [~~state board~~]  
9 department standards and employ only qualified teachers and  
10 other staff. The department shall provide additional  
11 professional development for kindergarten plus teachers in how  
12 young children learn to read. Teachers and educational  
13 assistants shall be paid at the same rate and under the same  
14 terms for kindergarten plus as teachers and educational  
15 assistants are paid for regular full-day kindergarten programs.

16 E. Students participating in kindergarten plus  
17 shall be evaluated at the beginning of kindergarten plus, and  
18 their progress in literacy, numeracy and cognitive and social  
19 skills shall be measured through standardized assessments in  
20 kindergarten and in first grade. [~~The department of education~~  
21 ~~shall provide additional professional development for~~  
22 ~~kindergarten plus teachers in how young children learn to~~  
23 ~~read.~~]

24 F. The department [~~of education~~] shall establish  
25 reporting and evaluation requirements for participating

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1 schools, including student and program assessments. The  
2 department shall provide interim and final reports annually to  
3 the legislature and the governor on the efficacy of the pilot  
4 project.

5 G. In addition to legislative appropriations for  
6 the pilot project, the department [~~of education~~] shall seek  
7 public and private grants and donations. Grants and donations  
8 shall be deposited in the "kindergarten plus fund", created in  
9 the state treasury. Income from investment of the fund shall  
10 be deposited in the fund. The department shall administer the  
11 fund, and money in the fund is appropriated to the department  
12 to carry out the purposes of the pilot project. Money shall be  
13 expended in accordance with the terms of the grants and  
14 donations. Unless otherwise specified by the terms of a grant  
15 or donation, money in the fund at the end of the pilot project  
16 shall revert to the general fund. Expenditures from the fund  
17 shall be by warrants of the secretary of finance and  
18 administration drawn pursuant to vouchers signed by the [~~state~~  
19 ~~superintendent~~] secretary of public education or [~~his~~] the  
20 secretary's authorized representative."

21 Section 2. APPROPRIATION.--One million dollars  
22 (\$1,000,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the  
23 public education department for expenditure in fiscal years  
24 2006 and 2007 to expand the kindergarten plus pilot project.  
25 Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of

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fiscal year 2007 shall revert to the general fund.

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