

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE IS A NEED TO INCLUDE HEALTH EDUCATION AS A REQUIREMENT FOR GRADUATION FROM PUBLIC SCHOOL.

WHEREAS, the genuine pursuit of excellence in education requires that school communities periodically examine and assess all aspects of their educational programs to identify ways in which existing policies, standards and competencies might be strengthened; and

WHEREAS, the public education department has established standards for excellence that set graduation expectations for public schools; and

WHEREAS, the standards for excellence establish the content standards with benchmarks in health education that are used by all public schools, charter schools and state-supported educational institutions to develop, deliver and assess health education curricula; and

WHEREAS, the content standards with benchmarks for health education were adopted by rule in March 1997, and the benchmarks and performance standards were revised in June 2007; and

WHEREAS, these content and performance standards are mandated for students in grades kindergarten through twelve;

and

WHEREAS, by law, all first, second and third grade classes are required to provide instruction in art, music and a language other than English, and instruction that meets content standards, benchmarks and performance standards in science, social studies, physical education and health education; and

WHEREAS, by law, all fourth and fifth grade classes are required to provide instruction in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies, including geography, and, as instructional time permits, to offer art, music, physical education, health and computer literacy; and

WHEREAS, by law, all seventh grade classes are required to provide instruction in English, with an emphasis on grammar and writing, communication skills or science, New Mexico history and geography, physical education and science; and

WHEREAS, the standards for excellence state that school health programs must provide opportunities for all students to develop healthy behaviors; and

WHEREAS, school districts are required to provide or make provisions for school health programs that address the health needs of students and staff; and

WHEREAS, school districts are required to provide health education, physical education, health services and school counseling, and may provide nutrition, staff wellness, family-

school-community partnerships, healthy environments and psychological services; and

WHEREAS, the standards for excellence allow for the requirements for health education to be integrated into existing and related courses or to be taught as stand-alone courses;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the public education department be requested to convene a working group to determine whether there is a need to include health education as a requirement for graduation from public school; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group include representation from the department of health, higher education institutions with health education teacher preparation programs, school superintendents, school health educators, school counselors, other educators and community organizations focused on school health issues and the legislative education study committee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group consider creative alternatives for the delivery of health education content standards with benchmarks and performance standards; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education department report the working group's findings and

recommendations to the legislative education study committee
by January 2010; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
transmitted to the secretary of public education, the
secretary of health and the director of the legislative
education study committee.