

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 14

2 **51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2013**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO NAME A TASK
12 FORCE TO STUDY A NEW APPROACH TO PUBLIC EDUCATION REFORM THAT
13 FOCUSES ON TRIFURCATED CURRICULA AND DIPLOMAS, THAT FUNDS
14 PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO MEET THE VARIOUS NEEDS OF STUDENTS AND THAT
15 TRULY PROVIDES LOCAL CONTROL OVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

16
17 WHEREAS, the legislature and other public education
18 policymakers and advocates have struggled for decades trying to
19 find the magic formula for defining, fostering and funding
20 student success; and

21 WHEREAS, no matter what has been tried over the years, the
22 state's graduation rate is still abysmal, failing both students
23 and taxpayers; and

24 WHEREAS, given the immersive media world that young people
25 live in these days, traditional ideas of education must give

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1 way and ingrained ideas of governance, funding and the state's
2 expectations and role in education must be rethought and
3 reimaged; and

4 WHEREAS, there are many students who are not interested in
5 pursuing an academic career in college, and many students would
6 rather receive a general educational development certificate
7 and get on their path in life rather than remain in a high
8 school that does not fit their needs; and

9 WHEREAS, New Mexico should consider a trifurcated system
10 that provides three levels of high school diploma, to wit:

11 A. a basic education diploma, which means the
12 student:

13 (1) is at least sixteen years old;

14 (2) can read, write and perform basic
15 mathematics at least at the eighth grade level;

16 (3) understands civic duties and
17 responsibilities; and

18 (4) is ready for the work force, the military
19 or anything else that requires a simple high school diploma;

20 B. a trades-ready diploma, which means the student:

21 (1) has completed tenth grade;

22 (2) can read, write and perform or understand
23 mathematics and science at least at the tenth grade level;

24 (3) understands civic duties and
25 responsibilities;

1 (4) has taken courses that develop trades-
2 ready skills, such as how to:

3 (a) read requests for proposals and
4 respond appropriately;

5 (b) read a work order;

6 (c) calculate the cost of labor,
7 materials, taxes and other charges or expenses;

8 (d) measure and perform other
9 construction mathematics; and

10 (e) read and understand safety
11 instructions and operating manuals; and

12 (5) is ready to attend a technical and
13 vocational institute;

14 C. a baccalaureate-ready diploma, which means the
15 student:

16 (1) is eligible to attend a public post-
17 secondary educational institution in New Mexico; and

18 (2) can begin freshman coursework without
19 remediation; and

20 WHEREAS, school districts and charter schools should be
21 funded for results, that is, graduation, and the public school
22 funding formula should recognize the costs of providing each of
23 the trifurcated educational pathways; and

24 WHEREAS, taxpayers should not have to pay first for early
25 childhood services, then for public schools and then yet again

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1 for remediation in post-secondary educational institutions or,
2 worse, for the intergenerational transmission of poverty,
3 ignorance and poor physical and mental health because adults
4 have failed to reach their full cognitive and social potential;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, because the educational and staffing requirements
7 differ for each of the three levels of diploma, school
8 districts should be funded commensurate with the types of
9 diplomas for which they are successfully preparing their
10 students. For example, a trades-ready diploma might equal one
11 hundred percent funding, based on a five-year rolling average;
12 a basic diploma might equal eighty percent of the cost of a
13 trades-ready diploma; and a baccalaureate-ready diploma might
14 be funded at one hundred twenty percent of a trades-ready
15 diploma; and

16 WHEREAS, local school boards and school district and
17 charter school employees are more likely to understand the
18 needs of their students and their communities than people in
19 Santa Fe or Washington, D.C., no matter how dedicated and well-
20 meaning they may be, and local school boards should be given
21 full governance and budgeting authority and held accountable to
22 community voters for the success or failure of their policies;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
24 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council be
25 requested to create a task force composed of legislators,

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1 school superintendents, other school personnel, school board
2 members, public post-secondary educational institutions, the
3 business community, parents and taxpayers to study the failures
4 of the current educational system and the efficacy of a
5 trifurcated diploma system; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force study the
7 state's funding formula and make recommendations on changing
8 the formula to comport with systemic recommendations; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force also study the
10 current governance structure and make recommendations for the
11 devolution of governance responsibility to the local level; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be allowed to
13 name subcommittees of its members to focus on different areas
14 of the Public School Code with an eye to repealing provisions
15 that are incompatible with local control and governance; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
17 department, higher education department, public schools and
18 public post-secondary educational institutions be strongly
19 urged to assist the task force in its work; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative council
21 service, legislative education study committee and legislative
22 finance committee provide staff support to the task force; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its
24 findings and recommendations to the first session of the fifty-
25 second legislature, including recommendations for

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1 constitutional and statutory changes necessary to implement
2 other recommendations of the task force; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
4 transmitted to the New Mexico legislative council, the
5 governor, the secretaries of public education and higher
6 education, the council of university presidents and the
7 association of independent community colleges.

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