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SENATE MEMORIAL 81

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

INTRODUCED BY

Linda M. Lopez

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE, IN COOPERATION WITH THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS TO MENTOR THIRD GRADE STUDENTS IN READING.

WHEREAS, research indicates that the inability to read at the third grade level correlates with high dropout rates, lower graduation rates from high school, an inability to thrive in a competitive global economy and incarceration as an adult; and

WHEREAS, research also indicates that New Mexico college students' graduation rates are fifteen percent below national averages, and certain New Mexico scholarship programs have college graduation rates as low as fourteen percent over a six-year period, with growing college debt for those who do and do

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1 not graduate; and

2 WHEREAS, the economic impact of a failing educational
3 system is reflected in a lowered tax base, rising costs of
4 social welfare and criminal justice, lower standards of living
5 and higher rates of anxiety among people in terms of having
6 enough food to eat, appropriate housing and good health; and

7 WHEREAS, students who are successful in learning to read
8 by the end of grade three can look forward to a lifetime
9 ability of reading to learn, rather than to learning to read,
10 and of accessing the benefits of the educational system; and

11 WHEREAS, an international model of mentoring and tutoring
12 built into the pilot program with St. John's college and Santa
13 Fe public schools in New Mexico has demonstrated success in
14 bringing together college student mentors with at-risk third
15 graders in a one-to-one mentoring relationship; and

16 WHEREAS, this international model, as adapted in twenty-
17 five countries, has shown positive benefits, including improved
18 academic performance, greater efficiency in meeting graduation
19 requirements, a heightened motivation to study for both the
20 mentors and the students who are being mentored, higher levels
21 of self-esteem and greater civic involvement; and

22 WHEREAS, financial support for college students through
23 state scholarships and stipends is reinvested in the community
24 when a college student offers the unique gift of social
25 commitment by providing tutoring services to third grade

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1 students;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
3 OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative education study committee,
4 in cooperation with the public education department and the
5 higher education department, be requested to establish a work
6 group to conduct a study on the feasibility of establishing
7 programs throughout the state to provide mentoring by college
8 students to third graders who are at risk of not learning to
9 read; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group include college
11 students representing community-based colleges and universities
12 in the state and leaders from the public and private sectors
13 representing science, industry, education, community
14 organizations, foundations, government and health and welfare
15 programs and who are representative of the various populations
16 of the state; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include a needs
18 assessment, implementation plan and fiscal impact analysis with
19 measurable outcome data applicable to the various populations
20 of New Mexico; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education
22 study committee, in cooperation with the public education
23 department and the higher education department, and the work
24 group report the results of the study and their recommendations
25 to the legislature and the executive before the 2014

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1 legislative session; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
3 transmitted to the director of the legislative education study
4 committee and the secretaries of public education and higher
5 education.

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