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HOUSE BILL 310

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2015

INTRODUCED BY

W. Ken Martinez and Mary Kay Papen

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC EDUCATION; CREATING THE SCIENCE EARLY
EDUCATION PROGRAM AS A PILOT PROJECT; PROVIDING POWERS AND
DUTIES; REQUIRING APPLICATIONS; REQUIRING MATCHING FUNDING;
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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:

"[NEW MATERIAL] SCIENCE EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM--PILOT
PROJECT--IMPLEMENTATION.--

A. The "science early education program" is created
as a five-year pilot project that is based on three-year
student cohorts and that incorporates hands-on, age-appropriate
physics education into the sixth through eighth grade
curricula. The purpose of the science early education program

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1 is to enhance students' academic performance in science and
2 mathematics.

3 B. The department shall administer the science
4 early education program and shall contract with an organization
5 that provides professional development and materials for
6 teachers to introduce physics education into the sixth through
7 eighth grade curricula.

8 C. The science early education program is
9 designated for high-poverty public schools. For the purposes
10 of the science early education program, "high-poverty public
11 school" means a public school in which, at the time the public
12 school applies for the program, eighty-five percent or more of
13 the students are eligible for free or reduced-fee lunch.

14 D. School districts may apply on behalf of their
15 schools on a form and in a manner as provided by the department
16 for a grant from the science early education fund. The
17 department shall select for participation in the program as
18 many schools as qualify, but not more than ten. To the extent
19 possible, the department shall select schools that are based in
20 regions of the state that are generally distinct from one
21 another in their locations and population density. An approved
22 school shall provide one-half of the funding for the program.

23 E. Students participating in the science early
24 education program shall be evaluated at the beginning of the
25 program, and the students' progress shall be measured through

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1 standardized assessments in science and mathematics at the end
2 of grades six, seven and eight.

3 F. The department shall establish reporting and
4 evaluation requirements for participating schools, including
5 student and program assessments. At the end of each program
6 year, the department shall provide to the legislature and the
7 governor an interim or final report, as appropriate, on the
8 efficacy of the science early education program."

9 SECTION 2. A new section of the Public School Code is
10 enacted to read:

11 "[NEW MATERIAL] SCIENCE EARLY EDUCATION FUND--CREATED.--
12 The "science early education fund" is created in the state
13 treasury. The fund consists of appropriations, gifts, grants,
14 donations and income from investment of the fund. The
15 department shall administer the fund, and money in the fund is
16 appropriated to the department to carry out the purposes of the
17 science early education program. The department shall seek
18 public and private grants and donations for the science early
19 education program. Grants and donations shall be deposited in
20 the fund. Money from a grant or donation shall be expended in
21 accordance with the terms of that grant or donation. Unless
22 otherwise specified by the terms of a grant or donation, the
23 balance in the fund at the end of the program shall revert to
24 the general fund. Expenditures from the fund shall be by
25 warrants of the secretary of finance and administration drawn

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1 pursuant to vouchers signed by the secretary of public
2 education or the secretary's authorized representative."

3 SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION.--Two hundred fifty thousand
4 dollars (\$250,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the
5 science early education fund for expenditure in fiscal years
6 2015 through 2020 to carry out the provisions of the science
7 early education program. Any unexpended or unencumbered
8 balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2020 shall revert
9 to the general fund.

10 SECTION 4. EMERGENCY.--It is necessary for the public
11 peace, health and safety that this act take effect immediately.