

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND THE SECRETARY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TO CREATE A SCHOOL NURSE TASK FORCE TO ASSESS THE CURRENT NEW MEXICO SCHOOL NURSE STAFFING MODELS AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENSURE SAFE AND LEGAL CARE FOR STUDENTS IN PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND CHARTER SCHOOLS.

WHEREAS, for many students, the school nurse is the only health care provider a student visits; and

WHEREAS, school nurses deal with major health issues, including asthma, allergies, obesity and diabetes, emergency administration of medication, medication management, disaster preparedness, crisis management, immunizations, mental health, oral health, visual health, school wellness policies, violence and bullying and much more; and

WHEREAS, school nurses also coordinate and manage the health needs of special education students; and

WHEREAS, the absence of a school nurse results in a loss of teacher productivity spent on addressing student health issues, increased student absenteeism and a parent's productivity loss costs associated with a student's early dismissal or medication administration; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico school health manual recommends that school health programs provide opportunities for all students to develop healthy behaviors, and all New Mexico

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

WHEREAS, public education department rules require support service programs that include health service provided by public education department-licensed registered nurses and that meet the health needs of students with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, new department of health rules establish standards for the administration of emergency medications in schools; and

WHEREAS, currently, only twenty-one school districts have one part-time nurse per district, and four school districts have no nurse at all;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary of health and the secretary of public education be requested to convene a school nurse task force to propose New Mexico school nurse staffing models in schools and to make recommendations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include representatives from the department of health, the public education department, the board of nursing, school nurses, the New Mexico school superintendents association, the New Mexico school boards association and other appropriate health care providers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to make recommendations to the legislative finance committee and the legislative health and human services committee to address any possible disparities caused by a lack of nursing services to students and to develop a plan to address those disparities by October 1, 2015; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of health and the secretary of public education.