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SENATE MEMORIAL 2

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

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 THAT MATCHES COLLEGE STUDENTS AS MENTORS TO THIRD GRADE STUDENTS IN READING.

WHEREAS, studies show that children who are struggling to read in third grade are four times more likely to drop out or not complete high school, compared with classmates who are proficient readers; and

WHEREAS, studies also show that only twenty-one percent of New Mexico fourth graders actually read at the fourth grade level; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that New Mexico college graduation rates are fifteen percent below national averages

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1 and certain scholarship programs have college graduation rates  
2 as low as fourteen percent in six years, leaving students with  
3 no college degrees and mounting college debt; and

4 WHEREAS, the economic impact of a failing educational  
5 system is often reflected through a lowered tax base, rising  
6 costs of social welfare and criminal justice, lowered standards  
7 of living and high levels of anxiety regarding having enough  
8 food to eat, appropriate housing and good health; and

9 WHEREAS, success in learning to read by the end of grade  
10 three allows for a lifetime ability of reading to learn, rather  
11 than learning to read, and of accessing the benefits of the  
12 educational system; and

13 WHEREAS, an international model of mentoring and tutoring  
14 built into a program called "MATCH New Mexico" has demonstrated  
15 success in bringing together college student mentors with at-  
16 risk third graders in a one-to-one relationship; and

17 WHEREAS, the international model, as adapted in twenty-  
18 five countries, has shown positive benefits for both mentors  
19 and their mentees, including improved academic performance, the  
20 ability to meet graduation requirements more efficiently, a  
21 heightened motivation to study and the addition of improved  
22 social status, higher levels of self-esteem and civic  
23 involvement; and

24 WHEREAS, this international model of mentoring and  
25 tutoring has seen success in the Santa Fe public schools and is

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1 currently being implemented in the Albuquerque public schools,  
2 with plans for future implementation in the Taos public  
3 schools; and

4 WHEREAS, financial support for college students through  
5 state scholarships and stipends is reinvested in the community  
6 when college students offer this unique gift of social  
7 commitment;

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE  
9 OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative education study committee,  
10 in cooperation with the public education department and the  
11 higher education department, be requested to establish a work  
12 group to report on the feasibility of creating an innovative  
13 program with mentoring and tutoring third grade students by  
14 college student mentors; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group generate a  
16 feasibility study, including a needs assessment, implementation  
17 plan and a fiscal impact analysis with measurable outcome data  
18 applicable to the various populations of New Mexico; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group be composed of  
20 equal numbers of college students who are residents of New  
21 Mexico representing community-based colleges and universities  
22 in the state, together with leaders from the public and private  
23 sectors representing science, industry, education, community  
24 organizations, foundations, government, health and welfare  
25 programs; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education  
2 study committee, in cooperation with the public education  
3 department, the higher education department and the work group,  
4 report the results of the study and their recommendations to  
5 the legislature and the governor before the 2016 legislative  
6 session; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
8 transmitted to the director of the legislative education study  
9 committee and the respective secretaries of public education  
10 and higher education.