

1 HOUSE BILL 280

2 **55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2021**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 Luis Terrazas and Rebecca Dow

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10 AN ACT

11 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO PROVIDE REIMBURSEMENT TO LOW-INCOME
12 PARENTS FOR SCHOOL EXPENSES FOR STUDENTS HAVING TO ATTEND
13 PUBLIC SCHOOL REMOTELY; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

16 SECTION 1. APPROPRIATION--APPLICATION.--

17 A. Seventy-six million dollars (\$76,000,000) is
18 appropriated from the public education reform fund to the
19 public education department for expenditure in fiscal years
20 2021 and 2022 to reimburse parents of public school students
21 who meet the household income requirements for free or reduced-
22 price lunch for necessary expenses to enable the students to
23 attend public school remotely during school closures due to the
24 coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic. Any unexpended or
25 unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2022

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1 shall revert to the public education reform fund.

2 B. As used in this section:

3 (1) "household income requirements for free or
4 reduced-price lunch" means a household:

5 (a) with income below one hundred thirty
6 percent of the federal poverty level that qualifies the student
7 for free meals;

8 (b) that receives support through the
9 federal supplemental nutrition assistance program or the
10 federal temporary assistance for needy families program; or

11 (c) with income between one hundred
12 thirty percent and one hundred eighty-five percent of the
13 federal poverty level that qualifies the student for reduced-
14 price meals; and

15 (2) "necessary expenses" means supplies and
16 equipment that would normally be paid for by the public school
17 the student attends, including furniture, computers, printers
18 and art and other supplies, the cost of purchasing internet
19 connections or increasing internet speeds necessary to allow
20 the student to attend school remotely and the cost of tutoring
21 or other supplemental education services.

22 C. The public education department shall develop
23 and send an electronic version of the coronavirus disease 2019
24 reimbursement application form to every school superintendent
25 and every head administrator of a charter school for

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1 dissemination to the parent of every public school student in
2 the school district or charter school that has qualified by
3 application for free or reduced-price lunch. The application
4 shall include questions to identify the eligibility of students
5 for free or reduced-price lunch who currently qualify through
6 the federal community eligibility provision. Parents who have
7 not applied for free or reduced-price lunch may apply for that
8 benefit as well as the reimbursement for school expenses as
9 provided in this section.

10 D. An application submitted for reimbursement of
11 necessary expenses shall include receipts or other proof of
12 expenditure for covered purchases.

13 E. The maximum amount of reimbursement shall be
14 four hundred dollars (\$400) for the parent in a household in
15 which students who are eligible for free lunch reside and two
16 hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for the parent in a household in
17 which students who are eligible for reduced-price lunch reside.

18 SECTION 2. EMERGENCY.--It is necessary for the public
19 peace, health and safety that this act take effect immediately.