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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE TO STUDY
MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATION.

WHEREAS, the middle school years represent a crucial and formative period in a student's educational journey, laying the foundation for future academic and career success; and

WHEREAS, a wealth of educational research underscores the significance of the middle school years in shaping a student's cognitive, social and emotional development, recognizing this period as a pivotal juncture in a student's development and academic trajectory; and

WHEREAS, middle school serves as a bridge between the elementary and high school levels and is a vital transitional phase when students begin to explore a more diverse and advanced curriculum as they prepare for academic and career pursuits in high school and beyond; and

WHEREAS, studies consistently highlight the unique role of middle schools in fostering essential skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and effective communication that are foundational to success in both academic achievement and future career pathways; and

WHEREAS, middle school is a pivotal time for students to explore a broad range of subjects and extracurricular activities, fostering a well-rounded education that nurtures

1 diverse talents and interests; and

2 WHEREAS, evidence-based research emphasizes the role of
3 dedicated and skilled teachers in middle schools, as they
4 contribute significantly to students' academic achievements,
5 character development and overall well-being; and

6 WHEREAS, emerging brain research shows early adolescence
7 is the second period of immense brain development, and
8 schools can be better designed to be more developmentally
9 appropriate; and

10 WHEREAS, data in New Mexico shows that student
11 achievement in mathematics, reading and science and in school
12 engagement begins to decline in middle school years as
13 chronic absenteeism begins to rise; and

14 WHEREAS, access to mathematics courses in middle school
15 years, and taking algebra 1 by the end of eighth grade, has
16 been found to be key for students to have sufficient time to
17 take more advanced courses in their high school years,
18 particularly courses related to science, technology,
19 engineering and mathematics pathways; and

20 WHEREAS, a positive middle school experience contributes
21 significantly to students' self-esteem, social skills and
22 overall well-being, providing a much more successful
23 transition to high school and beyond; and

24 WHEREAS, recognizing the importance of middle school
25 education is integral to ensuring a strong and vibrant future

1 for communities and fostering a society with well-prepared,
2 intellectually engaged and socially responsible citizens;

3 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
4 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the
5 legislative education study committee be requested to study
6 the structure, curriculum, funding and design of middle
7 schools and make recommendations to the legislature and the
8 governor on methods and means of enhancing the quality of
9 middle school education in New Mexico that equitably serves
10 all students in New Mexico, including those students
11 described in the *Yazzie/Martinez* lawsuit as students with
12 disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, English
13 language learners and Native American students; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education
15 study committee be requested to work with a representative
16 group of youth, including representatives that reflect New
17 Mexico's student demographics and the student groups named in
18 the *Yazzie/Martinez* lawsuit; teacher preparation program
19 leaders, middle school teachers and educational leaders;
20 school counselors and other instructional support providers;
21 school safety and school resource officers; higher education
22 institutions; health professionals; community members; and
23 the public education department in its middle school study;
24 and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education

1 study committee be requested to submit a copy of its research
2 findings and recommendations to the governor and the
3 legislature and to publish its report by December 31, 2024;
4 and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
6 transmitted to the director of the legislative education study
7 committee and the secretary of public education. _____

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Page 4

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