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HOUSE BILL 73

42ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 1996

INTRODUCED BY

BARBARA A. PEREA CASEY

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; RECOGNIZING AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE AS A LANGUAGE THAT MAY BE TAUGHT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS; AMENDING SECTIONS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CODE.

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

Section 1. Section 22-1-1.1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1986, Chapter 33, Section 1) is amended to read:

"22-1-1.1. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND PURPOSE. --

A. The legislature finds that, although New Mexico has been in the forefront of educational reforms in many areas, additional improvements are necessary to enhance and upgrade the delivery of quality education in New Mexico.

B. The legislature further finds that enhancement of the educational system in New Mexico requires a renewed emphasis on the primary grades, recognizing especially the importance of

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1 the first grade to a child's future educational career.

2 C. The legislature further finds that teachers and
3 administrators play a key role in any reform efforts and
4 acknowledges their importance in the educational process.

5 D. The legislature further finds that the
6 smorgasbord curriculum offered in many schools fails to provide
7 students with the basic educational background necessary to
8 provide them with indispensable life skills.

9 E. The legislature further finds that discipline in
10 the schools is essential to provide an atmosphere conducive to
11 effective learning.

12 F. The legislature further finds and recognizes
13 American sign language as a language that should be given the
14 same consideration for instruction, to hearing and
15 hearing-impaired students, as other languages taught in public
16 schools.

17 [~~F.~~] G. It is the purpose of this reform
18 legislation, among other things, to stress the importance of
19 substantive academic subjects, provide for a greater emphasis on
20 the primary grades, upgrade curriculum and graduation
21 requirements, systematically evaluate instructional improvement
22 and student progress, increase parental involvement in the
23 public schools and recognize that teachers should be treated
24 like other professionals. "

25 Section 2. Section 22-2-8.3 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1986,

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1 Chapter 33, Section 4, as amended) is amended to read:

2 "22-2-8.3. SUBJECT AREAS--MINIMUM INSTRUCTIONAL AREAS
3 REQUIRED--ACCREDITATION.--

4 A. The state board shall require instruction in
5 specific subject areas as provided in Subsections B through F of
6 this section. Any public school or school district failing to
7 meet these minimum requirements shall not be accredited by the
8 state board.

9 B. All first and second grade classes shall provide
10 daily instruction in language arts skills, including phonics and
11 mathematics. Languages other than English, including American
12 sign language, may be offered in the remaining instructional
13 time.

14 C. All third grade classes shall provide daily
15 instruction in language arts skills and mathematics. Languages
16 other than English, including American sign language, may be
17 offered in the remaining instructional time.

18 D. All fourth, fifth and sixth grade classes shall
19 provide instruction in language arts skills, with an emphasis on
20 writing and editing; mathematics; science; and social studies,
21 including geography. The following subject areas shall be
22 offered in the remaining instructional time: art; music;
23 physical education; health; and computer literacy, including a
24 general familiarization with computers and support in the areas
25 of mathematics and writing through word processing. Languages

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1 other than English, including American sign language, may be
2 offered in the remaining instructional time.

3 E. All seventh grade classes shall provide instruction
4 in English, with an emphasis on grammar and writing;
5 communication skills or science; New Mexico history and
6 geography; mathematics; and physical fitness. Remaining
7 instructional time may be used for electives listed in
8 Subsection G of this section.

9 F. All eighth grade classes shall provide instruction
10 in English, mathematics, United States history and science.
11 Remaining instructional time may be used for electives listed in
12 Subsection G of this section.

13 G. The electives authorized in Subsections E and F of
14 this section are art, industrial arts, chorus, band, home
15 economics, typing, creative writing, speech, drama, Spanish,
16 American sign language, computer literacy and other electives
17 approved by the state board. "

18 Section 3. Section 22-2-8.4 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1986,
19 Chapter 33, Section 5, as amended by Laws 1995, Chapter 174,
20 Section 1 and also by Laws 1995, Chapter 180, Section 1) is
21 amended to read:

22 "22-2-8.4. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS. --

23 A. At the end of the eighth grade or during the ninth
24 grade, each student shall prepare an individual program of study
25 for grades nine through twelve. The program of study shall be

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1 signed by a student's parent or guardian.

2 B. Beginning with students entering the ninth grade in
3 the 1986-87 school year, successful completion of a minimum of
4 twenty-three units shall be required for graduation. These
5 units shall be as follows:

6 (1) four units in English, with major emphasis on
7 grammar and literature;

8 (2) three units in mathematics;

9 (3) two units in science, one of which shall have
10 a laboratory component;

11 (4) three units in social science [~~which~~] that
12 shall include United States history and geography, world history
13 and geography, and government and economics;

14 (5) one unit in physical fitness;

15 (6) one unit in communication skills, with major
16 emphasis on writing and speaking [~~which~~] that may include a
17 language other than English, including American sign language;
18 and

19 (7) nine elective units. Only the following
20 elective units shall be counted toward meeting the requirements
21 for graduation: fine arts, i. e., music, band, chorus and art;
22 practical arts; physical education; languages other than
23 English, including American sign language; speech; drama;
24 vocational education; mathematics; science; English; R. O. T. C. ;
25 social science; computer science; health education; and other

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1 electives approved by the state board.

2 With the approval of the local school board, participation
3 on an athletic team or in an athletic sport during the school
4 day may count toward fulfillment of the physical education
5 required unit.

6 C. Final examinations shall be administered to all
7 students in all classes offered for credit.

8 D. Beginning with students entering the ninth grade in
9 the 1986-87 school year, no student shall receive a high school
10 diploma who has not passed a state competency examination in the
11 subject areas of reading, English, math, science and social
12 science. If a student exits from the school system at the end
13 of grade twelve without having passed a state competency
14 examination, he shall receive an appropriate state certificate
15 indicating the number of credits earned and the grade completed.
16 If within five years after a student exits from the school
17 system he takes and passes the state competency examination, he
18 may receive a high school diploma.

19 E. The state board may establish a policy to provide
20 for administrative interpretations to clarify curricular and
21 testing provisions of the Public School Code."

22 Section 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. --The effective date of the
23 provisions of this act is July 1, 1996.

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State of New Mexico
House of Representatives

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FORTY- SECOND LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION, 1996

January 23, 1996

Mr. Speaker:

Your RULES AND ORDER OF BUSINESS COMMITTEE, to
whom has been referred

HOUSE BILL 73

has had it under consideration and finds same to be
GERMANE in accordance with constitutional provisions.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Barbara A. Perea Casey, Chairperson

Adopted _____ Not Adopted _____

(Chief Clerk)

(Chief Clerk)

Date _____

The roll call vote was 8 For 0 Against

Yes: 8

Excused: Lujan, Olguin, Pederson, Ryan, Taylor, Wallach,

S. Williams

Absent: None

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