

AN ACT

CREATING THE EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY TASK FORCE; PROVIDING FOR ITS MEMBERSHIP AND DUTIES; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

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

Section 1. EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND ACCOUNTABILITY TASK FORCE CREATED-- MEMBERSHIP-- APPOINTMENT. --

A. The "education accountability task force" is created and shall function from the date of its appointment until December 15, 1999.

B. The task force shall consist of twenty-three members appointed as follows:

(1) four members of the house of representatives, three from the majority party and one from the minority party, shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(2) four members of the senate, three from the majority party and one from the minority party, shall be appointed by the committees' committee or, if appointed in the interim, by the president pro tempore of the senate after consultation and agreement of a majority of the members of the committees' committee;

(3) two members of the executive department appointed by the governor;

(4) two public members appointed by the

governor;

(5) the superintendent of public instruction or his designee;

(6) the president of the state board of education or his designee; and

(7) nine public members representing school administrators, teachers' organizations, parent-teacher organizations and business groups appointed by the governor, the speaker of the house of representatives and the president pro tempore of the senate.

C. The task force members shall be appointed so as to provide representation from the various geographic areas of the state. Appointments shall be made no later than twenty days after the effective date of this act. The New Mexico legislative council shall appoint a chairman from among the members of the task force within fourteen days of the appointment of the task force.

D. The governor, the speaker of the house of representatives and the president pro tempore of the senate may agree to appoint advisory members to the task force to provide a broad range of educational views, interests and expertise as necessary to accomplish its task.

E. The task force shall meet at the call of the chair, but no less than once a month, as necessary to carry out its duties. A majority of the members appointed

constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.

However, the final report of the task force findings and recommendations must also have the support of a majority of the members.

F. Public members of the task force shall be reimbursed for per diem and mileage expenses as provided for public officers in the Per Diem and Mileage Act.

Section 2. DUTIES--STAFFING. --

A. The task force shall develop a plan to ensure effective education program initiatives and public school accountability. To carry out this task, the task force shall examine thoroughly the educational strengths and deficiencies in the state's public schools and consider educational accountability issues, specifically special program initiatives, such as vouchers, charter schools, charter districts and other alternative educational programs, educational standards, educational testing, including testing for literacy, and other matters relevant to educational accountability. The task force shall report its findings and recommendations, including proposed legislation, no later than December 15, 1999 for the consideration of the second session of the forty-fourth legislature.

B. The legislative council service shall staff the task force and shall coordinate additional staff assistance from other legislative and executive agencies as

needed. The legislative council service, at the request of the task force, may contract with educational consultants or other persons with expertise as needed to carry out its task.

Section 3. APPROPRIATION. -- One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) is appropriated from legislative council service cash balances to the legislative council service for expenditure in fiscal years 1999 and 2000 to carry out the provisions of this act and to reimburse the per diem and mileage expenses of the education accountability task force. Payments from the appropriation shall be made upon vouchers signed by the director of the legislative council service or his authorized representative.