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SENATE MEMORIAL 15

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

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO RECOGNIZE THE URGENT NEED FOR SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CARE AND THE NEED FOR RESEARCH FOCUSED ON IMPLEMENTING SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CLINICS AS A VITAL COMPONENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO MEDICAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE DURING AND AFTER THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 PANDEMIC.

WHEREAS, New Mexico's students and their family and household members may endure high levels of adverse childhood experiences, such as abuse, neglect, trauma, substance misuse and violence, resulting in poor school achievement and lack of job readiness; and

WHEREAS, countywide surveys implemented by the one hundred percent New Mexico initiative have identified that New Mexico's students and their family and household members may lack access

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1 to medical care and behavioral health care due to cost, lack of
2 transportation to services, inconvenient hours, lack of
3 awareness of services and their benefits, lack of insurance and
4 lack of qualifying for care; and

5 WHEREAS, students and their family and household members
6 who face untreated medical and behavioral health care
7 challenges and related hardships may fail to become job ready
8 and secure steady employment, resulting in the incapacity to
9 contribute to the local and state economy by paying taxes; and

10 WHEREAS, students and their family and household members
11 who face untreated medical and behavioral health care
12 challenges and related hardships may increase involvement in
13 the overburdened child welfare, law enforcement and judicial
14 and prison systems, with increased costs to state government;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, models for cost-effective school-based health
17 centers exist but may not be widely known to the entire school
18 community, health care community and city and county
19 stakeholders; and

20 WHEREAS, the need for and benefits of school-based health
21 clinics, ideally part of the community schools model, have been
22 documented in academic journals for decades; and

23 WHEREAS, recent events that include the coronavirus
24 disease 2019 pandemic and related economic disruption and
25 joblessness have focused new attention on the urgency for

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1 accessible medical and behavioral health care in the school
2 setting, an environment shown to be one of the easiest for
3 students and their family members to access; and

4 WHEREAS, in some New Mexico counties, surveys of parents
5 of school-aged students have revealed that almost thirty
6 percent of those needing medical care cannot easily access it
7 and almost fifty percent of those seeking behavioral health
8 care cannot easily access it; and

9 WHEREAS, in San Miguel county and seven other counties,
10 where stakeholders are engaged in the one hundred percent New
11 Mexico initiative, notably with active action teams in the
12 arena of medical care, behavioral health care, community
13 schools and related sectors, stakeholders committed to
14 accessible medical, dental and behavioral health care are
15 seeking evidence-based and evidence-informed models to decrease
16 barriers to school-based and community-based health care where
17 timely access is most needed; and

18 WHEREAS, the article "Expanding Medical and Mental
19 Healthcare during the COVID-19 Pandemic: The New Mexico
20 School-Based Health Center 'Hub and Spoke' Model" by Matthew
21 Probst details how access to quality health care in the
22 coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic is of paramount importance;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, based on preliminary El Centro family health
25 data, the New Mexico school-based health center hub and spoke

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1 model is highly successful in providing both increased access
2 to health care and improved quality outcomes during the
3 coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic; and

4 WHEREAS, El Centro family health is now implementing hub
5 and spoke school-based health center health care delivery
6 across San Miguel, Colfax, Guadalupe, Harding, Mora, Taos and
7 Rio Arriba counties; and

8 WHEREAS, school-based health clinics began using the hub
9 and spoke pilot model in June 2020 for San Miguel county in
10 response to barriers to access for medical and mental health
11 school-based health services; and

12 WHEREAS, the model increases care via telehealth, cross-
13 agency and cross-sector collaboration, proactive health
14 screening, workforce development and peer health education; and

15 WHEREAS, in addition to expanding access to care as
16 measured by patient visits, clinical quality measures were
17 superior compared to the non-hub and spoke El Centro family
18 health control group and overall New Mexico school-based health
19 center data; and

20 WHEREAS, the implementation of school-based clinics using
21 the hub and spoke model, including other best-practice or
22 promising-practice strategies, would benefit New Mexico by
23 addressing barriers to medical and behavioral health care
24 identified in countywide surveys, especially in rural
25 communities; increasing interventions for preventing

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1 coronavirus disease 2019, which can include coronavirus disease
2 2019 chronic conditions; giving school staff the capacity to
3 address epidemic levels of adverse childhood experiences,
4 abuse, neglect and trauma through family interventions; and
5 increasing supports for all students to improve school
6 achievement and engagement, leading to vocational education and
7 higher education and ultimately job readiness, employment and
8 capacity to contribute to the state's economy by paying taxes;

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
10 OF NEW MEXICO that the department of health and the public
11 education department be requested to jointly create a strategic
12 plan to:

13 A. consider potential funding mechanisms to support
14 school-based health clinics based on successful models with
15 partners that may include school districts, city government,
16 county government, state government, health care providers and
17 community partners;

18 B. provide a guide for each school district to use
19 to set standards for school-based health clinics in school
20 settings during and after the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic
21 in New Mexico;

22 C. provide an analysis of the hub and spoke model
23 designed to improve health and education for New Mexico
24 students and families during and beyond the pandemic; and

25 D. offer guidelines for local school community

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1 partners in developing a cost-benefit analysis of school-based
2 health centers and the return on investment in a post-
3 coronavirus disease 2019 New Mexico where the need for local
4 and timely medical and behavioral health care is critical in
5 addressing challenges related to effective education during the
6 intersection of the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic, economic
7 crisis and joblessness, childhood and family trauma, barriers
8 to health care and other vital services for surviving and
9 thriving documented in countywide surveys of parents; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the strategic plan be
11 requested to address the needs for school-based medical and
12 behavioral health care, the benefits of the hub and spoke
13 model, among other promising and best practices, and the need
14 for a comprehensive plan to remove barriers to care identified
15 during and after the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a comprehensive reading,
17 review and local analysis of the strategic plan be requested
18 from stakeholders; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
20 transmitted to members of the New Mexico legislature, the
21 secretary of public education, the secretary of health, school
22 superintendents, school board members, city council members,
23 county commissioners, county health councils and leaders of
24 higher education departments of medicine, nursing, public
25 health, education and social work.

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