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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/23/06

SPONSOR Gonzales LAST UPDATED 1/25/06 HB 160

SHORT TITLE Expand Teacher Education Field Courses SB _____

ANALYST Baca

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	\$2,000.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates SB233

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education department (HED)

Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 160 appropriates \$2,000,000 from the general fund to the Higher Education Department (HED) for expenditure in FY07 to support the expansion and improvement of educator field experience courses at public post-secondary educational institutions statewide. The HED shall apportion these funds based on enrollment in field experience courses among two- and four- year institutions that prepare educators and instructional support providers for licensure by expanding and improving field experiences prior to practice teaching and supporting formal collaborations between public schools and colleges of education. The funds shall be used to supplement institutional funds allocated for field experience programs.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$2.0 million contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY07 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

It is generally believed that teacher education programs need to be improved and providing field experiences are considered key strengthening activities that help prepare teachers. It is believed that providing field experiences in addition to those currently afforded would help improve the quality of professionals entering the teaching field. HED has provided a table that shows the number of prospective teachers enrolled in field experience courses.

Enrollments in Field Experience in Education Courses

Year	LOWER DIV		UPPER DIV		GRADUATE		Total	
	COURSES	STUDENTS	COURSES	STUDENTS	COURSES	STUDENTS	COURSES	STUDENTS
9495	27	122	142	1600	128	585	297	2307
9596	30	202	129	1885	140	653	299	2740
9697	35	310	188	1704	155	715	378	2729
9798	64	528	161	1748	191	872	416	3148
9899	52	475	138	1407	181	932	371	2814
9900	64	595	174	1502	221	1075	459	3172
0001	77	727	218	1591	199	965	494	3283
0102	82	758	236	1672	187	901	505	3331
0203	90	784	211	1534	231	1130	532	3448
0304	64	775	213	1257	232	1012	509	3044
Changes	137%	535%	50%	-21%	81%	73%	71%	32%

Source: Higher Education Department

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

HED reports that four year institutions do not have sufficient funding to provide adequate field experiences to students enrolled in teacher education programs primarily because there is inadequate funding to pay field supervisors. Further, the HED reports, the funding proposed will be used to improve alternative licensure programs.

The PED contributes that:

It would be very desirable for most educator preparation courses to have a field experience component. All teacher preparation programs have early field experiences but they are confined mostly to giving candidates a general taste of what is involved in working in public education. Field experiences tied to each course, module or strand of a program would significantly strengthen educator preparation programs.

This request was not included in the list of priority projects submitted to the HED and, consequently, was not included in the FY07 funding recommendations submitted to the Legislature.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

The field experiences to be proposed in the bill will not be available to prospective teachers.

LB/mt