

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 51

51st Legislature, 1st Session, 2013

Tracking Number: .191051.1

Short Title: Summer School Elective Civics Classes

Sponsor(s): Representative Sheryl Williams Stapleton

Analyst: LaNysha Adams

Date: February 14, 2013

Bill Summary:

HB 51 amends the *Public School Code* to allow approved summer civics courses or programs to be offered as an elective course to count toward credits needed to graduate and to earn a New Mexico Diploma of Excellence.

Fiscal Impact:

HB 51 does not contain an appropriation.

According to the Legislative Finance Committee's Fiscal Impact Report (FIR), there would be minimal fiscal impact to the Public Education Department (PED) if HB 51 were enacted.

Fiscal Issues:

According to PED, HB 51, if enacted, would require school districts to offer a summer civics course as an elective and funds would have to be allocated for teacher salaries and facility costs.

Substantive Issues:

According to the PED bill analysis, HB 51, if enacted, would:

- duplicate rule and content standards that already exist and are in practice at each district throughout the state (see "Background," below); and
- reiterate what is already required by law for graduation.

According to the FIR:

- PED does not have a list of approved summer civics courses or programs; and
- under current PED rule, school districts and charter schools do not need to seek PED approval to develop and offer elective courses if they are approved by the local school board;

Background:

Current Law

Secondary students are required to complete 23 units of coursework to graduate, including 3 units in social science, which must include US history and geography, world history and geography and government and economics, and 7.5 elective units that meet department content and performance standards.

Secondary students are required to complete 24 units of coursework to earn a New Mexico Diploma of Excellence, including 3.5 units in social science, which must include US history and geography, world history and geography and government and economics, and 0.5 unit in New Mexico history, and 7.5 elective units that meet department content and performance standards.

School districts and charter schools are also required to offer electives in student service learning and financial literacy.

Pre-apprenticeships programs and media literacy may be offered as electives.

PED Rule

The Standards for Excellence in Social Studies in 6.29.11 NMAC outline content standards with benchmarks and performance standards for social studies that are mandated for students in grades K-12.

The four strand content areas included in social studies are:

1. history;
2. geography;
3. civics and government; and
4. economics.

For the civics and government content standard, PED rule states that students should “understand the ideals, rights and responsibilities of citizenship and understand the content and history of the founding documents of the United States, with particular emphasis on the United States and New Mexico constitutions, and how governments function at local, state, tribal and national levels.”

Common Core Standards

In October 2010, New Mexico became the 39th state to adopt the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as a result of state-led efforts coordinated by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers to develop common standards across states K-12 in English language arts and math. The CCSS:

- “are a clear set of shared goals and expectations for the knowledge and skills students need in English language arts and mathematics at each grade level to ultimately be prepared to graduate college and career ready”;
- insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language be a shared responsibility within the school; and

- emphasize the teaching of informational texts because the reading framework of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) requires an increasing proportion of informational texts, compared to literary texts, on its assessment as students advance through the grades.
 - For example, on the fourth grade NAEP reading assessment, the distributions of informational passages compared to the literary passages are equal.
 - However, on the twelfth grade NAEP reading assessment, 30 percent of the passages are literary, and 70 percent of the passages are informational.

In addition to English language arts and math standards, there are reading and college and career readiness anchor standards for writing for history, social studies, and other technical subjects.

Committee Referrals:

HEC

Related Bills:

HB 542 *Community Schools Act* (Identical to SB 179)

SB 179 *Community Schools Act* (Identical to HB 542)

SJM 14 *Study New Approaches to Education Reform*