

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 167

51st Legislature, 1st Session, 2013

Tracking Number: .191298.2

Short Title: Teacher Licensure Content Knowledge

Sponsor(s): Representative Jimmie C. Hall and Others

Analyst: LaNysha Adams

Date: January 31, 2013

Bill Summary:

HB 167 amends the *School Personnel Act* to require, as of January 1, 2014, additional content knowledge assessments of elementary school Level 1 and alternative Level 1 teaching licensure candidates in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Fiscal Impact:

HB 167 does not contain an appropriation.

According to the Legislative Finance Committee's Fiscal Impact Report (FIR), the bill has no fiscal impact.

Fiscal Issues:

According to the University of New Mexico and New Mexico State University analyses of HB 167, each candidate for elementary licensure would be required to pay additional fees for content knowledge assessments in four subject areas. According to the "Test Fees and Payment Policies" on the New Mexico Teacher Assessment (NMTA) website, candidates pay \$114 for each content knowledge assessment (\$89 for each content knowledge assessment and \$25 for registration processing fee per test date).

The Public Education Department (PED) reports that there are no fiscal implications for the state because of the current contract with the National Evaluation Systems/Pearson (NES/Pearson).

Substantive Issues:

According to PED, if enacted, HB 167 would:

- ensure that all elementary teachers have sufficient knowledge of core content subjects to implement the Common Core State Standards (see "Background," below);
- change the current Content Knowledge Assessment in Elementary Education, which:
 - produces a composite score;
 - may include a failing score in one or more of the content areas assessed; and

- does not ensure that elementary teacher candidates are appropriately prepared for all content areas;
- require the replacement of the New Mexico Content Knowledge Assessment in Elementary Education with separate exams that test candidates' knowledge in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies;
- require PED, by January 1, 2014, to develop additional content knowledge assessments for elementary education licensure; and
- not provide enough time for PED to develop new content knowledge assessments by January 1, 2014, if new assessments are required.

According to the "Licensure Requirements" on the NMTA website:

- not including administrator and other types of licenses for school personnel, there are six kinds of teaching licenses that can be obtained in New Mexico, including:
 - Early Childhood (B-3);
 - Elementary Education (K-8);
 - Grades Pre-K to 12 Teaching;
 - Middle Level Education (5-9);
 - Secondary Education (7-12); and
 - Special Education (Pre-K to 12);
- a regular and alternative Level 1 teaching license in Elementary Education (K-8) requires successful passage of the following assessments:
 - the New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Basic Skills;
 - the New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency (Elementary);
 - the New Mexico Content Knowledge Assessment in Elementary Education; and
 - the NES/Pearson Essential Components of Elementary Reading Instruction; and
- effective July 1, 2013, all new teachers seeking a Level 1 teaching license in Elementary Education (K-8) are required to pass the NES/Pearson Essential Components of Elementary Reading Instruction Assessment.

Background:

According to PED, the department currently contracts with NES/Pearson to develop the New Mexico Teacher Assessments (NMTA). There are three major components of the NMTA:

- *Assessment of Teacher Basic Skills*, which is designed to measure fundamental communication and math skills that the state requires of classroom teachers and that are needed to complete a New Mexico educator preparation program. The basic skills test has four sub-areas in:
 - reading comprehension;
 - foundations of written communication;
 - mathematics; and
 - written communication-composition.

- *Assessment of Teacher Competency*, which is designed to measure a candidate’s professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills depending upon the kind of license sought.
- *Content Knowledge Assessments*, which is designed to measure the subject-matter knowledge and skills needed to teach effectively in New Mexico schools. The content knowledge assessments could take the form of middle or secondary level assessments in certain disciplines, foreign language assessments, or assessments in a number of other disciplines or fields.

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 mathematics. 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. The K-5 standards include expectations for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language applicable to multiple content areas; 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 2011, the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) endorsed and the Legislature passed HB 74a, *Science of Teaching Reading Requirement*, which amends the *School Personnel Act* to require, beginning January 1, 2013, a “rigorous assessment of the candidate’s knowledge of the science of teaching reading” to be included in the New Mexico teacher assessments examination for elementary Level 1 and alternative Level 1 licensure.

In November 2012, the LESL devoted an entire day to discuss reading initiatives statewide and to address what five selected states (Texas, North Carolina, Maryland, Kentucky, and Delaware) have done to increase their fourth grade reading proficiency scores on the NAEP. During this LESL interim meeting, PED staff reported that the reading assessment required by HB 74a, *Science of Teaching Reading Requirement*, was:

- under contract with NES/Pearson;
- aligned with the CCSS;
- administered to its first cohort of teacher candidates in September 2012; and
- would not be finalized until sometime in 2013.

During school year 2013-2014, according to the *New Mexico Common Core State Standards Implementation Plan*, full implementation of the New Mexico CCSS will begin:

- for mathematics and English language arts in grades 4-12; and
- for literacy in social studies/history, science, and technical subjects in grades 6-12.

Committee Referrals:

HLC/HEC

Related Bills:

HB 50 *No Funds for Certain School of Ed. Programs*

SJM 14 *Study New Approaches to Education Reform*