

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill Number:** SB 158a

**51st Legislature, 2nd Session, 2014**

**Tracking Number:** .195333.1

**Short Title:** Dual Credit Program Parity

**Sponsor(s):** Senator Daniel Ivey-Soto and Representative Dennis J. Roch and Others

**Analyst:** Travis Dulany

**Date:** February 14, 2014

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**FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**

**AS AMENDED**

**The Senate Public Affairs Committee amendment adds language to require an eligible dual credit student be a school-age person as defined in the *Public School Code*.<sup>1</sup>**

**Original Bill Summary:**

SB 158 amends the general provisions relating to state educational institutions to provide dual credit parity for all high school students; clarifies terms including “dual credit course,” “dual credit program,” and “high school”; and updates language relating to home school registration.

**Fiscal Impact:**

SB 158 does not contain an appropriation.

**Background:**

Dual credit programs allow high school students to take courses offered through a postsecondary educational institution and earn credit at the high school level and the college level simultaneously. Dual credit is frequently said to fulfill a number of purposes and produce a number of benefits, among them:

- providing high school students an introduction to college life;
- affording high school students access to college-level material;
- shortening the time – and thereby the expense – required to complete a postsecondary degree;
- suggesting college as a possibility for students who had not previously considered it;
- enhancing the academic and vocational offerings of the school district; and
- leading to better completion rates for students in both high school and college.

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<sup>1</sup> As defined in Section 22-1-2(O) NMSA 1978, "school-age person" means a person who is at least five years of age prior to 12:01 a.m. on September 1 of the school year and who has not received a high school diploma or its equivalent. A maximum age of 21 shall be used for a person who is classified as special education membership as defined in Section 22-8-21 NMSA 1978 or as a resident of a state institution.

Among other provisions, the state law governing the dual credit program in New Mexico requires the Public Education Department and the Higher Education Department (HED) to evaluate the program and to make annual reports to the Governor and the Legislature. During a Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) meeting during the 2013 interim, LESL staff provided some background to the dual credit program, and HED presented information from the annual report.

The testimony by HED included selected statistics from the report, among them:

- dual credit enrollment for school year 2011-2012 was 11,666 unique students;
- a majority of dual credit students, approximately 55 percent, were female;
- the subject areas that experienced the highest enrollment of dual credit students were:
  - English language and literature/letters;
  - health profession and related clinical services; and
  - mathematics and statistics;
- the majority of dual credit students (59 percent) limit themselves to a single course during the school year, while 26 percent of students enroll in two dual credit courses;
- almost 78 percent of the enrollees in school year 2011-2012 met the success criterion mandated in the *A-B-C-D-F Schools Rating Act*: that students in dual credit courses must achieve a grade of C or better in order to be considered successful;
- the most popular dual credit programs at postsecondary institutions were at Central New Mexico Community College, Doña Ana Community College, and New Mexico Junior College;
- online delivery of dual credit courses has grown in popularity, with the spring semester of 2012 experiencing the highest percentage of online course delivery (19 percent) in recent years; and
- the percentage of dual credit courses being taught on college campuses, rather than on high school campuses, is increasing.

**Committee Referrals:**

SCC/SPAC/SE/HEC

**Related Bills:**

SB 3 *Tribal College Dual Credit Program Fund*

SB 139 *Tribal College Dual Credit Program*

SB 153 *Home School Program Unit Calculations*

SM 23 *Tribal College Lottery Scholarship Exclusion* (Identical to HM 37)

HM 37 *Tribal College Lottery Scholarship Exclusion* (Identical to SM 23)