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**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**  
**BILL ANALYSIS**  
**54th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2020**

<b>Bill Number</b>	<u>HB51</u>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<u>Roybal Caballero</u>
<b>Tracking Number</b>	<u>.215741.1</u>	<b>Committee Referrals</b>	<u>HRC</u>
<b>Short Title</b>	<u>Ethnic Studies to Meet PED Contents</u>		
<b>Analyst</b>	<u>Alexander</u>	<b>Original Date</b>	<u>1/8/2020</u>
		<b>Last Updated</b>	<u>2/7/2020</u>

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## BILL SUMMARY

### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 51 (HB51) would amend Public School Code to include “ethnic studies,” an interdisciplinary study of social, ethnic, cultural, gender, and historical experiences, as a minimal instructional area provided in fourth through eighth grade. The bill would also update graduation requirements, shifting one half-unit from electives to ethnic studies for ninth graders starting in the 2021-2022 school year. HB51 would create the ethnic studies council, with members appointed by the secretary of the Public Education Department (PED), to assist with curriculum development and advise on the benefits and costs of ethnic studies.

## FISCAL IMPACT

HB51 does not contain an appropriation.

Public members of the ethnic studies council would need to be reimbursed for per diem and mileage as provided in the Per Diem and Mileage Act, and would be prohibited from receiving any other compensation.

Research on ethnic studies education cites access to adequate resources and instructional materials as a barrier to successful implementation. School districts and charter schools will need to consider the cost of ethnic studies instructional materials. Notably, the House Appropriations and Finance Committee Substitute for House Bills 2 and 3 proposes to increase funding for culturally and linguistically appropriate instructional materials and curricula by \$9 million.

## SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

**Impact of Ethnic Studies on Student Outcomes.** Research shows ethnic studies courses can improve student interest and outcomes. A study by Stanford Graduate School of Education found that a high school ethnic studies course improved the attendance and academic performance of students who were at risk of dropping out. Attendance jumped by 21 percentage points and grade-point average by 1.4 points. Additionally, students in ethnic studies courses covering

discrimination, stereotypes, and social-justice movements earned 23 more credits toward graduation. The four-year pilot ethnics studies program showed the effects were positive across male, female, Asian, and Hispanic groups of students, with the largest gains found among boys and Hispanic students and in the subjects of math and science. A similar study on Tucson Unified School District's Mexican American Studies (MAS) program, before it was eliminated in 2012, showed MAS participation had a significant and positive correlation to passing Arizona state standardized tests and high school graduation.

The National Education Association (NEA) agrees ethnic studies are valuable to boosting student performance, with the caveat that significant results can only be achieved when ethnic studies curricula are well-designed and well-taught. The NEA states that to see significant improvements, ethnic studies teachers must be able to relate well with their students, believe in students' academic abilities, and know ethnic studies content and perspectives well. Results are more significant if teachers are members of the same ethnic background of most of their students. NEA also adds both students of color and white students have benefited academically and socially from ethnic studies.

**Recent History of Ethnic Studies in New Mexico.** Many New Mexico state departments, universities, and school districts have taken recent strides to further incorporate ethnic studies into policy, trainings, and curriculum. The Indian Affairs Department (IAD) indicates the bill aligns with the department's mission to support tribal communities' efforts to expand opportunities, leverage state resources to tribal benefit, and work to create relationships across state, tribal, philanthropic, educational, and private sectors for the New Mexico Indian nations, tribes, and pueblos. The Office of African American Affairs indicates it has been working with community and state organizations in the creation of ethnic studies in the state's public school system, and has stated the agency would be available to assist in training teachers by providing technical assistance in African American history for fourth through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Albuquerque public schools (APS) has offered ethnic studies in all thirteen of its high schools, and the University of New Mexico (UNM) Ethnic Studies Department is currently implementing a dual credit ethnic studies college preparation program in seven APS schools. At the November 2019 LESC committee meeting, Dr. Irene Vasquez of the UNM Chicano/Chicana Studies Department provided an overview of the program's impact on high school students. Data from the first cohort enrolled in the UNM ethnic studies dual credit program in 2016 reflects improved academic outcomes including higher grade point averages (GPAs), increased college enrollment and retention, and a strengthened sense of community connection.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

HB51 would require the secretary of PED to appoint the members of the ethnic studies council, and to provide staff support for the ethnic studies council in the performance of its duties.

The ethnic studies council may include representatives from university and public school ethnic studies programs; professional or community organizations that promote Native American, African American, Chicano/Chicana and Latino education and the education of distinct underrepresented cultural and ethnic groups; colleges of education and institutions of teacher preparation; the Office of African American Affairs; the IAD; the All Pueblo Council of Governors; public schools; PED's Hispanic Education liaison; the director or the director's designee of the PED Indian Education Division; the director or the director's designee of the PED Language and Culture Bureau; teachers' unions; and other organizations or persons whose work or interests can provide valuable insights into the benefits and costs of ethnic studies.

## **OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

HB51 is aligned with current teacher preparation and licensure standards. New Mexico school personnel licensure requirements reflect the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (inTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards, which address teachers' understanding of cultural, ethnic, gender, and learning differences that promote equity.

In a similar bill introduced during the 2017 legislative session, PED indicated the definition of ethnic studies is “duplicative” to the New Mexico Social Studies Standards.

## **RELATED BILLS**

Relates to HB52, Multicultural Programming at UNM, which makes an appropriation to ethnic studies departments within UNM, which are currently implementing ethnic studies dual credit programs in seven Albuquerque public schools.

Relates to HB134, Funding to Improve Educational Outcomes, which appropriates \$800 thousand to support culturally and linguistically relevant education and extended learning programs at Diné College.

Relates to HB221, Cultural and Linguistic Education Support, which appropriates \$2.6 for regional education cooperatives to provide or contract for culturally and linguistically responsive professional development and technical assistance.

Relates to HB314, Rio Arriba and Santa Fe School Districts, which appropriates \$400 thousand to Northern New Mexico College for community initiatives.

Relates to SB90, Policies to Decrease Institutional Racism, which advances intersectional ethnic studies education for teachers, staff, students, and families.

Nearly duplicates SB93, Ethnic Studies Curricula, which includes ethnic studies as a minimal instructional area and convene an ethnic studies council one year later than HB51.

## **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- LESC Files
- University of New Mexico Ethnic Studies Department Research
- Indian Affairs Department (IAD)

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