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**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**  
**BILL ANALYSIS**  
**56th Legislature, 1st Session, 2023**

<b>Bill Number</b>	<u>SB490</u>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<u>Maestas</u>
<b>Tracking Number</b>	<u>.225228.1</u>	<b>Committee Referrals</b>	<u>SEC/SJC</u>
<b>Short Title</b>	<u>Head Varsity Coach Bonuses</u>		
<b>Analyst</b>	<u>Bedeaux</u>	<b>Original Date</b>	<u>2/23/23</u>
		<b>Last Updated</b>	<u></u>

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**BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 490 (SB490) appropriates \$3.3 million to the Public Education Department (PED) for expenditure in FY24 to provide a \$5,000 stipend to each varsity athletics head coach serving in a school district.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

SB490 appropriates \$3.3 million from the general fund to PED for expenditure in FY24. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY24 shall revert to the general fund.

The \$3.3 million appropriation equates to 668 stipends of \$5,000, which may not be sufficient to fund bonuses for “each” varsity athletic coach in New Mexico as the bill would require. Data from PED’s Student and Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS) lists a total of 792 “athletic coaches” in high schools statewide, but these data do not differentiate between head varsity, varsity, and junior varsity coaches. Analysis from PED indicates the number of coaches could be as high as 900, requiring an appropriation of \$4.5 million.

**SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

Little is known about high school athletic coach salaries and bonuses in New Mexico. Coaches do not have a minimum salary in state statute, but often serve schools in other salaried roles, including as teachers or athletic directors. Coaches may currently receive stipends from local fundraising efforts, like those sponsored by parent-teacher associations. The New Mexico Athletics Association (NMAA) reports that it is not involved in salary decisions for school coaches, and that these decisions often occur at the school- or school-district-level.

The Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) fiscal impact report for SB490 points out that school districts make local decisions about stipends to athletic coaches depending on the sport they coach, and the amount of time spent coaching. For instance, coaches at Albuquerque Public Schools

receive a stipend between \$2,300 and \$7,100 annually depending on the sport they coach, with additional adjustments for years of experience. It is possible SB490 could offset the cost of providing current stipends, but language in the bill would require the stipends to be at least \$5,000.

SB490 provides little room for flexibility in stipends; a varsity football coach responsible for coaching more than 50 students would be eligible for the same stipend as a varsity basketball coach responsible for 10 to 15 students. School districts could make local decisions to exceed the \$5,000 allocated per coach through SB490, introducing potential concerns that some regions may be able to afford much higher stipends than others.

SB490 applies to head varsity sports coaches, raising additional concerns for assistant varsity coaches or junior varsity coaches who work overtime hours and serve numbers of students comparable to their varsity head coach counterparts.

As a final consideration, the language in SB490 applies only to school districts, excluding varsity coaches at 32 state-chartered high schools serving approximately 6,200 students. As defined in the Public School Code, [Section 22-1-2 NMSA 1978](#), the term school district does not include charter schools.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

PED would be required to establish a methodology to distribute funding to school districts based on the number of varsity coaches at each district. This would likely require school districts to submit, and PED to verify, applications for varsity head coach stipends.

## **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- LESC Files
- Legislative Finance Committee (LFC)
- Public Education Department (PED)
- New Mexico Athletics Association (NMAA)

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