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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Pope LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_  
ORIGINAL DATE 2/10/23  
SHORT TITLE NMSU STEM Plus Center BILL NUMBER Senate Bill 347  
ANALYST Jorgensen

### APPROPRIATION\* (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY23	FY24		
	\$5,000.0	Recurring	General Fund

Parentheses ( ) indicate expenditure decreases.

\*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

### Sources of Information

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)  
New Mexico State University (NMSU)

## SUMMARY

### Synopsis of Senate Bill 347

Senate Bill 347 establishes the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) plus center of excellence for teaching and learning at New Mexico State University (NMSU). Among other functions, the center will research and promote best practices for teaching STEM and will assist in aligning STEM curriculum with workforce needs. SB347 establishes a long-term program goal of increasing the number of STEM plus graduates and creating short- and long-term goals for job creation, business creation, and private equity investment outcomes of the center's work.

SB347 allows the center to collaborate with and provide funding to partners throughout the state to implement programs on a regional basis. The bill does not define which partners would be eligible to receive funding.

SB347 appropriates \$5 million from the general fund to NMSU to support the creation of the STEM plus center of excellence.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect June 16, 2023, (90 days after the Legislature adjourns) if signed into law.

## FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$5 million contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY26 shall revert to the general fund.

## SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

SB347 states that the STEM plus center of excellence “shall collaborate, and may provide funding when relevant, with partners throughout the state...” However, the bill does not define a partner and it is unclear if the intent is for the center to provide funds to private businesses, school districts, or other entities.

NMSU reports:

SB347 builds on a successful partnership model between NMSU and the Gadsden Independent School District (GISD) to identify evidence-based practices that can be scaled and replicated to enhance teaching and learning and serve as a resource for school districts across the state. Local engagement, tailored to the needs of school districts and the broader community, has been key to the success of a 17-plus year partnership between NMSU and GISD. The proposed STEM+ Center borrows from models in other US states. Iowa, for example, has successfully raised test scores and improved outcomes using a similar regional model with a centralized hub for gathering and disseminating data on STEM programs, evaluating programs for efficacy, and allowing communities to deploy programs that work best for their demographics and employment needs.

The funding will be used to hire full-time dedicated staff who will be tasked with establishing a networked ecosystem among higher education, PED and K-12, NM Workforce Solutions, and employers (industry, NGOs, Tribal, and government). The Center will operate under a framework that includes (1) STEM+ Advisory Council (representative from higher education, K-12, employers, and STEM-focused partners), (2) development of an annual implementation plan that includes integration of evidence-based teaching and learning practices with a focus on scale, integration of culturally-relevant curriculum, (3) collaborative development and delivery of quality teacher training (in-person and online), and (4) broadening STEM-based educational learning experiences for students from rural and Tribal communities. Programmatic priority and associated funding will be guided by feedback from the proposed STEM+ Advisory Council, statewide needs, and opportunities to directly scale or replicate programs for direct impact in the classroom and in teacher preparation and training

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