



LFC Requester: Liu

**PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
BILL ANALYSIS  
2025 REGULAR SESSION**

**SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

Check all that apply:

Original  Amendment   
Correction  Substitute

Date Prepared: 01/30 /25

Bill No: HB195

**Agency Name and Code:** PED - 924

Sponsor: Garratt

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**Short Title:** SCHOOL NURSE SALARY  
TIERS & MINIMUMS

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**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT**

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

**APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
N/A	N/A	N/A	NFA

**REVENUE (dollars in thousands)**

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27	FY28		
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NFA

**ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)**

	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
<b>Total</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NFA

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act:

## **SECTION III: NARRATIVE**

### **BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis: House Bill 195 (HB195) would create new sections of the Public School Finance Act and amend [Section 22-8-18 NMSA 1978](#) of that act to generate 1.5 program units for school nurses who obtain national board certification. SB195 would also require that schools provide the board-certified nurses salary differentials equal to the funding generated by the program units.

The bill also proposes new sections of the School Personnel Act to create a tiered licensure system for school nurses, and tie minimum salaries for school nurses to the minimum salaries for teachers of the same licensure level.

The bill does not provide an effective date. Laws go into effect 90 days after the adjournment of the Legislature enacting them, unless a later date is specified. If enacted, this bill would become effective June 20, 2025.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

The projected total cost of aligning nurse salary minimum levels to that of teachers would require an additional sum of approximately \$576,014. However, if the three salary level minimums were each increased by \$5,000, as is proposed by House Bill 156, the total cost of aligning nurse salary minimum levels to that of teachers would require approximately \$980,487.42.

The projected cost for maintaining the unit value while adding a program unit for school nurses who have obtained the required national board certification is \$550,515.

Unlike salaries for teachers and school principals, school nursing salary minimums are not currently statutorily defined, nor is there defined funding for school nurses. School districts use a variety of funding sources, including operational funds from the state equalization guarantee (SEG), to cover the cost of school nurse salaries. Because of this, school nurse salaries vary among school districts and charter schools. In New Mexico, full-time nurses earn an average annual salary of \$47,213, excluding benefits.

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

HB195 would align school nurses' salaries with those of teachers, which would enhance the recruitment and retention of qualified nursing professionals in educational settings. The inclusion of a program unit for national board-certified nurses underscores the importance of advanced certification and may incentivize professional development among school nurses.

The [American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses](#) both recommend having at least one registered nurse (RN) in every school. Due to a lack of registered nurses, particularly in rural areas, it is common for school districts to contract nursing services through Regional Education Cooperatives (RECs), sharing full-time school nurse positions with other small school districts. School districts employ supervised licensed practical nurses, health assistants, and contracted nurses in addition to – or in lieu of – registered nurses. According to

the [FY24 Annual School Health Services Report](#), a report developed by PED in collaboration with the Department of Health, at least 27 percent of school districts in NM do not have a school nurse.

## **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

[The American Federation of Teachers](#) report that with the help of a school nurse, children can control symptoms, manage diseases, and avoid trips to the hospital. The study also shows that students in schools with a school nurse perform better academically. When a registered school nurse is present, 6.2 percent of students are sent home from school due to illness or injury. In the absence of a registered school nurse, that proportion more than doubles. When a registered school nurse is present, teachers spend an average of 6.2 minutes per day dealing with injured or ill students. Without a school nurse, that rises to 26.2 minutes per day. Further, without a nurse on campus, administering medications often falls to untrained school personnel. New data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [National Association of School Nurses](#) found that in 39 percent of schools nationwide, someone other than a registered school nurse administered students' medications.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

HB195 would require school districts and charter schools to implement a structured salary framework for school nurses, aligning their pay with that of teachers. This adjustment could necessitate modifications to payroll systems, ensuring that salary schedules accurately reflect the new minimum pay scales. Districts and charter schools would need to establish a process for verifying national board certification credentials, as certified nurses would be eligible for additional compensation.

The department would need to amend Rule 6.63.2, Licensure for School Nurses, Grades K-12, to ensure conformity with the provisions of the bill.

## **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

Relates to:

- House Bill 156, Increase Educational Salaries, which proposes an increase of \$5,000 to the minimum salary of each level of teacher licensure.
- House Bill 157, New School Licenses, which proposes several new classes of licenses for school administrators.
- House Bill 201, Raise School Employee Minimum Wage, which proposes to increase the minimum hourly wage to \$15 per hour, and the minimum annual salary to \$30 thousand per year.

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

The bill as currently drafted creates internal conflict with other sections of the School Personnel

Act. HB195 proposes a new, tiered licensure structure for school nurses similar to that of teachers. Current law, at Section 22-10A-17 NMSA 1978 of the act, provides for licensure of school nurses as “instructional support providers” and directs the department to provide for their licensure requirements by rule, which PED did with the promulgation of 6.63.2 NMAC, Licensure for School Nurses. Further, Section 22-10A-17.2 NMSA 1978 provides for an alternative Level Three-B license for school nurses that should be addressed in consideration of the bill’s proposed licensure structure for school nurses.

#### **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

None.

#### **ALTERNATIVES**

None.

#### **WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

None.

#### **AMENDMENTS**

The sponsor may wish to consider also amending:

- Section 22-10A-2 NMSA 1978, which includes at Subsection H a definition of “instructional support provider” that includes school nurses.
- Section 22-10A-17 NMSA 1978, which directs the PED to provide for licensure of school nurses as “instructional support providers” and requires school nurses to obtain such licensure.
- Section 22-10A-17.2 NMSA 1978, which provides for an alternative Level Three-B license for school nurses, and includes requirements.