

LFC Requester:

Sunny Liu

**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2025 REGULAR SESSION**

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO  
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*(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)*

**SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

*{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}*

**Date Prepared:** 2/14/25 *Check all that apply:*  
**Bill Number:** SB344 Original  Correction   
 Amendment  Substitute

**Sponsor:** Sen Soules **Agency Name and Code** HCA-630  
**Short Title:** K-4 Vision Hearing Screening **Number:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT****APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY25	FY26		
\$0.0	\$0.0	NA	NA

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate expenditure decreases)

**REVENUE (dollars in thousands)**

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY25	FY26	FY27		
\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	NA	NA

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate revenue decreases)

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

	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
<b>Total</b>	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	NA	NA

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

### **SECTION III: NARRATIVE**

#### **BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis: Synopsis: Making an appropriation in the amount of \$2 million dollars for fiscal year 2026 to the Public Education Department to provide vision and hearing screening for kindergarten through fourth grade students.

#### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

SB344 does not make any appropriations to HCA. This bill does not add any new services or administrative requirements for HCA therefore there is no fiscal impact for HCA

#### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

None for HCA

#### **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

None for HCA

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

Per the Department of Health, School Health Manual, in 2007, legislation was passed in New Mexico requiring all public schools to have a vision screening program. School vision screenings for the target population are required and defined under statute [NMSA § 22.13.30](#) and NM Administrative Code [NMAC 7-30-11-8](#). This outlines that a school nurse or the nurse's designee, a primary care health provider, or a lay eye screener may administer a vision screening for students enrolled in the school. The target grades are pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, and third grade (also any new student or transfer student, unless a parent prohibits the visual screening). This bill would effectively expand that target group to include second grade and fourth grade.

There are no mandatory hearing screening requirements. It is recommended that schools provide general and individual hearing screenings based upon the following:

- The school is to define a hearing screening program in policy and procedure defining the hearing program manager or coordinator, hearing screeners, and hearing screeners' training.
- Utilize the American Speech, Language, and Hearing Association's Guidelines for Manual Pure-Tone Threshold Audiometry: ASHA. (2005). [Guidelines for manual pure-tone threshold audiometry. https://www.asha.org/policy/GL2005-00014/](#)) and the National Association's recommendations and hearing screening standards.
- The School Nurse is to provide oversight of hearing screening and follow-up in the schools.
- The identification of hearing problems is accomplished by using individual pure-tone air conduction testing. For more information, see: ASHA. [Pure tone testing. https://www.asha.org/policy/GL2005-00014/https://www.asha.org/public/hearing/Pure-Tone-Testing/](#).
- Acoustic immittance screening might also be considered if trained staff are available.

Funding for School Nurses is not provided by the State Equalization Guarantee (SEG) formula which provides general funding for school budgets. Many districts in the state do not employ full-time nurses and may have difficulty in fully implementing hearing and vision screening programs per the recommendations above.

Hearing and vision screenings are considered covered services under the Medicaid School-Based Services (MSBS) program and may be eligible for interim reimbursement when provided by qualified Medicaid-enrolled School Nurses or approved delegated lay people to Medicaid enrolled students. Final reimbursement for MSBS services is determined through an annual cost settlement methodology; submitting claims for interim services is not a requirement for reimbursement and presents additional administrative burden for School Nurses. It is unknown what percentage of the target populations would be Medicaid-enrolled and potentially qualify for MSBS reimbursement for hearing and vision screenings provided under this bill.

No IT impact.

**CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

No known

**TECHNICAL ISSUES**

None for HCA

**OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

None for HCA

**ALTERNATIVES**

None

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

Status quo. Medicaid eligible New Mexicans under age 21 will continue to have access to hearing and vision screenings.

**AMENDMENTS**

No known amendments at this time.