



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: 02/19 /25

Bill No: SM9

Agency Name and Code: PED - 924

Sponsor: Pinto

**PED Lead Analyst:** Evan Chavez

**Phone:** (505) 538-0536 **Email:** [evan.chavez@ped.nm.gov](mailto:evan.chavez@ped.nm.gov)

**Short Title:** CONTINUE & IMPROVE 520  
LANGUAGE

**PED Policy Director:** Denise Terrazas

**Phone:** (505) 470-5303 **Email:** [denise.terrazas@ped.nm.gov](mailto:denise.terrazas@ped.nm.gov)

**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT**

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

**APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
None	None	N/A	NFA

**REVENUE (dollars in thousands)**

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27	FY28		
None	None	None	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>	None	None	None	None	N/A	NFA

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act: House Bill 2 includes proposed appropriations of, \$30 million to the Public Education Department for New Mexico Nations, Tribes, and Pueblos for expenditure in FY26-FY28 to support activities pursuant to the Indian Education Act and \$20 million to the Indian education fund that includes \$4.6 million to support Tribal education departments.

## **SECTION III: NARRATIVE**

### **BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis: Senate Memorial 9 (SM9) would request the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) to study and make recommendations for continuing and improving the 520 Native American Language and Cultural Certificate (520 NALC) program. SM9 requires the working group to include representatives from the Indian Education Division (IED) and Licensure Bureau within the Public Education Department (PED), school districts and charter schools specializing in Native American language and culture education, and organizations focused on 520 certification or bilingual teacher certification. SM9 requests the working group to present their findings to the legislature and the IED no later than December 31, 2025.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

This memorial does not contain an appropriation.

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

In FY25, PED awarded \$1.325 million from the Indian Education fund to school districts and charter schools to support 520 Native American Language and Culture Certificates. As of FY24, there were 133 certified and active 520 NALC instructors teaching in New Mexico.

The 520 NALC program is enabled in statute through the [Section 22-10A-13 NMSA of the School Personnel Act](#). The purpose of the certification is for any public school to employ non-degreeed individuals to teach in the native language and culture of specific tribes and pueblos in any grade K-12. Statute requires that 520 NALC certificate holders receive the same minimum salary as a licensed level one teacher. Each New Mexico tribe and pueblo, in collaboration with the PED under a memorandum of agreement (MOA), develops standards and criteria for determining eligibility and renewal of certification.

Certification in Native American language and culture does not require a degree, nor the passing of a general education exam or portfolio process that other K-12 licenses require, as stated in [6.63.14 NMAC, Certification in Native American Language and Culture](#). PED is not responsible for reviewing or approving the standards and criteria developed by each tribe or pueblo to teach native language and culture.

### **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

SM9 states that learning one's ancestral language fosters cognitive development, strengthens academic performance and enhances overall well-being by reinforcing cultural identity and community connections. The results from the study may lead to innovations or initiatives that increase the number of 520 NALC teachers and the quality of instruction thereby fostering a sense of belonging and pride among Native American students in district and charter schools.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

The PED is one of the entities named as a member of the working group requested by HM9. Group participation by PED would be significant and require department staff and resources.

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

Relates to:

- House Bill 194, Cultural Expressions at Graduation Ceremonies;
- House Bill 223, Bilingual Education Cost Differential;
- House Bill 467, Multicultural Student Safety and Support;
- House Bill 488, Use of Language for Bilingual Education;
- Senate Bill 13, State-Tribal Education Compact Schools Act;
- Senate Bill 163, Tribal Regalia at School Events;
- Senate Bill 234, Tribal Education Trust Fund;
- Senate Bill 345, Teacher and Instructional Support Licensure; and
- Senate Joint Memorial 3, Higher Ed Bilingual Faculties & Degree.

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

None.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

None.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

None.

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

None.

## **AMENDMENTS**

None.