

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current FIRs (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) are available on the NM Legislative Website (legis.state.nm.us). Adobe PDF versions include all attachments, whereas HTML versions may not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may also be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Lopez DATE TYPED 2-17-04 HB _____

SHORT TITLE NM Virtual School Expansion SB 126

ANALYST Segura

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY04	FY05	FY04	FY05		
	\$400.0			Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Response Received From

New Mexico Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 126 appropriates \$400.0 to PED to expand the New Mexico Virtual School (NMVS) to provide distance-learning opportunities for New Mexico middle grade students.

Significant Issues

According to PED, the NMVS is designed to assist districts in meeting the growing and changing needs of students in the 21st Century and to assist students by providing courses that might not be available in their local schools.

In FY00 the department was appropriated \$500.0 and in FY01 an appropriation of \$800.0 was used for the development and implementation of the NMVS. A statewide taskforce recommended a framework that allowed the PED to begin offering on-line learning opportunities beginning in the 2001-02 school year.

Enrolled students represented the diversity of the New Mexico student population and were distributed across grades 9-12. Twenty-one percent of the students were in 12th grade, 28 percent in 11th grade, 25 percent in 10th grade, and 25 percent in 9th grade.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Senate Bill 126 appropriates \$400.0 from the general fund and is recurring.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The PED can administer the expansion of the NMVS and provide technical assistance to districts implementing virtual courses.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

According to PED, the availability of certified instructors, the development of alternative learning programs, the number of students in a class, schedules, geographic location, budget and resources limit educational choices. These factors are currently driving a need to continually create innovative, challenging and sound learning experiences available throughout the middle grades in New Mexico.

RS/dm:lg