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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2-3-06

SPONSOR Swisstack LAST UPDATED _____ HB 744

SHORT TITLE Central NM Youth Mentoring Programs SB _____

ANALYST Hadwiger

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	\$300.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to SB368, HB679, and SB175.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)
 Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)
 Department of Health (DOH)
 Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 744 appropriates \$300 thousand from the general fund to the Local Government Division (LGD) of the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) in FY07 for youth mentoring programs in central New Mexico through a program that matches at-risk children with carefully screened mentors.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$300 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY07 would revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Department of Health indicated that a connection to a caring adult other than a parent has been shown to be a strong protective factor for alcohol and drug use, violence, sexual behaviors, unhealthy dietary patterns and inadequate physical activity. Mentoring programs are proven effective ways to create and maintain these connections to promote positive youth development.

According to the Department of Finance and Administration, approximately 95 percent of the children served in mentoring programs come from single-parent families and over 90 percent are from low-income families. During the last three years, the number of children matched increased over 55 percent from 1,997 to 3,100.

DFA noted that, as reported on the BBBS website a recent study conducted by a national research firm (Public/Private Ventures) examined the impact of youth mentoring programs and found that when compared to their peers, children who met with their mentors for at least one year were:

- 46% less likely to start using drugs;
- 27% less likely to start drinking;
- 33% less likely to act violently;
- 52% less likely to skip a day of school, and earned higher grades.

DFA added the outcome, almost across the board, was significantly higher for minority youth. The study reported that minority boys are 67% less likely to start using drugs, and minority girls are 72% less likely to start using drugs as a result of the youth mentoring programs. The goal for the program is to increase the number of matches by 260 in fiscal year 2007.

The Public Education Department offered the following benefits from mentoring programs:

- Research shows that “adult role models,” “supportive relationship with three or more other adults” and “adults in community valuing youth” as essential to youths’ health and well-being.
- Researchers working from within a risk and resilience framework have repeatedly called attention to the protective influence of supportive relationships with adults, highlighted the importance of “one good relationship,” and discussed the critical importance of significant adults in promoting the healthy development of highly stressed youths.
- Mentoring relationships can positively influence a range of outcomes, including improvements in peer and parental relationships, academic achievement and self-concept, as well as lower recidivism rates among juvenile delinquents and reduced substance abuse.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

PED noted this bill may positively impact the academic achievement of youths participating in the program by improving attendance, resulting in improved reading and math scores and increasing the graduation rate of students in New Mexico.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The grant will be administered through DFA which already has the staff and the knowledge to easily fund and monitor this project. DFA indicated that agency will conduct a good faith review of mentoring programs, and will most likely provide a sole source contract to Big Brothers Big

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Sisters (BBBS) in Central New Mexico. The average annual cost per adult/child match is \$1,000. Half of that \$1,000 is used by BBBS for recruitment, screening, training, and matching of adults to at-risk children. The other half is used for professional support and monthly monitoring of the adult/child relationship.

DH/yr