

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill No: HB 187

48th Legislature, 1st Session, 2007

Short Title: Middle School International Film Education

Sponsor(s): Representative Mimi Stewart and Others

Analyst: Peter van Moorsel

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FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

Bill Summary:

HB 187 appropriates funds to the Public Education Department (PED) to contract for a program to develop and implement an interdisciplinary international education curriculum using international films for middle school students statewide. The curriculum shall meet state content standards and benchmarks, and shall be evaluated to show evidence of academic achievement and global understanding.

Fiscal Impact:

\$400,000 is appropriated from the General Fund for FY 08. HB 187 contains a reversion clause.

Issues:

During the 2005 interim, the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) viewed a presentation on the use of selected foreign films in middle school classrooms to address national curriculum standards in social studies, language arts, math, science, the arts, and media literacy. The curriculum presented to the committee, *Journeys in Film*, includes interdisciplinary integrated lesson plans, guides for facilitated classroom discussion, and a professional development program for teachers who use the material. Testimony from representatives of the *Journeys in Film* curriculum reports that preliminary evaluation research conducted by an independent research firm in six national cities including Albuquerque indicates that the curriculum is effective in increasing the awareness of other countries: changing their opinions of the countries depicted; increasing willingness to meet people from other countries; broadening understanding of the quality of children's lives in other countries; and shifting perceptions about the superiority of one set of customs over another.

In New Mexico, for example, PED data shows that student achievement on standards-based assessments in all subjects is lower in middle school grades than in elementary grades. The Center for Education Policy observes that middle schools are disproportionately represented among Title I schools identified for improvement under the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. The Education Commission of the States (ECS) summarizes recommendations from national organizations and state reform efforts that the identified weaknesses in middle grades education should be addressed with challenging, interdisciplinary, engaging, and relevant curricula for this age group.

In the 2004 and 2005 interims, the LESC heard testimony from PED and from the Asia Society, an international organization dedicated to strengthening relationships and deepening understanding among the peoples of Asia and the United States. Presenters testified regarding the need to include international education as a component of a rigorous and innovative secondary school curriculum. Witnesses addressed the growing importance of international knowledge and skills for future careers in business, government, health care, law enforcement, education and research; and cited evidence that students in the United States often lack even rudimentary global awareness. ECS cites a need for curricula, standards, and other policies that provide K-12 students with instruction on the history, geography, cultures and languages of foreign nations, as well as with skills needed to analyze and evaluate the United States' interaction with foreign peoples and nations.

Related Bill:

SB 79 *Middle School International Film Education* (identical)