

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill No: HB 335

48th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2008

Short Title: Allow Student Appointments to Precinct Boards

Sponsor(s): Representative Jeff Steinborn and Others

Analyst: James Ball

Date: January 27, 2008

Bill Summary:

HB 335 authorizes county clerks to appoint not more than two students to serve on a precinct board under the direct supervision of a presiding judge of the precinct. A student must meet the same requirements of all precinct board members except that a student:

- need not be eligible to vote;
- have the approval of the educational institution in which the student is enrolled and the approval of the student's parent or guardian;
- be at least 16 years of age at the time of the election in which the student serves;
- be a citizen at the time of the election in which the student serves;
- be a student attending a public or private secondary educational institution or home school;
- attend at least one required school of instruction related to the duties of a precinct board member;
- may not serve as a presiding judge of a precinct board; and
- may be appointed by the county clerk only from the standby or other list of voters unless requested by the county chair of a major political party.

Fiscal Impact:

HB 335 does not carry an appropriation.

Issues:

The Secretary of State's analysis of HB 335 does not raise any significant issues associated with HB 335.

The Public Education Department's (PED) analysis of HB 335 indicates that not only would the use of students as precinct board members assist counties and town governments to address shortages of election workers, but would also connect students to the New Mexico Social Studies Standards, impacting their understanding of civics. PED also states that HB 335 relates to service learning projects, which teaches the skills of civil participation and develops an ethic of service and civic responsibility. In addition, education research consistently shows that students learn most effectively in an interactive, hands-on context.

Technical Issues:

The term “educational institution” which appears on lines 1-2 and 11 on page 3 of HB 335 could be problematic since that term is used in state statute to identify institutions of higher education only. For clarification, the sponsor might wish to consider the following language:

- Lines 1-2, p 3: “have the approval of the ~~educational institution~~ public, private or home school in which the student is enrolled . . .”
- Line 11, p 3: “be a student attending a public or private secondary ~~educational institution~~ school or home school;”

Related Bills:

None to date.