

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill No: HB 70

48th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2008

Short Title: Student Progress Tracking System

Sponsor(s): Representatives Debbie A. Rodella and Nick L. Salazar

Analyst: Pamela Herman

Date: January 18, 2008

Bill Summary:

HB 70 appropriates funds to the Public Education Department (PED) to develop model programs at four schools in Rio Arriba County for a New Mexico standards-based student progress tracking system to raise student achievement.

Fiscal Impact:

HB 70 appropriates \$58,000 from the General Fund to PED for expenditure in FY 09. The bill contains a reversion clause.

Issues:

Student progress tracking systems are tools that school districts can use to assess students' skills and knowledge against state or national standards. The systems allow teachers to administer standards-based assessments tied to the curriculum at regular intervals to get immediate feedback whose results they can use to individualize instruction and help improve student achievement. Some systems actually use software applications to deliver self-paced coursework, with live teacher support, as well as to administer assessments and diagnose individual student needs.

The Legislature has appropriated funds in past sessions to support acquisition of student tracking systems in New Mexico, as follows:

- In 2003, \$2.0 million to PED for expenditure in FY 03 and FY 04 for a computerized learning system that aligns public school curricula to New Mexico academic content standards and the statewide assessment program;
- In 2005, \$1.0 million to PED for expenditure in FY 05 and FY 06 for a computerized learning system that aligns public school curricula to the criterion-referenced tests, New Mexico academic content and performance standards, current textbooks, and the department voluntary curriculum; and
- In 2006, \$2.0 million to PED for continued implementation of a computerized learning system that aligns public school curricula to state academic standards and the statewide assessment program through local and wide-area networks; diagnoses student skill deficiencies; prepares lesson plans; measures objectives by grade level; and provides reading, language arts and mathematics programs in English and Spanish and includes the capability to translate educational programs to other languages. However, the 2006 appropriation was vetoed by the Governor.

A number of vendors produce student tracking systems that are generally computer-based and sometimes web-based. PED documents indicate that, in the past, the department has allowed schools to use the funds awarded to purchase systems identified by a team of classroom professionals and technology coordinators as meeting legislative and department specifications.

HB 70 states that the appropriation is to be used for model programs in four schools in Rio Arriba County, but does not specify which schools or school districts. There are five school districts located in whole or in part in the county: Española Public Schools; Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools; Dulce Independent Schools; Jemez Mountain Public Schools; and Chama Valley Independent Schools. PED documents indicate that it has awarded the funds previously appropriated for computerized learning systems to schools that responded to a Request for Proposals (RFP), that were in the school improvement cycle and that had a high percentage of low-income students. In 2003, 110 schools in 34 districts received awards, and in 2005, another 27 schools in 12 districts received awards. Seven schools that have received such awards in the past are in Rio Arriba County.

PED states that if funds are appropriated as set forth in HB 70 for student tracking systems, awards would probably again need to be based on an RFP process. The department suggests that the funds could be used for schools in the Española Public Schools or other school districts in the county that are in the school improvement cycle and that have a high Native American enrollment.

PED indicates that a student tracking systems could supplement a school's Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS) to help improve student achievement. In the 2004 interim, the LESC heard testimony from staff at Hatch Valley Public Schools who described the district-wide implementation of a computerized learning system that they believed was working well with the district's population of mostly low-income English language learners.

Related Bill:

SB 190 *Student Progress Tracking System*