

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill No: SB 323

48th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2008

Short Title: Regional Educational Technology Assistance

Sponsor(s): Senators Cynthia Nava, Mary Jane M. García, and Mary Kay Papen

Analyst: Peter van Moorsel

Date: January 29, 2008

Bill Summary:

SB 323 appropriates funds to the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University (NMSU) for the Regional Educational Technology Assistance (RETA) program.

Fiscal Impact:

\$600,000 is appropriated from the General Fund for FY 08. The bill contains a reversion clause.

Between FY 04 and FY 08, RETA has been funded approximately \$2.3 million. The Legislature appropriated \$2.5 million to the Teacher Professional Development Fund for FY 08, of which the Public Education Department (PED) allocated \$400,000 to RETA.

CS/HB 2 et al., the *General Appropriation Act of 2008*, includes \$2.0 million for the Teacher Professional Development Fund for FY 08.

Issues:

SB 323 funds RETA, a program identified by NMSU as a statewide partnership that helps New Mexico educators and administrators integrate technology into their classrooms. RETA offers workshops for administrators, teachers, assistants, librarians, and other educators that improve technology skills, offer strategies to integrate technology into classrooms, and can be customized to meet the needs of schools and school districts.

Legislation was enacted in 2007 to create the Regional Educational Technology Assistance Center as a professional development center at NMSU's College of Extended Learning. By law, the RETA Center must:

- provide technology integration training into teaching and learning;
- aid in professional development dossier creation;
- make use of data to drive instruction to improve student learning outcomes;
- provide internet safety, online teaching and learning, and technical assistance;
- support faculty development in integrating technology and distance learning tools;
- contribute to implementing the New Mexico Learning Network;
- make all of the services it provides available to pre-kindergarten through college throughout New Mexico; and
- prepare an annual report for the Legislature detailing the activities and accomplishments of the center.

The Higher Education Department reports that RETA's 2008-2009 goals include:

- creating four new face-to-face technology integration workshops;
- sponsoring free professional development dossier groups serving a minimum of 250 educators;
- expanding the topics and number of RETA online professional development sessions;
- training the RETA instructors in developing and delivering online professional development;
- partnering with other agencies in the development and delivery of professional development online. Partners include initiatives such as IDEAL-NM (Innovative Digital Education and Learning-NM), Laptop Learning Initiative, and Enhancing Education Through Technology (E2T2) projects;
- providing professional development for New Mexico teachers to prepare them to teach online for IDEAL-NM and for their districts; and
- providing a minimum of one, and possibly two, face-to-face professional development sessions with ongoing online professional development.

Related Bills:

SB 326 *Strengthening Quality in Schools Initiative*

SB 328 *Continue Re:Learning Program*