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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Hall ORIGINAL DATE 1/18/08  
LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB 17  
SHORT TITLE NMSU Communication Disorders Programs SB \_\_\_\_\_  
ANALYST Haug

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$250.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Companion to HB 16  
Related to SB 28

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)  
New Mexico State University (NMSU)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 17 appropriates \$250.0 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University to expand student clinical studies and practicum programs for communication disorders in the department of special education and communications disorders.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$250.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 shall revert to the general fund.

The HED states that a collaborative request from UNM and NMSU for \$600,000 was submitted by NMSU to the New Mexico Higher Education Department for review and is not included in the Department's funding recommendation for FY09.

The HED's evaluation table of FY09 Research and Public Service Projects provided to the LFC classifies this project as a "breach" of the Higher Education Formula. Reasons for this

classification decision are not provided. (LFC Report 07-20, Higher Education Department Review of Selected Research and Public Service Projects, January 12, 2008, Table 4, p74.)

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

NMSU states that the 2000 American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Schools Survey reported that 51% of school-based speech-language pathologists (SLPs) indicated a shortage of qualified SLPs in their school district. State-level data revealed that shortages were most prevalent in Hawaii, Alaska, New Mexico, California, New Hampshire, and Arizona. In addition, the U.S. Department of Labor estimates that more than 34,000 additional SLPs and audiologists will be needed to fill the demand between 2000 and 2010.

The shortage of qualified speech-language pathologists is a particular problem in New Mexico. While vacancies exist in all employment settings, the shortage is most acute in the public schools. Because services for children with communication disorders are mandated by law, schools without a speech-language pathologist are faced with providing services through the high-cost of external contracts and contracted services are costing New Mexico millions of dollars. School districts are experiencing significant vacancies. For example, the Las Cruces Public Schools are currently advertising 14 vacant positions, the Gasden District has 8 vacant positions, and in northern NM, the Albuquerque Public Schools District lists 21 vacancies. The shortage is equally acute in smaller school districts throughout NM.

According to NMSU the Communication Disorders Program (Dept. of Special Education/Communication Disorders Department) at New Mexico State University and the Dept. of Speech and Hearing Sciences at the University of New Mexico are working to address the shortage collaboratively using a two-fold approach that involves 1) expansion of existing, campus-based programs and 2) extension of current programs to distance education.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

NMSU states that this request involves a collaborative effort between the New Mexico State University (NMSU) Program in Communication Disorders and the University of New Mexico (UNM) Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences and will require joint administration. This will be particularly necessary for aspects of the program involving learning through distance education. In addition, each student's program of study must be consistent with the accreditation requirements of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association as outlined by the Council on Academic Accreditation. Students must also achieve the appropriate education, knowledge and skills as outlined by the Council for Clinical Certification in Speech-Language Pathology (CFCC) and the New Mexico Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Practices Board.

## **COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

House Bill 17 is a companion bill to House Bill 16 - UNM Communication Disorders Programs which appropriates the UNM portion of the funding for this collaborative effort.

House Bill 17 is related to Senate Bill 28 - Expand NMSU Communications Disorders Program which provides \$250.0 to NMSU in addition to the appropriation in House Bill 17 to increase the number of speech-language pathologists in the public schools.