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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/05/08

SPONSOR Barreras LAST UPDATED _____ HB 602

SHORT TITLE Belen Schools Graduation Prep Counseling SB _____

ANALYST Escudero

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$75.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to HB640 and SB60

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Public Education Department (PED)

Higher Education Department (HED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 602 appropriates \$75.0 to the Public Education Department (PED) for a pilot program at Belen Consolidated Schools in graduation counseling aimed at high school seniors and juniors. The purpose of this bill is to ensure that students are on track toward graduation in terms of their course taking and the corresponding credit hours needed to graduate.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$75.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY09 shall revert to the general fund.

This appropriation can be implemented by the PED with existing staff and minimal fiscal impact.

This proposal was submitted to the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) by NMSU and was not included in the Department's funding recommendation for FY08.

As stated by HED, NMSU's Cooperative Extension Service and 4-H Youth Development was the recipient of four federal grants totaling \$2,542,815 over a five-year period beginning in 2001 to establish 4-H Outreach Agents in 14 counties in New Mexico. These were three-year grants and the funding is being completed this year.

With this funding depleted, the programs that the 4-H Youth Outreach and Engagement had provided has come to an end, leaving many vulnerable youth without a caring adult support system, life skill development opportunities, and the chance to be engaged in their communities. The success of this program has shown that the need persists and cannot be met without additional funding from the state legislature.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to PED, the New Mexico team that participated in Leadership Training Institutes conducted through The Wallace Foundation for states last year learned of such a model and pilot being implemented in Georgia. Anecdotal evaluation is that this model appears to help juniors and seniors stay in school, although this may be a little too early to assess.

The dropout data for 2006-2007 uses the 40th-day student count factored and corrected for duplicates -- students leaving to be home schooled, to go to another school within the public school system in the state and having left but subsequently passing the GED. Using this formula, the PED's Data Collection & Reporting Bureau reports a 3.8% dropout rate for juniors and seniors in Belen high schools. Dropout numbers of juniors and seniors stand at 16 out of a junior/senior student base of 593.

Juniors and seniors need special attention during the critical transition between postsecondary education and the workforce. Success in postsecondary life and work hinges a great deal on high school graduation.

As stated by HED, the principal objectives of this request will focus on providing 4-H outreach programs to underserved youth in eight selected counties impacting an estimated 5,000 students per year. NMSU's 4-H Youth Development Program staff will provide teachers or classroom volunteers with experiential learning lessons and activities that are aligned to New Mexico educational standards and benchmarks. In addition to the school classroom, NMSU's 4-H Youth Development professionals will provide educational, hands-on activities and programs in out-of-school settings throughout the county. To date more than 40,000 youth have been involved in the 4-H program.

In New Mexico there are more than 421,000 youth of 4-H age (5-19). There is a need for adult-led non-formal educational programs to provide an alternative to negative peer pressure.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

As stated by PED, HB 602 aligns to priorities in the PED's strategic plan for 2005-2010, namely:

- student achievement and
- cohort graduation rates.

As stated by HED, NMSU's 4-H Youth Outreach and Engagement Program seeks to support youth development by mobilizing, strengthening, and aligning systems that affect children's

learning. A key strategy is to forge partnerships between NMSU, local schools, and communities to promote life skills acquisitions that support academic performance and workforce preparation.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

HB 602 relates to HB640 and SB60.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

As stated by PED, the Next Step Plan, implemented in school districts since 2004, replaced the previous 4 Year Plan. Despite regional trainings to build capacity in advisement, full implementation with fidelity has not been achieved in the state. If the pilot program envisioned in HB 602 is a different model from traditional counseling/advisement programs, it would be interesting to gauge its success in increasing graduation rates and overall access to postsecondary education and work.

As stated by HED, in 2005-2006, more than 74,000 of the states youth were involved in life skills education through 4-H, making 4-H the largest youth development program in New Mexico. 4-H provides educational opportunities through which youth can learn information and develop the skills they need. The 4-H Youth Development Program emphases 35 life skills including leadership, responsible citizenship, critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making, conflict resolution, respect for others, and communication that directly contribute to the successful transition of young people into productive adulthood.

NMSUs 4-H Program is involved in partnerships throughout New Mexico with volunteers efforts. Last year 5,220 adult 4-H volunteers contributed more than 260,000 hours of volunteer service to the youth of the state. Had that service been provided by paid staff, it would have cost \$4,690,400.

PME/bb