

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill No: HB 672

49th Legislature, 1st Session, 2009

Short Title: Luna College Summer High School Program

Sponsor(s): Representative Richard D. Vigil

Analyst: Dorinda Fox

Date: February 25, 2009

Bill Summary:

HB 672 appropriates funds to the Higher Education Department (HED) for FY 10 for Luna Community College to operate a summer institute in Las Vegas for high school students to enhance their ability to learn and to progress in their basic coursework.

Fiscal Impact:

\$250,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to HED.

Any unexpended or unencumbered funds will revert to the General Fund.

Fiscal Issues:

HED states that this request was not submitted by Luna Community College to HED for review and is not included in the department's funding recommendation for FY 10.

The Fiscal Impact Report (FIR) by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) reports these concerns:

- the overall growth of research and public service projects (RPSP) within the higher education budget;
- alignment of such projects with state goals and strategic plans; also,
- accountability and performance outcomes for these projects.

The FIR further reports that appropriations outside of the *General Appropriation Act* will be viewed in the current declining revenue context.

Issues:

HED's analysis reports that HB 672 is a response to the high percentage of high school students needing remedial coursework upon entering Luna Community College:

- The program would address the needs of the 40 percent of high school students, grades 9-12, who need college-readiness instruction as determined by Compass placement assessment.
- The program would serve secondary school students in Las Vegas, Pecos, Maxwell, Cimarron, Santa Rosa, Springer, Mora, and Vaughn.

According to Luna Community College:

- the long-term goal of the summer institute is to increase the number of high school students who are both interested in and competitively prepared to pursue a college degree;
- students will enhance their ability to learn and to progress in the basic coursework within the general core areas at Luna Community College; and
- students will be provided the opportunity to get a head start toward establishing a college transcript and to complete core requirements toward a degree.

The Public Education Department analysis states:

- gains made in this one-time summer institute may not be sustainable without a continuation of strategies throughout the year and in future years; and
- tracking the success of the institute through student achievement data is difficult with only one application.

Background:

Research presented to the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) in each interim since 2006 shows that approximately half of New Mexico's recent public high school graduates who immediately enrolled in state public colleges required at least one remedial course in literacy or numeracy as first-semester freshmen and that as many as one-quarter required two or more such courses. Increasingly, postsecondary institutions and public school districts have been forming partnerships to develop mutual solutions to the problem of inadequate student preparation for college and careers.

In an effort to determine if and to what extent public postsecondary institutions and local public school districts communicate and coordinate their efforts to prepare students for college-level coursework and the workforce, throughout the 2008 interim the LESC heard testimony and engaged in discussions with representatives of all of New Mexico's 28 state and tribal two- and four-year institutions of higher education. According to information provided during the LESC August meeting by Luna Community College representatives:

- Luna Community College offers a general education certificate program made up of core academic courses that, upon completion, enables students to graduate from high school with a community college degree;
- Luna Community College has a waiver program in which high school students are allowed to take up to two college courses with free tuition and fees; and
- 662 students from nine high schools were enrolled in dual credit programs at Luna Community College in school year 2007-2008.

Related Bills:

SB 370 *Luna College Youth College Program*
SB 371 *Luna College Sustainable Agriculture Program*
SB 372 *Luna College Science & Math Prep Program*
SB 373 *Luna College Remedial College Prep Program*