

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill No: SB 46a

49th Legislature, 1st Session, 2009

Short Title: High School Pre-Apprenticeship Programs

Sponsor(s): Senator Bernadette M. Sanchez and Others

Analyst: Dorinda Fox

Date: March 9, 2009 (revised)

**FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE AND
THE ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

AS AMENDED

The Senate Corporations and Transportation Committee amendment stipulates that the satisfactory completion of an approved pre-apprenticeship program must result in a certificate of completion acceptable to an apprenticeship training program registered with the apprenticeship council.

Original Bill Summary:

SB 46 introduces legislation authorizing local school districts to offer industry-led or -guided pre-apprenticeship programs as electives for qualified high school students. Among its provisions, SB 46 amends the *Public School Code* to:

- include pre-apprenticeship programs and career-technical courses in a student's Next-Step Plan¹;
- allow pre-apprenticeship programs to be offered as electives to meet high school graduation requirements;
- define terms applicable to pre-apprenticeship programs;
- allows a school district or charter school to offer pre-apprenticeship programs to qualified students in grades 11 and 12;
- prescribe criteria for local board approval of pre-apprenticeship programs, including program providers, courses of instruction, and industry instructors;
- require a student to be at least 16 years of age and enrolled in grade 11 or grade 12;
- allow a student to withdraw from a pre-apprenticeship program with the approval of the high school principal;
- require a pre-apprenticeship program provider to notify the local board, superintendent, and high school principal of the provider's wish to cease a pre-apprenticeship program;
- exempt industry instructors from teacher licensure requirements but requires criminal background checks; and
- for insurance purposes, consider pre-apprenticeship programs as school-sponsored activities and industry instructors as school volunteers.

¹In accordance with the Public School Code Graduation Requirements, students are required to complete Next-Step Plans at the end of grades 8 through 11; these plans set forth the student's coursework for the grades remaining until graduation. Each student must complete a final Next-Step Plan during the senior year and prior to graduation to indicate post-high school plans for college and/or workplace preparation.

Fiscal Impact:

SB 46 makes no appropriation.

Fiscal Issues:

According to the Public Education Department (PED) analysis, the bill does not appropriate any funds for the local school district or PED to administer high school pre-apprenticeship programs; however, the Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS) analysis notes there is opportunity for school district partnership with postsecondary institutions, contractor organizations, unions, and other apprentice programs to develop pre-apprentice opportunities.

Issues:

SB 46 will allow qualified high school juniors and seniors who are at least 16 years old to participate in industry-taught or -guided pre-apprenticeship programs in high school. Pre-apprenticeship programs established by local school districts will focus on student completion of courses that are counted toward high school graduation and acceptance into a paid apprenticeship program upon graduation, thereby increasing opportunities for well-paying careers in needed industries.

The DWS analysis points out that pre-apprenticeship would offer an opportunity to address high school dropout rates while at the same time provide a trained work force to meet industry demands. There are currently 45 registered adult apprentice programs across the State of New Mexico. Traditional apprentices are paid while they are trained. The majority of adult apprentice programs are construction programs and apprentices who complete the program will have the opportunity to be paid high journeyman wages (usually \$15-\$40 per hour). There are also registered apprenticeship programs in healthcare and film. Pre-apprenticeship students that would successfully complete classroom training prior to turning 18 could potentially enter a traditional apprentice program at a higher “pay-step” level.

Background:

In 2008, the Legislature passed two memorials requesting representatives from PED, the Higher Education Department, DWS, the Association of Commerce and Industry, the Economic Development Department, industry advocacy groups, and registered apprenticeship programs to study the feasibility of implementing an industry-taught pre-apprenticeship curriculum in high school career-technical programs. A study group met during the 2008 interim and its findings and recommendations were presented to the Legislative Education Study Committee, and other legislative committees, including the Economic and Rural Development Committee, the Welfare Reform Oversight Committee, and the Revenue Stabilization and Tax Policy Committee. The study recommendations include:

- supporting legislation for the creation and funding of a New Mexico pre-apprenticeship curriculum pilot project that will provide student access to apprenticeable careers, training from industry experts, industry-recognized certification in pre-apprenticeship courses, and elective or dual credit toward high school graduation. The purpose of such legislation is to prepare high school students for apprenticeable occupations; and

- requesting that the Public Education Commission and PED coordinate with the State Apprenticeship Council and/or the US Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship for the creation and oversight of pre-apprenticeship program standards.

Related Bill:

HB 44a *Running Start for Careers Act*