

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: SJM 23

50th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2012

Tracking Number: .188451.1

Short Title: Educational Barriers for Pregnant Teens

Sponsor(s): Senator Cynthia Nava and Others

Analyst: Travis Dulany

Date: February 7, 2012

Bill Summary:

SJM 23 requests the Public Education Department (PED) to create a task force to study the obstacles faced by teen parents in completing their educations. The task force is to be composed of:

- experts in the fields of:
 - education;
 - teen pregnancy;
 - teen parenting;
 - law; and
 - statistics and social services; and

- in addition to representatives from:
 - PED;
 - the New Mexico GRADS program;
 - New Futures School;
 - the Santa Fe Teen Parent Center;
 - at least three different school districts from different regions in New Mexico;
 - the Epidemiology and Response Division of the Department of Health;
 - the American Civil Liberties Union of New Mexico;
 - Young Women United; and
 - the Southwest Women's Law Center.

The joint memorial further requests the task force to issue a comprehensive report by November 1, 2012, with goals, both short-term and long-term, for eliminating obstacles teen parents face in completing their education, as well as recommendations to increase the graduation rate for pregnant and parenting teens.

Fiscal Impact:

Legislative memorials do not contain appropriations.

Memorials requesting that state agencies conduct studies are likely to have a fiscal impact in terms of staff time, travel, office supplies, and other items.

Substantive Issues:

A 2010 Child Trends report, titled *Diploma Attainment among Teen Mothers*, found that among those surveyed:

- young women who had been teen mothers were 38 percent less likely than other young women to earn a high school diploma by age 22;
- teens who gave birth before the age of 18 were 22 percent less likely to receive a high school diploma than teens who gave birth after their 18th birthday;
- teens who gave birth before the age of 18 were 16 percent less likely to earn either a high school diploma or a general educational development (GED) certificate than teens who gave birth after their 18th birthday;
- Hispanic teen parents were less likely to receive a high school diploma or GED than Caucasian and African-American teen parents; and
- only one-half of women in the study sample who had been teen mothers had earned a high school diploma by the age of 22, compared with 89 percent of young women in the study sample who had not given birth as a teen.

Related Bills:

None as of February 7, 2012.