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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Morales ORIGINAL DATE 02/11/13
 LAST UPDATED 03/08/13 HB _____

SHORT TITLE Study A-F School Grading System SJM 34/aSEC

ANALYST Wojahn

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY13	FY14	FY15	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	Minimal					

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicate to HJM 29

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of SEC Amendment

The Senate Education Committee Amendment to Senate Joint Memorial 34 adds the Public Education Department to the proposed workgroup to study the New Mexico A-F grading system.

Synopsis of Original Bill

Senate Joint Memorial 34 (SJM 34) requests that the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) convene a work group to study the New Mexico A-F grading system to clarify this complex system and methodology for school districts, educators, legislators and parents. The study would include answering the following questions:

- how the value-added model is used to predict students' scores;
- how stable the confidence intervals are for making the predictions;
- how decisions are made on what constitutes each grade;
- what interventions for "D" and "F" schools are provided and how well they are working;
- how the grading system accounts for poverty and other demographic differences in student populations;

- to what extent standardized test scores are good measures of a school's effectiveness; and
- how the A-F grading system helps schools improve their performance.

The LESC would include representatives of teachers, local school superintendents, charter schools, the Native American and Hispanic communities, school assessment administrators, statistical experts, and interested persons in the work group which shall report its findings and recommendations to the LESC by October 1, 2013.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

In their analysis, the Public Education Department (PED) provided several resources located on their website for understanding the A-F School Grading system:

- **Understanding School Grades – Module 1** gives a general explanation of the components, points, and framework for both elementary/middle schools and High schools models: http://webapp2.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolData/docs/1011/SchoolGrading/Understanding_A-F_Module_1_January_13_2012.pdf
- **Understanding School Grades – Module 2** explains how the VAM (value added model) works within the scheme of the A-F School Grading system: http://webapp2.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolData/docs/1011/SchoolGrading/Understanding_A-F_Module_2_January_17_2012.pdf
- **Bonus Points Rubric:** http://webapp2.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolData/docs/1112/SchoolGrading/Bonus_Points_Web_Rubric_Formated.pdf
- **School Grading Technical Guide, V2.0** details the A-F School Grading calculations and business rules: http://webapp2.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolData/docs/1112/SchoolGrading/A-F_School_Grading_Technical_Guide_2012_V2.0.pdf
- **October 2012 School Grading Presentation to Parents** outlines A-F School Grading information for parents and the general public: <http://webapp2.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolData/docs/1112/SchoolGrading/School%20Grades%20Community%20Workshop%20%28October%202012%29.pdf>
- **School Grading Workbook** is an Excel[®] modeling program that allows users to estimate the impact of certain school reforms or student interventions on a future ABCDF school grade. The program is pre-populated with the school's local data from prior years, and each component can be manipulated for projected gains. Because the program contains sensitive student-identified information, it is released only to schools.
- **School Grading FAQ** provides a user friendly explanation of each component of school grading: http://webapp2.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolData/docs/1011/SchoolGrading/School_Grading_FAQ.pdf

According to the PED, SJM 34 implies a belief that the Department developed the A-F School Grading Model without community and stakeholder input. The following advisors guided the development of the model through multiple on-site meetings as well as electronic communication, and these groups continue to advise school grading as new information is learned:

- US Department of Education (peer review and approval for No Child Left Behind flexibility waiver)

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- 9 Superintendent’s Advisory Council meetings on the development of the A-F regulation and model
- 2 hearings on the A-F final regulation (only 1 is required)
- 8 regional School Board Association meetings to present the A-F model, answer questions, and receive feedback
- Training to over 2000 school leaders and district administrators on how A-F works and supports for D and F schools
- Development and convening of a Technical Working Group on the A-F school grading system
- Coalition for Excellence in Science and Math Education (advocacy group)

Study items 4 and 7 mandated by the memorial have been extensively covered in numerous educational colloquia conducted by the PED’s Priority Schools Bureau. In 2012, the bureau began ongoing tours of the state where school personnel from low performing schools learned turnaround principles and reform strategies. To date, more than 2000 educators have been trained on the A-F system and interventions for D and F schools.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The PED indicated they successfully implemented the A-F grading system, which has been approved as the replacement for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, federal and state accountability. Concerted effort has gone into disseminating the calculations and principles of the model to constituents and stakeholders, which has translated into favorable acceptance and meaningful accountability. That effort continues and will not be altered under SJM 34.

MEW/svb:blm