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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE
LAST UPDATED 02/18/14 **HM** 97

SPONSOR Maestas

SHORT TITLE School for the Deaf Curriculum **SB** _____

ANALYST Chavez

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY14	FY15	FY16	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		Minimal	Minimal			

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Memorial 97 requests that a task force:

- Study the educational needs of students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing from birth through middle school and evaluate the necessity for updating and modernizing the current educational system to cultivate optimal educational fulfillment;
- Study the educational needs of students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing from high school through college and evaluate the feasibility of converting to or adding a public post-secondary educational curriculum at the New Mexico School for the Deaf (NMSD);
- Evaluate the best ways to use existing facilities, assets and resources at the NMSD; and
- Identify ways to improve and potential resources for amplifying the educational experiences of current and prospective students at the NMSD.

Additionally, the task force is requested to study Gallaudet University, the only post-secondary educational institution that offers a bilingual education in both American Sign Language (ASL) and English as an example for determining the feasibility of establishing a similar institution for deaf and hard-of-hearing students in New Mexico. The task force is also requested to study the New Mexico Military Institution (NMMI), a land grand institution, for determining the feasibility of establishing a learning institution composed of a four-year college preparatory high school and a parallel four-year college.

The task force should consist of qualified staff from the Public Education Department (PED), with assistance from the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC), the Higher Education Department (HED), and the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC).

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no appropriation for this memorial. Any administrative burden resulting from this task force should be absorbed by existing resources.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The memorial notes that the NMSD operates on a 30-acre campus that was granted by Congress in the late 1800s. The school provides educational and support services on campus through programs in K-12 for deaf and hard-of-hearing children, as well as educational and support services at satellite locations in other parts of the state. While in the past, deaf and hard-of-hearing students were sent away to school and the NMSD was the only means for many families to ensure an education for their deaf or hard-of-hearing children, in the present day keeping a child at home with family members is understood to be a critical component of the child's well-being and success in education.

The memorial also notes that in 2003, the education of the deaf and hard-of-hearing task force stated in its report that New Mexico's deaf and hard-of-hearing children were not developing effective communication and language skills, resulting in isolation and a lack of "essential skills required to fully participate in society". The provision of up-to-date current educational materials, instruction and technologies is required for measurable gains.

The memorial points out that, while currently the only opportunity for deaf and hard-of-hearing students to receive a bilingual post-secondary education in English and ASL is at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., the NMSD has the campus and resources to become a secondary and post-secondary educational institution and thus provide greater educational impact for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The memorial adds that the establishment of a post-secondary educational institution for deaf and hard-of-hearing students on the campus of the NMSD could cultivate the untapped potential of the institution and its students by allowing more young students to be educated regionally and allowing older students in grades 9 through 12 and beyond to learn in a focused environment on campus.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The NMSD website notes they offer the following programs to the state:

- Preschools and Kindergartens - comprehensive and stimulating learning environments for young children
- Academics - grades 1 through 12, which encompass traditional and elective subjects with a special emphasis on language and literacy development
- Student Life - a wide range of residential, educational and recreational after-school activities, such as athletics, clubs and life skills development
- Early Intervention and Involvement Division - statewide, family centered, early intervention services for babies, toddlers and young children
- The Center for Educational Consultation and Training - statewide information and educational support to public schools serving children and youth who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Summer Program - a place where NMSD and non-NMSD students who are deaf or hard of hearing and in grades K - 12 come together in fun, adventurous, academic and non-academic ways.
- Site-based Specialized Services