

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: CS/HB 144

52nd Legislature, 1st Session, 2015

Tracking Number: .199821.1

Short Title: Teacher & School Leader Effectiveness Act

Sponsor(s): Representatives James E. Smith and Dennis J. Roch, and Senator Sander Rue

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HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL 144

Bill Summary:

CS/HB 144 adds new sections to the *Public School Code* to create the *Teacher & School Leader Effectiveness Act* and amends Section 22-2-2 NMSA 1978, Department; general duties.

Definitions

CS/HB 144 defines a number of terms, among them:

- “certified observer” is an individual who:
 1. holds an active level three-B license or an active teaching license;
 2. is employed by a school district or charter school as an administrator or teacher;
 3. completes the teacher observation training provided by the Public Education Department (PED) and passes PED’s assessment of the adopted observation protocol; and
 4. following satisfaction the requirement number three, each year before August 1, completes follow-up training and passes PED’s assessment of the adopted observation protocol in any location in the state;
- “evaluation” is a final summative rating that is composed of multiple measures that include growth in student achievement, observations, and locally selected multiple measures;
- “local superintendent” includes the head administrator of a charter school; and
- “school district” includes charter schools.

Evaluation Regulations

Among its other provisions, CS/HB 144:

- requires PED to promulgate rules for the act, including for:
 - submission, review, and approval of school district procedures for the annual effectiveness evaluation of licensed school employees;
 - standards for each effectiveness level required pursuant to Section 4 of the act; and

- measurement of student achievement growth and associated implementation procedure required pursuant to Section 6 of the act;
- requires PED to adopt:
 - a list of approved assessments to measure student achievement growth; and
 - a list of approved measures of teacher and school leader effectiveness for the multiple measures component of the teacher and school leader effectiveness evaluations; and
- beginning in school year 2015-2016 and in subsequent school years, requires each school district to:
 - implement its PED-approved teacher and school leader effectiveness evaluation system; and
 - employment decisions pertaining to effectiveness evaluations, promotions, terminations, and discharges shall pursuant to the act.

Evaluation Requirements

CS/HB 144 requires the teacher and school leader effectiveness evaluation system to:

- be used to inform school district- and school-level improvement plans and professional development of licensed school employees;
- include a mechanism to examine effectiveness from multiple sources with the option of giving parents and students the opportunities to provide input when appropriate;
- identify those teaching fields for which special evaluation procedures may be developed;
- include measures of:
 - student achievement growth worth 40 percent;
 - observations worth 35 percent; and
 - multiple measures worth 25 percent; and
- differentiate among at least five levels of performance, which include:
 - exemplary, meets competency;
 - highly effective, meets competency;
 - effective, meets competency;
 - minimally effective, does not meet competency; and
 - in effective, does not meet competency.

In addition, each teacher must be evaluated at least once a year.

Student Achievement Component

Every school district is required to use PED-adopted measures of student achievement growth calculated by PED for all courses associated with state assessments or district-created, PED-approved assessments and is also required to select comparable measures of student achievement growth for other grades and subjects.

By July 15, 2015, PED is required to propose a formula to measure individual student achievement growth on the state standardized assessments used for school accountability. The formula shall take into account each student's prior performance, grade level, and subject. PED is required to adopt the formula in regulations by September 1, 2015.

For Teachers

CS/HB 144 provides a graduated application of the student achievement component of the evaluation, so that for teachers with:

- no student achievement growth data, student achievement will play no part in the teacher's evaluation;
- with one or two years of student achievement growth data, that component will account for 25 percent of the teacher's evaluation; and
- three or more years of student achievement growth data, 40 percent of the teacher's evaluation will be based on student achievement.

However, for teachers who do not teach in a standards-based assessment grade or subject, the school district is required to submit the assessment to PED for approval.

For School Leaders

Alternatively, for school principals, the student achievement growth component of the school leader evaluation is required to:

- include student achievement growth data for students assigned to the public school over the course of at least three years; and
- the student achievement growth component is based on the student growth component's of the schools A through F letter grade and constitutes 50 percent of the school leader's evaluation.

Observation Component

For Teachers

Regarding the observation component of the teacher evaluation, 35 percent is required to be based on data and indicators of instructional practice for teachers. Feedback on classroom observations must be given to classroom teachers within 10 school days after the observation is completed.

For School Leaders

School leader evaluations are required to include indicators based on each of the leadership standards adopted by the PED. There is also an available option for other licensed school employees and parents to provide input, when appropriate.

Finally, regarding the multiple measures component of the evaluation system, CS/HB 144 requires that:

- the measures be aligned with improved student achievement; and
- each school district adopt at least one multiple measure.

Results of Evaluation

Regardless of a teacher's rating on other components of the evaluation, a teacher whose students in the aggregate have demonstrated growth of one grade level or more are deemed as meeting competency in the student achievement growth component and shall not, based on all evaluation components, be rated as minimally effective or ineffective.

Likewise, a teacher whose students have not demonstrated the growth as described above, but who demonstrated competency in the observations and multiple measures components, shall not, based on all evaluation components, be rated minimally effective or ineffective.

Post-Evaluation

The act requires evaluators to submit a written report on the effectiveness evaluation of each licensed school employee to the employee and the local superintendent. If an employee is rated as minimally effective or ineffective, he or she may provide a written response to the evaluation, which will become a permanent attachment to the employee's personnel file.

The evaluator is required to arrange a post-evaluation conference with each licensed school employee who is rated as minimally effective or ineffective. At the conference, the evaluator is required to make recommendations to correct the unsatisfactory performance.

If the licensed school employee rated as minimally effective or ineffective has an employment contract, he or she will be placed on a performance growth plan.

In addition, within 90 days following receipt of the notice of minimally effective or ineffective, the licensed school employee must be observed and evaluated periodically and be apprised of progress. Within five days of the allowed 90-day period, the evaluator is required to evaluate whether the performance deficiencies have been corrected. Within 10 days, the local superintendent must notify the employee in writing whether the performance deficiencies have been satisfactorily corrected. Lastly, if corrective action has not been made, the local superintendent is required to determine whether to discharge or terminate the employee.

Finally, the local superintendent is required to notify PED of an employee who receives two consecutive minimally effective or ineffective evaluations. Following such notification, PED shall not, without the agreement of the local superintendent, revoke the license of a teacher who holds teaching license for an evaluation rating of minimally effective or ineffective.

Fiscal Impact:

CS/HB 144 does not contain an appropriation.

According to the analysis by PED, fiscal implications would be minimal as systems are already in place at PED and school districts to support the measures established by the bill.

Technical Issues:

On page 7, lines 12 through 19, the bill does not indicate what components or other percentages thereof will be utilized for teachers who do not have student achievement growth or who only have one or two years of student achievement growth.

In Section H, pp. 12-13, CS/HB 144 allows exemptions to be granted upon appeal for “extraordinary circumstances as determined by the department.” The sponsors may wish to consider indicating or suggesting the nature of these extraordinary circumstances.

Substantive Issues:

One question that CS/HB 144 raises is what effect, if any, the waiver provisions related to teacher evaluation will have upon the state’s waiver from the requirements of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* (see “Background,” below).

According to the PED analysis of the original HB 144, the bill is misaligned with the state’s federal waiver from the federal *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA). In New Mexico’s approved waiver, the state articulates it will implement an evaluation system using the following categories and proportions: student achievement – 50 percent; teacher observations – 25 percent; and PED-approved multiple measures – 25 percent.

The bill leaves the option at the local level for the superintendent to determine if a licensed school employee should be discharged or terminated based on two consecutive years of receiving ratings of minimally effective and/or ineffective.

Background:

During the 2014 interim, the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) heard extensive testimony on the current teacher and principal evaluation system, which was implemented through PED rule. CS/HB 144 would replace this rule-based system with a different evaluation system prescribed in law.

Adopted in August 2012 and amended in September 2013, the PED rule, *Teacher and School Leader Effectiveness*, implements an evaluation program for public school teachers and administrators called the Effectiveness Evaluation System (EES), sometimes also called the NMTEACH Effectiveness Evaluation System. Under this system, districts have the option of using the plan developed by PED or submitting a custom plan to PED for department approval.

In general, 50 percent of a teacher’s evaluation is based on student achievement measures, whether derived from the state standards-based assessments or some other student assessment. Details vary, however, depending upon whether a teacher is a member of Group A, Group B, or Group C:

- Group A teachers teach subjects tested by the standards-based assessments in those grades in which the assessments are administered;
- Group B teachers teach either non-tested subjects or tested subjects in grades in which the standards-based assessments are not administered; and
- Group C teachers teach in grades K-2.

Briefly, the rule requires that:

- school districts use a department-adopted student achievement growth measure or, with department permission, use a combination of PED-approved growth measures and, for non-tested subjects or grades, a PED-approved alternative measure;
- whenever possible, the performance rating include three years or more of student achievement growth data; and
- if a school district has not implemented appropriate course assessments or adopted a comparable measure, student achievement growth be measured by:
 - the growth achievement of the classroom teacher’s students on state assessments;
 - the school’s A through F letter grade for courses in which enrolled students do not take the state assessment, provided that a school district may assign instructional team student achievement growth to classroom teachers in lieu of using the school grade growth calculation; or
 - state-developed end-of-course examinations or other PED-recommended options.

Upon request by the school district, the rule allows the rating for teachers who are assigned to courses not associated with state assessments to include achievement growth that is demonstrated on state assessments as a percentage of the overall evaluation. In addition, student achievement growth is measured through a value-added model (VAM), which, according to PED, accounts for the individual student’s background by using three years’ worth of data.¹ Those years of data produce a teacher’s overall value-added score (VAS).

For the remainder of a teacher’s evaluation, LESC staff testimony continued:

- 25 percent is based on teaching observations by one of two types of observers – either “approved” or “certified” – using the NMTEACH rubric or protocol; and
- 25 percent is based on “multiple measures,” which vary, again, according to the group to which the teacher belongs.

Turning to the evaluation of administrators, the EES requires that every school leader have an annual effectiveness evaluation, which must be conducted by a qualified person approved by PED. For the administrator EES rating itself:

- 50 percent is based on the change in the school’s letter grade;
- 25 percent is based on the school’s multiple measures; and
- 25 percent is based on “documented fidelity observations of the school leader.”

¹ VAM uses statistical models to predict student test performance, controlling for potential variables that could affect performance such as student, teacher, or school characteristics. The difference between the predicted and actual scores, if any, is assumed to be due to the performance of the teacher, rather than to the student’s natural ability or socioeconomic circumstances.

According to the PED business rules, unlike teachers, administrators are categorized into two groups:

- Group A Principals/School Administrators are those who:
 - hold Level 3-B administrative licenses;
 - serve as principal/director, assistant principal, dean of students, or athletic directors; and
 - supervise and evaluate certified teachers.
- Group B School Administrators are district-level administrators, athletic directors, and deans of students who do not have Level 3-B licenses.

On November 14, 2014, the United States Department of Education granted New Mexico's request for an extension of ESEA flexibility through the end of school year 2014-2015.

New Mexico's ESEA flexibility application includes sections that discuss three distinct principles:

1. college- and career-ready expectations for all students;
2. state-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and
3. supporting effective instruction and leadership.

Committee Referrals:

HEC

Related Bills:

HB 76 *Teacher Licensure Levels & Advancement*
SB 91 *Teacher Licensure Levels & Advancement*
SB 138 *Repeal A-B-C-D-F School Rating Act*
SB 202 *Public Education Data Advisory Council*
SB 205 *Delay Use of Certain Test in Teacher Evals*
SB 378 *Teacher & Admin Differential Performance*