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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE
SPONSOR Herrell **LAST UPDATED** 02/23/15 HM 61

SHORT TITLE School Nurse Task Force **SB** _____

ANALYST Dunbar

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY15	FY16		
	NA		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY15	FY16	FY17	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	*Indeterminate	*Indeterminate	*Indeterminate	*Indeterminate	Non Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

*Refer to Fiscal Implications

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Responses Received From
 Department of Health (DOH)
 Public Education Department (PED)
 University of New Mexico (UNM)
 Higher Education Department (HED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of the Bill

House Memorial 61 requests that the Secretary of Health and the Secretary of Public Education convene a school nurse task force to assess the current New Mexico school staffing models and to make recommendations to ensure safe and legal care for students in public, private and charter schools. Recommendations shall be made to the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) and the Legislative Health and Human Services (LHHS) committee to address any possible disparities

caused by a lack of nursing services to students and to develop a plan to address those disparities by October 1, 2015.

The task force, will include representatives from Department of Health and the Public Education Department, the Board of Nursing, school nurses, the NM School Superintendents Association, and the New Mexico School Board Association and other health care providers.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

HM 61 requests the PED to work in collaboration with other recommended agencies in providing an analysis of the situation in schools, along with recommendations addressing the potential lack of nursing services for New Mexico's students in schools. The PED and the Department of Health would incur significant staff time and support costs to meet the provisions of this memorial. These costs and staff are not part of the department's operating budget and could not be carried out without additional resources.

The long-term fiscal implications for the PED are unknown at this time but could be significant depending on recommendations made by the taskforce and accepted by the departments involved.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The PED, Coordinated School Health and Wellness Bureau addresses health issues with the mindset that “healthy kids make better students.” According to the AAP (2008) “There is a recognized relationship between health and learning, as there is between school nurse availability and student well-being and educational success.” This may imply that students who require less need to focus on their health may have more opportunity to focus on their academic success. NASN further states that there is a relationship between access to school nurses and student attendance(2012). An article published by the Journal of School Nursing (2003) found “that fewer children checked out of school for medical reasons when a full-time school nurse was available at the school.”

According to the PED Annual School Health Services Summary Report 2013-2014, the NASN recommended minimum school nurse-to-student ratio is 1:750. This applies to the general student population. For students who may require daily nursing services, this ratio is reduced to 1:225. As the complexity of student health care needs increases, this recommended ratio continues to decrease. The 2013- 2014 Summary Report describes all DOH regions as having a ratio greater than 1:500 with the Northwest region having a ratio of nearly 1:1200. With 42 percent of New Mexico students being identified as having a medical diagnosis (PED Annual School Health Services Summary Report 2013-2014), it is likely that many New Mexico students may require daily nursing services.

UNM indicates that the NASN (www.nasn.org) states school nurses benefit the school in the following ways:

1. Attendance – School nurses improve attendance through health promotion, disease prevention and disease management. Students with a full-time school nurse have about half the student illness- or injury-related early releases from school where no school nurse is present.

2. Academics – Improved attendance means the healthy student is in the classroom and ready to learn. School Nurses enable better performance, which also contributes to reducing drop-out rates.
3. Time – School nurses save time for principals, teachers and staff. A school nurse in the building saves principals, teachers, and clerical staff a considerable amount of time that they would have spent addressing health concerns of students.
4. Staff Wellness – School nurses improve the general health of staff. According to school reports, principals, teachers, and clerical staff are very satisfied with having school nurses in their schools for several reasons:
 - Teachers can focus on teaching
 - Office staff spend less time calling parents and sending students home
 - Healthy staff means increased attendance and productivity
5. Accountability - School nurses help schools stay accountable.
 - Promoting compliance with federal and state law mitigates lawsuits
 - Advocating for adequate staffing aligns with Healthy People 2020 recommendations of the ratio of one school nurse per 750 well students (1:750)
 - Preparing for emergencies saves lives and property
 - Addressing student mental health links to academic achievement

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

HM 61 relates to the DOH FY 14 strategic Plan Goal to Improve Health Outcomes for the People of New Mexico.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

DOH staff would be involved in Task Force meetings and activities. In addition, there could be implications resulting from recommendations by the task force, as school health personnel including school nurses and health assistants are under the medical oversight of the DOH Regional Health Officer in their respective DOH Public Health Regions.

HM 61 requires the PED to work in collaboration with other recommended agencies in providing an analysis of the situation in schools, along with recommendations addressing the potential lack of nursing services for New Mexico's students in schools. The administrative implications for the PED in relation to this task force would require the department to utilize unavailable staff and resources to carry out this task.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

Page 2, lines 13-16, indicate that the PED's rules require support services that include health service provided by PED-licensed registered nurses. PED's rule, 6.63.16, School Personnel-Licensure Requirements for Ancillary and Support Personnel, would allow a licensed practical nurse to provide these services if delegated.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

According to the 2013 New Mexico Health Workforce Annual Report presently, there is a substantial shortage of licensed practical nurses, registered nurses, and advanced practice registered nurses in New Mexico. Shortages create barriers to health care access. They also cause the current workforce to be more prone to stress, fatigue, errors, and burnout.

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