

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill Number:** SM 25a

**52nd Legislature, 2nd Session, 2016**

**Tracking Number:** .202825.1

**Short Title:** School-to-Work for Students with Disabilities

**Sponsor(s):** Senator Michael Padilla

**Analyst:** Christina McCorquodale

**Date:** February 8, 2016

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**AS AMENDED**

**The Senate Public Affairs Committee (SPAC) amendment:**

- **For purposes of reporting findings and recommendations, SPAC adds “the Legislative Health and Human Services committee and any other appropriate legislative committee.”**

**Original Bill Summary:**

SM 25 requests a task force convene to conduct a needs assessment and report on ways to improve the system of school-to-work transition for students with disabilities in New Mexico. The bill requests the task force to make formal recommendations for changes to existing policies, programs, or regulatory provisions including:

- addressing barriers to effective school-to-work transition for youth with disabilities;
- providing more effective services for youth with disabilities as they make the transition from school to work;
- improving the efficiency of the school-to-work transition process for students with disabilities;
- increasing the knowledge of students with disabilities and their family members on transition from school-to-work options; and
- maximizing outcomes, including lifelong opportunities for persons with disabilities to obtain competitive integrated employment.

The bill requests the task force to include one or more young adults with disabilities who have transitioned from high school to adult life and their family members, as well as representatives from local state agencies and community organizations.

The bill also requests the task force to report its findings and recommendations to the Legislative Education Study Committee by December 1, 2016.

**Fiscal Impact:**

SM 25 does not include an appropriation. State agencies as well as community organizations would be expected to absorb the cost of the proposed needs assessment within existing resources.

The following agencies are requested to participate: Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, the University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability, Parents Reaching Out, the Vocational Rehabilitation Division of the Public Education Department (PED), PED, the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division of the Department of Health, the Workforce Solutions Department, Youth Development, Inc., Advocacy Organizations, Centers for Independent Living, the Governor's Commission on Disability, and Disability Rights New Mexico.

**Substantive Issues:**

In 2012, a PED post-school survey reported that employment was declining for individuals with any disability. National data from the United States Department of Labor indicate that more than 70 percent of students with disabilities leave high school each year without employment prospects. It is suggested that diminished employment prospects coming out of high school set a lifetime pattern of inactivity and segregation from the community.

Enacted in July 2015, the federal *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* requires states to engage in a unified strategic planning process and collaborate to improve school-to-work transition outcomes for students with disabilities. To comply with this act, New Mexico's state and local agencies serving youth with disabilities need to work cooperatively to leverage their resources. To succeed, engagement with local community organizations, advocacy groups, and youth with disabilities and their families in planning and education is crucial.

The Higher Education Department indicated the task force would be beneficial in scaling such models and offering increased work opportunities to youth with disabilities.