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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR McQueen ORIGINAL DATE 2/17/17
 LAST UPDATED _____ HB 303

SHORT TITLE Life Skills as Graduation Requirement SB _____

ANALYST Fernandez

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY17	FY18	FY19	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		See Fiscal Implications				

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

Responses Not Received From

Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 303 would change the high school graduation requirements starting in the 2017-2018 school year as follows:

- Reduces mathematics required units from four to three, which shall include algebra and geometry;
- Replaces the current requirement of one unit in a career cluster course, workplace readiness or a language other than English with one unit in life skills, with a major emphasis on financial literacy, media literacy and workplace readiness; and
- Increases elective units from seven and one-half to eight and one-half units, and replaces the requirement that the electives be in financial literacy, pre-apprenticeship programs and media literacy with a requirement that career cluster courses, languages other than English and pre-apprenticeship programs may be offered as electives.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

This bill does not contain an appropriation. It is possible that school districts may incur additional costs associated with the new requirements in HB303.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Currently, successful completion of the requirements for a New Mexico diploma of excellence for students entering 9th grade beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, include successfully completing 4 units of mathematics, of which one shall be the equivalent to or higher than the level of Algebra II, unless the parent submitted written, signed permission for the student to complete a lesser mathematics and provided that a financial literacy course that meets state mathematics academic content and performance standards shall qualify as one of the four required mathematics units. HB303 reduces the number of required mathematics units from 4 to 3, which shall include algebra and geometry.

Students are also currently required to complete seven and one-half elective units that meet department content and performance standards. Currently, career and technical education, student service learning, financial literacy, pre-apprenticeship programs, and media literacy courses may all be offered as elective courses. HB303 increases required elective units from seven and one-half to eight and one-half and would move career cluster courses, languages other than English and pre-apprenticeship programs to the electives category. Media literacy, financial literacy and pre-apprenticeship programs would no longer fall under the category of electives but would now be under the requirement for one unit of life skills, with a major emphasis on financial literacy, media literacy and workplace readiness.

HED provides the following information:

While not specifically referenced in the bill, it is possible that dual credit opportunities with higher education institutions could be impacted by the proposed changes.

The HED currently administers the general education core curriculum. Currently the HED is working with higher education institutions to make general education center on the acquisition of five skills that are essential and foundational to a college education. These skills are: communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, personal and social responsibility, and information literacy.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

During the 2016 Legislature, House Memorial 59 passed which requested the Public Education and Workforce Solutions Departments study and develop recommendations that increase the number of high school students who take financial literacy education classes and report findings to the Legislative Education Study Committee by August 1, 2016.

PED provided the following information in 2016 for HM59:

Last year, PED indicated that based on 40th day data, only 114 high school students and 7 and 8th grade students were taking financial literacy courses as an elective or social science credit. Also, last year, based on 40th day data, 6,190 students were taking Financial Literacy to satisfy the math credit of 4 units required for graduation. The majority of these students were in 12th grade.