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**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**  
**BILL ANALYSIS**  
**54th Legislature, 1st Session, 2019**

<b>Bill Number</b>	<u>HB395/aHSEIC</u>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<u>Louis/Trujillo, C.</u>
<b>Tracking Number</b>	<u>.212505.1</u>	<b>Committee Referrals</b>	<u>HSEIC/HAFC</u>
<b>Short Title</b>	<u>Acoma-Keres Language Dictionary in Schools</u>		
<b>Analyst</b>	<u>Ochoa</u>	<b>Original Date</b>	<u>2/6/19</u>
		<b>Last Updated</b>	<u>2/13/19</u>

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**BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis of HSEIC Amendment

The House State Government, Elections and Indian Affairs Committee Amendment to HB395 (HB395/aHSEIC) strikes “public education” and inserts “Indian affairs” to indicate the department responsible for administering the provisions of the bill.

Synopsis of Original Bill

House Bill 395 (HB395) would make an appropriation for the development of an Acoma-Keres language dictionary and curriculum for use in early childhood through eighth grade education programs.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill appropriates \$350 thousand from the general fund to the Indian Affairs Department (IAD) for expenditure in FY20. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY20 shall revert to the general fund.

**SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

HB395/aHSEIC would require an Acoma-Keres language dictionary and curriculum be developed for use in early childhood through eighth grade. According to the Keres Language Project, there are approximately 200 speakers of Keres while the population of the Pueblo of Acoma is nearly 5 thousand. The Pueblo of Acoma has partnered with Cibola County Schools — comprised of seven public elementary schools, three public secondary schools, four Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, one private school, and the New Mexico State University – Grants campus. Although the instructional materials would be created within IAD, the Pueblo of Acoma would reserve the rights of the materials and be justified in distributing materials to partners as they see fit.

The Acoma Tribal Council approved a language policy that allows the use of technology and written texts for learning the Keres language, representing a major shift within the council to adopt

modern best-practices for language instruction. The Pueblo of Acoma Department of Education has partnered with The Language Conservancy (TLC), a nonprofit organization that assists tribes with language preservation and revitalization. According to Stanley Holder, executive director, Acoma Department of Education, TLC will be assisting the department in the development of an early childhood to eighth grade curriculum. It is unclear if the HB395/aHSEIC appropriation would transfer from IAD to the Pueblo of Acoma to continue their language revitalization initiatives or if the funds would cause work to be duplicated. Analysis from IAD notes New Mexico's nations, tribes, and pueblos recognize the importance of protecting native languages and while individual tribal councils may approve of the development and standardization of a given language, other nations, tribes, and pueblos might oppose the development of a language within the same language family. IAD analysis explains the Keresan language is spoken in the Pueblos of Acoma, Cochiti, Laguna, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Santo Domingo, and Zia.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

IAD would be required to implement the provisions of HB395/aHSEIC.

## **OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

**State Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy.** In 2015, New Mexico was the 5th state to adopt the State Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy pursuant to Section 22-1-9.1 NMSA 1978. Since the adoption, only seven students have received the State Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy in the Keres language. Students obtain the State Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy at substantially lower rates in Native American languages. To date, 16 seals have been awarded for the Navajo language, one for Tewa, five for Tiwa, and 11 for Zuni.

**Programs for Native American Students.** Pursuant to the Indian Education Act, the Public Education Department (PED) awards grants to tribes and pueblos that focus on at least one of the following areas in their grant application: attendance and truancy; cultural competency and culturally responsive learning environments; college and career readiness; supporting native language programs and English Learner students; and alignment between PED, Bureau of Indian Education, and tribally controlled schools. In FY18, 19 tribes and pueblos were funded. The FY18 award amount for the Pueblo of Acoma was \$40 thousand, however the pueblo had expended less than half of their grant funds by the end of the fiscal year. It is unclear if PED is providing sufficient guidance in the use of funds to benefit Native American students in specific nations, tribes, and pueblos.

## **RELATED BILLS**

HB 250, Native American Student Needs Assessments  
SB 420, Indian Education Needs Assessments

## **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- LESC Files
- Indian Affairs Department (IAD)
- Legislative Finance Committee (LFC)
- Public Education Department (PED)

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