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

Bill Number HB495 **Sponsor** Madrid/Garratt
Tracking Number .213257.1 **Committee Referrals** HEC/HAFC
Short Title Level 1 Teacher Mentoring
Analyst Sena **Original Date** 2/12/19
Last Updated _____

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 495 (HB495) would appropriate \$2.5 million to the Public Education Department (PED) to pay the cost of statutorily required mentoring of all beginning level 1 teachers.

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would appropriate \$2.5 million from the general fund to PED for expenditure in FY20. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY20 shall revert to the general fund.

Both the Legislative Finance Committee and the executive recommend appropriating \$2.5 million for general teacher development and mentorship. Those recommendations, though, would fund development and mentorship for all teachers, not just beginning level 1 teachers. It is unclear how much school districts spend annually to provide mentoring or how much is needed to do so.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

According to PED, there were about 2,900 full-time level 1 teachers during the 2017-2018 school year. It is unclear how many of those were beginning teachers.

Mentorships for beginning teachers are a crucial component to ensuring new teachers receive the guidance and support they need to be effective educators. Research has also found first-year teachers assigned a mentor were more likely to return the following year, indicating mentoring can be a valuable retention strategy.

Statute and Rule. Section 22-10A-9 NMSA 1978 requires PED to develop a framework for beginning teacher mentorship that includes support and assistance for each beginning teacher, structured training for mentors, formative and summative evaluation to assess teacher performance, and regular review of the mentorship program. School districts are required to submit

a plan to PED for mentorship programs that aligns to the state's framework. All level 1 teachers are required to complete a mentorship of at least one year before advancing to level 2.

How school districts fulfill the statutory responsibility to mentor beginning teachers varies. While some school districts have clear policies and structures for mentorship, others often leave mentoring to the discretion of school site administrators, causing uneven results that do not necessarily lead to effective teacher development or retention.

Funding. Statute requires that 50 percent of available mentorship funds be distributed to districts before the 15th day of September of the fiscal year according to the estimated number of teachers eligible for mentoring, with the balance distributed on or before the 15th day of January of the fiscal year according to the actual number of eligible teachers.

Because of the limited funds allocated for mentorship, districts have used operational funds to support mentorship programs, including stipends for mentor teachers. In recent years, PED has directed funding to professional development and mentoring initiatives such as Teachers Pursuing Excellence and Principals Pursuing Excellence. The programs have shown positive results, but have been limited to a handful of schools and school districts.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

PED would be responsible for administering funding, accepting, and reviewing school district mentorship plans.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files

JDS/mc