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

Bill Number SB110/aSEC **Sponsor** Sapient

Tracking Number .210990.3 **Committee Referrals** SEC/SPAC

Short Title No PARCC Testing Requirement

Analyst Bedeaux **Original Date** 1/29/19
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BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of SEC Amendment

The Senate Education Committee amendment to SB110 (SB110/aSEC) would require the adoption of a new assessment for the 2019-2020 school year.

Synopsis of Original Bill

SB110 would require the Public Education Department (PED) to discontinue the use of the PARCC English language arts and mathematics exams by the 2020-2021 school year, and require PED to design or contract for the design of a different assessment.

FISCAL IMPACT

SB110/aSEC does not contain an appropriation.

Designing a new assessment from scratch or contracting for the design of an assessment would have a significant initial cost along with recurring costs for annual assessment item development. The Legislative Finance Committee budget recommendation for FY20 includes a recurring categorical appropriation of \$6.6 million, and the executive recommendation includes \$6 million, for standards-based assessments in English language arts and mathematics. The executive budget recommendation for FY20 includes a nonrecurring \$2 million appropriation to research and develop standards based assessments.

Contracting with a different national assessment consortium like the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium would likely have annual recurring costs similar to those of the PARCC, but PED notes a request for proposals (RFP) would be necessary to determine the cost of a new contract.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

SB110/aSEC would require the state to discontinue the use of the PARCC exam, but the state would still need to participate in standardized testing to maintain eligibility for federal funding. For New Mexico to continue receiving about \$100 million in federal Title I funds, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires the state to assess students in English language arts and

mathematics in third through eighth grade and at least once in high school. The state Assessment and Accountability Act also requires students to participate in standardized testing.

During its time as the statewide assessment, PARCC was criticized for its use as the primary determinant of school grades and teacher evaluation scores and for the amount of time set aside for its administration. The previous administration reserved three weeks at the end of the school year for PARCC testing between the 2014-2015 school year, and after receiving feedback from teachers and students that the amount of time used for testing was reducing the time teachers could spend on instruction, reduced the length of the tests in the 2018-2019 school year.

The governor has already begun transitioning the state away from the use of the PARCC assessment. Executive Order 2019-001 requires PED to transition away from the PARCC and “pursue ratings and assessments that will decrease unnecessary pressure on students and teachers, provide more time for instruction, and conserve resources.” A PED memo to school districts and charter schools on January 10, 2019, noted the Spring 2019 Transition Assessment, the assessment slated to replace PARCC at the end of the 2018-2019 school year, would reduce overall testing time by 30 percent, down one to one and one half hours of testing time per subject area. The memo also notes the transition assessment will maintain comparability to prior years’ assessments and will be aligned to the Common Core State Standards.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

To remain in compliance with ESSA and the state Assessment and Accountability Act, PED would be required to design or contract for the design of a new assessment by the 2019-2020 school year. Designing a new assessment is a labor intensive process that will likely require the department to contract with technical experts. PED will also need to provide training and resources to school district and school test coordinators, principals, and teachers statewide to ensure the new assessment is reliably implemented.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

In 2010, the PARCC consortium was made up of 25 states and Washington D.C. that worked to create a standard set of kindergarten through 12th grade assessments. Each year since 2010, a number of states left the consortium, leaving only seven members at the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year. With the issuance of Executive Order 2019-001, New Mexico is no longer a member of the PARCC consortium.

RELATED BILLS

Related to HB92, Limit School Testing Time, which would limit the time allocated for standardized testing to 25 hours per school year, with students to be tested for no more than three hours per day.

Related to SB229, School Support and Accountability Act, which would repeal the A-B-C-D-F Schools Rating Act and replace it with a system designed to differentiate and support Title I schools based on academic achievement and growth; college-, career-, and civic-readiness; chronic absenteeism; progress toward English language proficiency; and school climate.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files
- Public Education Department (PED)