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**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**  
**BILL ANALYSIS**  
**54th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2020**

**Bill Number** HM31                      **Sponsor** Garcia, M.  
**Tracking Number** .216934.1              **Committee Referrals** HLLC  
**Short Title** Include Acequia & Land Grant Learning  
**Analyst** Porter                                      **Original Date** 2/3/2020  
**Last Updated** \_\_\_\_\_

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**BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis of Memorial

House Memorial 31 (HM31) requests the reform of New Mexico’s educational system include learning about acequias and land grants as part of a multicultural and equitable education for diverse student populations in New Mexico.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Memorials do not contain appropriations.

**SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Judicial District Court found the *Martinez* and *Yazzie* consolidated lawsuit specifically noted that at-risk students, including students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, Native American students, and English learners, have not had the opportunity to obtain a culturally relevant education. HM31 suggests that culturally relevant education should include the study of the historical development of acequia and land grant communities and the issues they encounter. Analysis from the State Land Office notes including education in the history and structure of land grants and acequias provides students with a robust context for some of the earliest governmental structures in the history of the state.

New Mexico’s state content standards for social studies identified in Part 10 of Section 6.29.11 NMAC currently requires the study of acequias and land grants in public schools. The history learning benchmarks for ninth through 12<sup>th</sup> grade require students to accomplish the following:

*“analyze the geographic, economic, social and political factors of New Mexico that impact United States and world history, to include: land grant treaty issues unresolved to present day and continuing to impact relations between and among citizens at the state, tribal and federal government levels; role of water issues as they relate to development of industry, population growth, historical issues and current acequia systems/water organizations....”*

Education about acequias and land grants could be incorporated into additional history and geography learning benchmarks, as related to New Mexico history and geography, where relevant.

Many New Mexico state departments, universities, and school districts have taken recent strides to further incorporate ethnic and multicultural studies into policy, trainings, and curriculum. One of the Indian Affairs Department's missions is to support tribal communities' efforts to expand opportunities, leverage state resources to tribal benefit, and work to create relationships across state, tribal, philanthropic, educational, and private sectors for the New Mexico Indian nations, tribes, and pueblos. Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) has offered ethnic studies in all 13 of its high schools, and the University of New Mexico (UNM) Ethnic Studies Department is currently implementing a dual credit ethnic studies college preparation program in seven APS schools. At the November 2019 LESC committee meeting, Dr. Irene Vasquez of the UNM Chicano/Chicana Studies Department provided an overview of the program's impact on high school students. Data from the first cohort enrolled in the UNM ethnic studies dual credit program in 2016 reflects improved academic outcomes including higher grade point averages (GPAs), increased college enrollment and retention, and a strengthened sense of community connection.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

The Public Education Department (PED) is requested to develop methods to integrate learning about acequias and land grants into the curriculum. The Higher Education Department (HED) is requested to train and develop educators for multicultural curriculum development. The Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations, the Ben Lujan Leadership and Public Policy Institute, and New Mexico Highlands University are requested to convene educators, community leaders and stakeholders to develop recommendations and provide them to PED and HED.

The Acequia Association, Acequia Commission, Land Grant Council, and New Mexico Land Grant Consejo are requested to develop and provide recommendations to PED and HED for integration of acequias and land grants into multicultural curriculum development.

### **RELATED BILLS**

Duplicate of SM31, Include Acequia & Land Grant Learning.

Relates to SB239, Acequias & Land Grants In Public Education, which appropriates funds to the Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations and to the Ben Lujan Leadership and Public Policy Institute to study and develop recommendations for integration of acequias and land grants into public education curriculum.

### **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- LESC Files
- State Land Office (SLO)

**LAP/tb/mc/sgs**