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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

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| <b>SPONSOR</b> <u>Lopez/Roybal Caballero</u>              | <b>LAST UPDATED</b> _____                 |
|   | <b>ORIGINAL DATE</b> <u>2/12/23</u>       |
| <b>SHORT TITLE</b> <u>Define Public Ed Ethnic Studies</u> | <b>BILL NUMBER</b> <u>Senate Bill 340</u> |
|   | <b>ANALYST</b> <u>Helms</u>               |

### ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT\* (dollars in thousands)

|  | FY23 | FY24 | FY25                      | 3 Year Total Cost         | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|--|------|------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
|  |      |      | Indeterminate but minimal | Indeterminate but minimal | Recurring                 | General Fund  |

Parentheses ( ) indicate expenditure decreases.  
 \*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

### Sources of Information

LFC Files

No Response Received  
 Public Education Department (PED)  
 Department of Indian Affairs (IAD)

## SUMMARY

### Synopsis of Senate Bill 340

Senate Bill 340 (SB340) amends Section 22-13-1 NMSA 1978 to add ethnic studies into several requirements in public schools. Senate Bill 340 adds ethnic studies as a required content area beginning with the 2025-2026 school year for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. SB340 adds that for students entering ninth grade in the 2024-2025 school year, graduation requirements will include four units in social science, with a half unit of ethnic studies and also replaces the general requirement for 7.5 elective units to only seven elective units beginning in the 2024-2025 school year.

SB340 defines ethnic studies as “the interdisciplinary study of multiple perspectives through the examination of social, ethnic, cultural, gender, and historical experiences to build critical thinking skills.

SB340 impacts graduation requirements for ethnic studies beginning in FY25 and ethnic studies as a required content area for kindergarten to eighth grade students beginning in FY26.

## FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Senate Bill 340 does not contain an appropriation.

SB340 keeps total graduation requirements constant at 24 units and replaces one half unit for electives with one additional elective studies unit categorized under social studies. While there would be some administrative cost to PED for ensuring districts and schools understand this change, LFC analysis estimates this would not impact overall costs of providing an education, as the sum total of graduation requirements remains unchanged.

SB340 also requires ethnic studies as a content area integrated in kindergarten to third grade, and in fourth to eighth grade. Costs of integrating this curricular change would likely be absorbed into ongoing professional development and curriculum development. For kindergarten to third grade, SB340 states students, “shall have grade-appropriate instruction on ethnic studies relating to New Mexico history.” The bill is not clear on how schools would implement this or how PED or the Legislature would ensure this requirement was met.

Ethnic studies would also be added as a minimum instructional area for fourth to eighth grade. Costs of integrating this curricular change would likely be absorbed into ongoing professional development, curriculum development, and curriculum oversight and technical assistance at PED. The other current subject areas are reading and language arts, mathematic, language other than English, communications, science, art, music, social studies, New Mexico history, United States history, geography, physical education, and health education.

Although ethnic studies will be a social science course and current social science instructors can likely be used to teach the course, public high schools may incur a cost if they determine the need to hire ethnic studies instructors.

## SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Several neighboring states that perform more highly on national assessments have incorporated ethnic studies into their public schools. Nevada authorized multicultural studies in schools and includes multicultural education, a facet of ethnic studies, in its social studies standards. Oklahoma has adopted grade-level frameworks for social studies standards that are required to reflect the racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity of the U.S., for all students enrolled in the state’s public schools. In the past four years, Texas added electives in Mexican American and African American studies.

A prior analysis from the Office of African American Affairs on ethnic studies in schools indicated, research shows the value of ethnic studies in contributing to growth in students’ critical thinking, sense of empowerment, wellness, and academic success, beyond building knowledge about racial and ethnic communities. A study from the Stanford Graduate School of Education in 2016 found high school ethnic studies courses examining the roles of race, nationality, and culture on identity and experience increased attendance and academic performance for students at risk of dropping out of school.

The Public Education Department has made some efforts to include curricula that represent the diverse populations within the state. In 2016, the regional education cooperatives (RECs) and the

Indian Education Division of PED administered an Indigenous New Mexico Curriculum Initiative with the goal of incorporating the provided lesson plans into the public school system. The Indian Pueblo Cultural Center (IPCC) created the Indigenous Wisdom Curriculum Project that includes downloadable curricula that can be used by kindergarten-through 12th-grade educators to strengthen the identity of Native American students. However, these efforts have not been implemented statewide.

The Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) has continued working on its Sowing Seeds Project – a digital eight-lesson capacity-building workshop for tribal communities to create early childhood learning curricula infused with the values, culture, and language from within their own knowledge systems.

## **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

Given poor performance on recent National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) scores, curricular changes should be implemented with an awareness of the need for basic reading and math skills in New Mexico.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

Schools and districts, and PED, will need to consider how to best meet the description and implementation set forth for ethnic studies. If the full scope of ethnic studies was met, this could incur moderately significant administrative time.

## **CONFLICT, RELATIONSHIP**

House Bill 126 amends graduation requirements and could conflict with SB340. While SB340 requires seven total elective units instead of 7.5 elective units and keeps total graduation units the same, House Bill 126 would move elective units to four units plus two additional units set by local administrators.

House Bill 111 relates to SB340, as it would require each school district and charter school to offer seventh and eighth graders an elective on the Holocaust and genocide starting with 2024-2025 school year.

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