

LFC Requester: Liu



**PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
BILL ANALYSIS
2025 REGULAR SESSION**

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Check all that apply:

Original Amendment
Correction Substitute

Date Prepared: 02/01 /25

Bill No: SB235

Agency Name and Code: PED - 924

Sponsor: Soules

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Short Title: SCHOOL MATH CHANGES

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SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
None	None	N/A	NFA

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27	FY28		
None	None	None	N/A	NFA

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	None	None	None	N/A	N/A	NFA

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the [General Appropriation Act](#): None.

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: Senate Bill 235 (SB235) would amend [22-15E-2 NMSA 1978](#) of the [Mathematics and Science Education Act](#), and require the Public Education Department (PED) Mathematics and Science Bureau to monitor the implementation of instructional materials and professional development in mathematics and science. The bill mandates that school districts and charter schools develop mathematics professional learning plans; screen students' on early numeracy prior to their completion of the second grade; notify parents of students with difficulties in mathematics ; and provide appropriate interventions using a multi-layered system of support.

The bill does not provide an effective date. Laws go into effect 90 days after the adjournment of the Legislature enacting them, unless a later date is specified. If enacted, this bill would become effective June 20, 2025.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

This bill contains no appropriation.

The Executive budget recommendation for Public School Support includes \$15 million for expenditure over three years for math improvement initiatives.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Mathematics student achievement trends. In New Mexico, [23 percent](#) of students scored proficient or above on mathematics tests in the 2023-2024 school year. Gaps in math achievement are notably different for at-risk students. Proficiency rates for at-risk student groups in the same school year include:

- 13 percent of Native American students;
- 8 percent of students with disabilities; and
- 15 percent of students who are economically disadvantaged.

Results from the 2024 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) indicate that [20 percent](#) of fourth graders were proficient in mathematics, whereas [11 percent](#) of eighth graders were proficient. The difference in the average NAEP scores for fourth and eighth grade indicate that achievement begins to decline as students approach and enter middle school. Moreover, the average NAEP score in New Mexico for fourth and eighth graders was lower than the average score in the nation.

It should be noted that New Mexico's statewide summative assessments include the New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement (NM-MSSA) for students in grades three through eight and the SAT for students in grade 11. The NAEP, by contrast, does not test every student but rather tests a sample of each state's school. In addition, the NM-MSSA is aligned to New Mexico state content and academic standards where as the NAEP is not fully aligned.

High-quality job-embedded professional learning for mathematics education. Researchers at *Education Week* estimate that most urban school districts spend between [\\$6,000 and \\$8,000](#) per teacher each year on professional development, but [another study](#) suggest these costs are often

underestimated. The New Teacher Project's study reported in [The Mirage](#) (2015) estimated that districts in their study spent an average of nearly \$18 thousand per teacher each year. The study also surveyed teachers and reported that nearly 10 percent of a typical school year, or 19 full school days, were spent on professional development activities. Despite these efforts, the researchers found most teachers do not improve substantially from year to year and districts find it difficult to evaluate these professional development efforts effectively. The study recommended schools redefine teacher development with clear, measurable progress standards, reevaluate and prioritize effective professional learning programs, and reinvent support structures.

Recent research from [the Council of Chief State School Officers \(CCSSO\)](#) consistently demonstrates teachers using high-quality instructional materials boosts student achievement in reading and math. Research also indicates professional learning experiences that help teachers use their specific curriculum to make informed decisions for their students can result in transformative impact in teaching and learning.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

A [2024](#) legislative hearing brief by the Legislative Education Study Committee reported that evidence-based student interventions are an effective way to address learning gaps and build student understanding in mathematics. Drawing from successful practices in other states, as reported by the Education Commission of the States, and national recommendations by CCSSO and ExcelinEd, this legislation ensures that New Mexico adopts proven strategies tailored to its unique educational landscape.

In 2022, Alabama passed the Alabama Numeracy Act, which required the state to convene a task force focused on math. In addition to reviewing HQIM for core instruction and intervention (NM already does this), the task force provides a continuum of high-quality professional learning opportunities centered on foundational math knowledge with funding and support for educators. The act requires the task force to monitor the implementation of intensive professional development for full support and limited support schools. The department regularly gathers data (e.g., usage data, surveys, site visits) on professional learning, the use of instructional materials, state-provided resources and technical assistance. Recent reports highlight Alabama's commitment to mathematics, recognizing it as one of the only states where average student achievement exceeds pre-pandemic levels in math. Recent NAEP data from the 2024 administration show Alabama had the most growth in Grade 4 math across the nation.

PED staff have technical expertise, capacity to implement the new requirements outlined in this legislation. Existing structures, personnel and resources align with the requirements necessary to support execution. There are internal processes in place to ensure implementation within the timeframes set without disrupting current ongoing work. The PED has planned to integrate these requirements into the current operations, leveraging established processes, systems, and expertise to maintain and execute effectively.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The department would establish a mathematics instructional leadership framework for public school administrators that would provide guidance for mathematical content, instruction,

ongoing learning in mathematics, mathematics coaching and program evaluation. Additionally, the PED would determine the minimum course requirements for mathematics licensure strands, across several different grade spans, and develop professional learning plan standards for mathematics for both elementary and secondary teachers. Finally, the PED would identify early numeracy screening tools for public schools' use in identifying students with learning difficulties in mathematics.

The bill also requires local school districts and charter schools to implement professional mathematics learning plans for schools, according to guidance established by the department, which are to be updated biennially. The bill would require that any teacher hired to be a math coach must hold a mathematics specialist license endorsement. Beginning in FY27, public schools would be required to screen students' math performance on department-approved numeracy screeners prior to the end of second grade, provide specific interventions to kindergarten through fifth grade students identified with as having math difficulties, and notify parents if so identified.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Relates to SB 116, Math Lab Pilot Project, which proposes to grant awards to participating school districts to establish and conduct math labs to improve math proficiency.

Relates to SB 107, NMSU STEM Center of Excellence, which proposes to establish a STEM center of excellence at NMSU, develop a stem innovation network and promote innovative practices and programs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

None.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

None.

ALTERNATIVES

None.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Failure to enact this bill would likely perpetuate the low proficiency rates in mathematics and science, leaving students unprepared for college and career opportunities. The continued lack of progress would disproportionately affect historically disenfranchised communities, exacerbating educational inequities and failing to address the deficiencies outlined in the Martinez Yazzie lawsuit. The absence of a coordinated statewide approach could result in fragmented efforts and missed opportunities to replicate the early successes seen under SB398 (2019). Without this legislation, New Mexico risks falling further behind in providing its students with the education they need and deserve.

AMENDMENTS

None.