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LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS
57th Legislature, 1st Session, 2025

Bill Number	<u>SB314/aSEC</u>	Sponsor	<u>Stefanics/Gonzales/Lord</u>
Tracking Number	<u>.229880.3</u>	Committee Referrals	<u>SEC/SFC</u>
Short Title	<u>Torrance County NM History Curriculum</u>		
Analyst	<u>Hicks</u>	Original Date	<u>2/27/2025</u>
		Last Updated	<u></u>

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of SEC Amendment

The Senate Education Committee Amendment to SB314 (SB314/aSEC) adds language to change the entities responsible for developing the history curriculum. Rather than directing the Torrance County Farm and Livestock Bureau to develop curriculum, the responsibility to develop *and implement* curriculum would now be given to Estancia Municipal School District and Mountainair Public School District. Additionally, the fiscal agent for the proposed appropriation would be the Public Education Department (PED) rather than New Mexico State University.

Synopsis of Original Bill

Senate Bill 314 (SB314) would provide funding to the Torrance County Farm and Livestock Bureau through New Mexico State University to develop curriculum for a high school history course covering the settlement of the Lower Estancia Valley. This curriculum would be required to include the history of the valley spanning from pre-Columbian times to modern day.

FISCAL IMPACT

SB314/aSEC appropriates \$250 thousand from the general fund to PED for expenditure in FY26 and FY27. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY27 shall revert to the general fund.

The House Appropriations and Finance Committee Substitute for House Bills 2 and 3 (HB2/HAFCS) includes a \$55 million appropriation to the state's public school funding formula, the state equalization guarantee (SEG), distribution for school districts and charter schools to purchase culturally and linguistically appropriate instructional materials.

Separate appropriations to specific schools or districts, such as the one included in SB314/aSEC, could have a disequalizing effect on the public school funding formula.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

New Mexico Social Studies Standards. PED’s [social studies standards](#) for high school New Mexico history, last revised in 2022, include several broad New Mexico-specific themes that could accommodate a high school course on the history of the Lower Estancia Valley, namely themes two, seven, and eight. These New Mexico history themes cover the state’s agricultural industry and heritage, cattle ranching and water use, historical and cultural preservation, and resource management.

Despite the inclusion of New Mexico history in the state’s social studies standards, it should be noted PED’s [high-quality instructional materials \(HQIM\) list](#) for high school social studies does not currently include any New Mexico-specific history materials. However, PED does offer a [New Mexico Social Studies Instructional Scope](#) to assist teachers in lesson planning informed by students’ learning needs, culture, and language.

Role of the Legislature, PED, and Schools in Curriculum Setting. In New Mexico, selection or development of specific curriculum is left to the discretion of local school districts and charter schools, though curriculum must fall within broader educational standards set by PED through administrative rule. PED does provide a list of HQIM reviewed by New Mexico educators to schools, but schools are not required to only adopt materials included on this list. The Legislature provides financial support to schools for the purchasing of instructional materials through the SEG and sets instructional requirements for students, such as through the establishment of graduation requirements.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

SB314/aSEC would likely have administrative implications for PED, as the department would need to manage and distribute the proposed appropriation to the two school districts identified.

Additionally, both Mountainair Schools and Estancia School District would likely see administrative implications related to developing and implementing the required history curriculum.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Estancia Valley and Torrance County. The Estancia Valley covers 2,000 square miles in central New Mexico and is primarily located in Torrance County. With a dry climate, fertile soil, and high elevation, this region of the state is often noted as one of the most productive agricultural counties in the nation, producing crops such as pinto beans, corn, alfalfa, and pumpkins, among others. Created in 1903 from a portion of neighboring Valencia County, the county today has a population over 15 thousand. According to [2019 data](#) from the New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau, 716 farms operate in Torrance County and sold nearly \$46 million in products that year.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files
- LFC Files
- New Mexico Regional Education Cooperatives Association (NMRECA)
- Public Education Department (PED)