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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Steinborn ORIGINAL DATE 3/14/09 LAST UPDATED _____ HM 98
SHORT TITLE Allen & Virginia Crane's Reading Techniques SB _____
ANALYST Wilson

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY09	FY10	FY11	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
Total		Unknown See Below	Unknown See Below		Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Memorial 98 honors Allen and Virginia Crane for their extraordinary efforts to improve the lives of New Mexico citizens by helping them to read.

The Public Education Department (PED) is requested to follow up on the proclamation issued by Governor Bill Richardson on July 30, 2004, in which he encouraged schools and parents to adjust desk heights and provide eye examinations for all students, to determine if strides have been made in securing these important components of the Lions Crane reading program for public school students.

PED is requested to evaluate the program's components and techniques and consider adopting them for use in New Mexico public schools to improve reading scores and other indices of adequate yearly progress required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

PED must report its findings and recommendations to the Legislative Education Study Committee by November 1, 2009.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

PED states that fulfilling the requests of HM 98 will require considerable costs, specifically for:

- surveying school districts across the state to determine if advances have been made in providing eye exams for all public school students and if student desk heights are appropriate;
- evaluation studies of the components and techniques of the Crane program;
- if approved, the adoption of the program into all New Mexico schools will require funds for textbooks, other materials, and teacher training.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Allen and Virginia Crane have dedicated their lives to helping children overcome reading challenges.

The Cranes have researched how underlying problems, such as poor vision and allergies, affect reading ability in various subgroups in New Mexico.

The Cranes have served southern New Mexico since 1997 by offering exemplary programs to treat reading failure in at-risk students and to increase reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and decoding skills in wider populations.

Allen and Virginia Crane have provided free training for teachers in public and private schools to implement the Crane reading program and increase student success.

The reading program was adopted by the Las Cruces Lions clubs, and, with the clubs' help, by 2008-2009, the Lions Crane reading program had helped almost 2,500 children in four school districts across southern New Mexico.

The Lions Crane reading program was chosen as one of the top three Lions service projects in the world, out of 45,000 Lions clubs in 93 countries at the Lions clubs international meeting in Tokyo in July 2005.

The Cranes incorporated the nonprofit New Mexico Lions Crane reading foundation, which is supported by grants and donations to provide vision care and reading programs for children in New Mexico.

Students participating in the six-week summer 2008 Lions Crane reading program demonstrated a doubling of average reading speed with over 80% comprehension, and students who were scheduled to repeat their last year's grade became eligible for promotion to the next grade after participating in the summer program.

The Lions Crane reading program at Gadsden high school has resulted in reading improvements of between two and four grade levels in one semester, with a few students increasing their reading levels as much as eight grades.

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Testimonials from participating public schools in the Cobre consolidated school district show that the reading program developed by Allen and Virginia Crane is making a remarkable difference in reading scores.

The ability to read is basic not just to success in school but to success in life.

PED provided the following:

HM 98 is unclear in its expectations for the request that PED follow up on Gov. Richardson's 2004 proclamation encouraging schools and parents to adjust desk heights and provide eye exams for all students. The phrase "to determine if strides have been made in securing these important components" does not specify benchmarks against which survey results can be measured and reported.

It will be difficult for PED to complete the requests within the timeframe required by HB 98 without specific benchmarks and without the resources to conduct a statewide survey of all school districts and to evaluate the program's components and techniques

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Administratively, PED notes three major projects will have to be organized, each requiring an undetermined number of staff and clerical personnel. They are as follows:

1. A survey of all public schools to determine if "strides have been made in securing these important components" of the Crane program;.
2. An evaluation project of the program's components and techniques;
3. If the program is adopted, integrating it into each district and school will require teacher training and the rewriting of curriculum.

DW/mt