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**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**  
**BILL ANALYSIS**  
**56th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2024**

<b>Bill Number</b>	<u>HB142</u>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<u>Hochman-Vigil</u>
<b>Tracking Number</b>	<u>.227018.2</u>	<b>Committee Referrals</b>	<u>HEC/HAFC</u>
<b>Short Title</b>	<u>Reimbursement for Pre-SAT Test Scores</u>		
<b>Analyst</b>	<u>Hathaway</u>	<b>Original Date</b>	<u>1/30/2024</u>
		<b>Last Updated</b>	<u></u>

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## **BILL SUMMARY**

### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 142 (HB142) makes an appropriation to the Public Education Department (PED) to provide reimbursement for the cost of the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test—commonly known as the PSAT—for high school juniors who achieve a score of 1000 or above on the test during their junior year of high school.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill appropriates \$80 thousand from the general fund to PED for expenditure in FY25. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY25 shall revert to the general fund.

For FY25, the House Appropriations and Finance Committee Substitute for House Bills 2 and 3 (HAFCS/HB2) does not appear to contain an appropriation that corresponds to the provisions of HB142.

## **SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

**Cost of PSAT/NMSQT.** The College Board, a national nonprofit organization that develops the PSAT, as well as other assessments, [reports](#) the cost of the PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT, the formal name of the PSAT) is \$18 per exam. Given current scores and costs, discussed in greater detail below, LESL staff estimate the proposed appropriation of \$80 thousand would be sufficient to fund reimbursement of assessments. This cost projection uses 2023 assessment data from actual PSAT/NMSQT scores that shows 1,869 11th grade students scored above 1000 in 2023 and assumes the College Board's stated cost of \$18 per exam (1,869 x \$18), for a total of \$33,642.

**About the PSAT.** The PSAT is part of a suite of assessments produced by the College Board, a national nonprofit organization that develops and administers standardized tests and curricula used by both kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) and postsecondary educational institutions. This

suite of assessments includes the PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, PSAT 8/9, and the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). The College Board also administers Advanced Placement (AP) assessments.

HB142 proposes reimbursing high school juniors who take the PSAT/NMSQT if they score 1000 or greater on the assessment. While data shows most students in New Mexico take the PSAT/NMSQT during 10th grade, some students do take this assessment during 11th grade.

[Data](#) from New Mexico shows that 50,111 test takers completed either the SAT or a PSAT-related assessment (PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, or PSAT 8/9) in the 2022-2023 school year. Of these, 5,496 of “test takers” were 11th grade (high school junior) students taking the PSAT/NMSQT.

**PSAT Suite of Assessments Test Takers**  
2022-2023 School Year

Assessment	Grade Taking Assessment	Count of Test Takers	Participation Rate
PSAT/NMSQT	Grade 11 (High School Junior)	5,496	22%
PSAT/NMSQT or PSAT 10	Grade 10 (High School Sophomore)	20,159	72%
PSAT 8/9	Grade 9 (High School Freshman)	3,254	10%
PSAT 8/9	Grade 8 (Middle School)	1,241	5%

Source: The College Board

Of these students who take the PSAT/NMSQT as high school juniors, 23 percent (1,264 students) score between 1000-1190, 10 percent (550 students) score between 1200-1390, and 1 percent (55 students) score between 1400-1520. This totals to 1,869 students scoring 1000 or greater among students who take the PSAT/NMSQT as high school juniors.

**Test Fees Covered by PED.** As indicated in a July 2023 [memo](#) from PED, the department does pay for all New Mexico public school 10th grade students to take the PSAT/NMSQT assessment during the annual PSAT/SAT testing window each October. This memo does explicitly say the assessment cost is covered for 10th grade students, but not 11th grade students. The provisions of HB142 may be intended to fund exam costs for students who take, or re-take, the PSAT/NMSQT assessment later in their high school career. Data from the College Board does show significantly more students take this exam in 10th grade (20,159 students) compared with those who take it in 11th grade (5,496 students), but several thousand students still take the exam in their junior year.

## ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

PED would be responsible for the administration of funds, as well as determining a methodology to provide reimbursement for high school juniors. Agency analysis on HB142 was not available at the time of writing, but as PED has both an Assessment Bureau and a College and Career Readiness Bureau that oversee similar topics and already provide reimbursement for some assessments, LESC staff analysis suggests PED would be able to incorporate this responsibility into current department workflows.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files

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