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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/20/15

SPONSOR Garcia Richard LAST UPDATED _____ HB 345

SHORT TITLE Gov't Literacy as Elective & Dual Credit SB _____

ANALYST Gudgel

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY15	FY16		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Public Education Department (PED)

Higher Education Department (HED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 345 specifies that an interactive government literacy course will be adopted by PED and HED as a course that is eligible for dual-credit and credit an elective course toward the requirements for a New Mexico Diploma of Excellence.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

NFI

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Currently, secondary students are required to complete 23 units of coursework to graduate, and 24 units of coursework to earn a New Mexico Diploma of Excellence, 7.5 of which must be electives. Of the required courses, New Mexico students must complete a 0.5 credit course in government. Additionally, to graduate, a student must complete an honors, dual credit, advanced placement, or distance learning course. School districts and charter schools are currently required to offer electives in student service learning and financial literacy, and may offer pre-apprenticeship programs and media literacy as electives. The bill would explicitly allow school

districts and charter schools to offer an interactive government literacy course for high school elective credit or as a dual-credit course pursuant to the state’s dual-credit program.

PED does not have a list of approved interactive government literacy courses or programs, and under state rule, school districts and charter schools do not need to seek PED approval to develop and offer elective courses if approved by the local school board or governing body of the charter school. During previous legislative sessions, PED indicated there is no reason certain elective courses would need PED approval compared to other electives.

PED also indicates current statute does not specify dual credit offerings and does not preclude a school from offering an interactive government literacy course.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

PED and HED will be required to include an interactive government literacy course as an approved dual credit courses.

DUPLICATION

SB 445 is a duplicate.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Nationally, student awareness of concepts related to government and civics is deficient. According to Indiana University’s Center for Civic Literacy:

- Survey research indicates only 36 percent of Americans can name the three branches of government.
- Fewer than half of 12th grade students can define federalism.
- Barely 35 percent of teenagers recognize “We the People” as the first three words of the Constitution.
- Only five percent of high school seniors can define America’s system of checks and balances.

RSG/bb