

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current FIRs (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) are available on the NM Legislative Website (legis.state.nm.us). Adobe PDF versions include all attachments, whereas HTML versions may not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE
LAST UPDATED

SPONSOR Gonzales 2/07/06 HB 699

SHORT TITLE TAOS PUEBLO DAY SCHOOL SB _____

ANALYST Weber

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	\$115.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Indian Affairs Department (IAD)

Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 699 appropriates \$115 thousand from the general fund to Indian Affairs Department for the purpose of supporting the Taos Pueblo Day School

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$115 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY07 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Indian Affairs Department reports.

Taos Day School (TDS) is located on the Taos Pueblo Indian Reservation in Northern New Mexico, 3 miles north of the town of Taos. The school serves one hundred and seventy (170) students in grades kindergarten through eighth. Fifty-two percent (52%) of TDS students live in

households below the poverty level. All students are Native Americans. The majority of the students are a mixture of Native American tribes, Hispanic or Anglo. Twenty-four percent (24%) of the children are full-blooded Taos. Fourteen percent (14%) are from another tribe altogether. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the children at the school receive free and reduced lunches. (Retrieved from <http://www.laplaza.org/edu/tds/>)

The Taos Day School's "Baby Faces" program is an early childhood program that serves children from prenatal to 3 years old. For the past three years, two parent educators have gone to the homes of their students to teach literacy, culture, language preservation, and parenting skills; in addition, these teachers have conducted screenings and tracked milestones for early childhood development. The program partners with the Taos Day Care, Headstart, and "Little Angels" programs in the community and has the support of the Governor of the Taos Pueblo. Early intervention for these children is significant and has a positive effect on the intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development of the children. In the Pueblo of Taos, this also affects the cultural development of Baby Faces participants. They also conduct monthly group meetings and literacy skills.

For the past 3 years, the program has been funded by the Title 1, however these funds have been drastically cut. The appropriation would provide mileage, salaries for two staff (Parent Educators) and other program costs.

This program, unique in design and concept in the Taos Pueblo, is a special project with the Indian Affairs Department. HB 699 would appropriate funds needed to keep the program services for the Taos Pueblo.

As it relates to Tribal Literacy Even Start Programs: One of the biggest challenges for many American Indians is overcoming isolation from the larger society, yet at the same time dealing with the influences and opposing cultural forces outside the reservation which contribute to parents' reluctance to attend adult education classes and becoming involved in their children's schools and spending more time in the "outside" community. Further, extreme poverty and a high rate of unemployment are challenges for most American Indian communities and for many Even Start families. One factor is geographic isolation. Lack of sufficient space and facilities for project activities is a challenge as well as culturally relevant early childhood curriculum materials and resources. (National Evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program, Report on Even Start Projects for Indian Tribes and Tribal Organizations, Executive Summary, Feb. 18, 1997)

HB 699 would address areas important to Tribal communities:

- Help break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by improving the educational opportunities of the nation's low-income families by integrating early childhood education;
- Supplement the academic achievement goals of the Taos school in accordance with their own National Education goals;
- Assist children from low-income families to achieve early childhood development standards.