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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Varela ORIGINAL DATE 01/22/07
LAST UPDATED _____ HB 25
SHORT TITLE Programs for Low-Income Children SB _____
ANALYST Geisler

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	1,250.0	Recurring	General

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Health (DOH)
Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 25 would appropriate \$1,250,000 to the Department of Health (DOH) to contract with a non-profit dance organization based in Santa Fe County to implement an anti-obesity, nutrition education, self-esteem and fitness dance program to low-income, at-risk children in public elementary and middle schools statewide. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2008 would revert to the general fund.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The Governor's Executive Budget recommendation for FY08 includes \$650,000 for youth dance to serve low-income at-risk children and the Legislative Finance Committee budget recommendation includes \$300,000. Funding for this program was \$400,000 in FY07.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

House Bill 25 would provide funding to a dance instruction and performance program, to help

increase physical activity among youth. Twenty-six percent of high school youth, and 24% of 2-5 year olds who participate in federally funded nutrition programs in New Mexico, are overweight or at risk for overweight; these rates have been consistently Physical activity guidelines for youth recommend at least 60 minutes of accumulated moderate to vigorous activity on most days of the week.

In 2005 an estimated 41.5% of New Mexican youth attended physical education classes; only 24.3% on a daily basis. School-based surveys show that some New Mexican youth work at having a healthy weight: 36% through healthy eating and 59.9% through exercise. Only 17.8% of New Mexico teens consume the daily recommended servings of fruit and vegetables. House Bill 25 could help promote good health through encouraging the consumption of more fruit and vegetables which is also associated with lower rates of obesity and overweight.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

DOH notes that this program has been well received; there is a waiting list for schools to get this initiative. Preliminary evaluation shows the program is well received by schools, teachers and students. A more formal evaluation of impact is scheduled for October 2007.

PED provides that evaluations of a dance program in New Mexico showed that students had improved grades and attendance during days in which the program was implemented; that students and teachers had positive written responses to the program; and parents and teachers commented on the positive effect of the program on student attitudes and behaviors, especially behaviors related to focus, dance skills and peer interactions.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

PED provided the following background on the childhood obesity:

- Since the 1970s, the prevalence of overweight among children has more than doubled for preschoolers ages 2-5 and adolescents ages 12-19, and has more than tripled for children 6-11 years.
- Overweight and obesity are major risk factors for chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, osteoporosis and some cancers.
- By ages 13 and 14, overweight boys, overweight Hispanic girls and overweight white girls have been found to have significantly lower self-esteem levels compared with their counterparts.
- Hispanic (25.9%) and non-Hispanic black (24.1%) children were significantly less likely to participate in organized physical activity compared to non-Hispanic white children (46.6%). Children of parents with lower incomes and educational levels were less likely to participate in organized physical activity.
- The National Association for Sports and Physical Education recommends that children engage in at least 60 minutes — and as much as several hours — of age-appropriate physical activity all or most days of the week. Fewer than one in four American children get 30 minutes or more of physical activity per day. More than three in four get no more than 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity per week.