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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 01/31/08

SPONSOR Gonzales LAST UPDATED _____ HB 513

SHORT TITLE Taos Schools Water Conservation Education SB _____

ANALYST Escudero

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$40.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates: HB 515, HB545, and HB559

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 513 appropriates \$40.0 to the Public Education Department for water conservation education in Taos Public Schools.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$40.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY09 shall revert to the general fund.

According to PED, the department would have to research available providers and staff would be required to develop a contract for this initiative. Time required for writing, approving and finalizing a contract totals 60 hours for one Ed Admin A equivalent @ \$25.50 plus benefits (\$1,989); 20 hours for one Exec Sec & Adm Asst A @ \$16.89 plus benefits (\$439.14) and 10 hours for Financial Spec O @ \$15.11 plus benefits (\$196.43) to set up accounts and process documentation. Total cost: \$2,624.57.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to PED, there are several different entities which offer water conservation education programs to youth throughout New Mexico. Each of them emphasizes the importance of building a strong connection between children, their natural environment, and their cultural heritage (e.g., Amigos Bravos, 2008; Rivers and Birds, 2008).

Water conservation education projects can align with NM Science Content Standards, Benchmarks, and Performance Standards, especially those that address the “complex relationships between living things and their environment” (NM State Department of Education, 2003).

In a 2003 position paper, the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) expressed strong support for inclusion of environmental education in the school curriculum because “student knowledge of environmental concepts establishes a foundation for their future understandings and actions as citizens.” NSTA further states, “Environmental education programs should foster observation, investigation, experimentation, and innovation...and encourage active learning” (NSTA, 2003).

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

This bill exactly duplicates HB 515, HB545, and HB559

TECHNICAL ISSUES

According to PED, because of the variety of water and watershed conservation programs available, some of which are offered on a national scale, parameters would have to be developed to adequately define the program that will meet the needs of Taos Public Schools. It is not clear whether this allocation would support a supplemental program for all students, if it is intended to be incorporated into the school district’s curriculum, or if it will be offered in some other way.

PME/mt