F I S C A L I M P A C T R E P O R T

SPONSOR Garcia, M.J. **ORIGINAL DATE** 01/24/08 **LAST UPDATED** **HB**

SHORT TITLE NMSU Science, Engineering & Math Academy **SB** 156

ANALYST Escudero

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	**FY09**		
	$200.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION
LFC Files

Responses Received From
New Mexico State University (NMSU)
Public Education Department (PED)
Higher Education Department (HED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 156 appropriates $200.0 to the Board of Regents of the Science, Engineering, Mathematics and Aerospace Academy at New Mexico State University to Improve Student Achievement and Increase Participation Statewide.

FISCAL IMPACT

The appropriation of $200.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense appropriated from the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 shall revert to the general fund.

This request was submitted to the Higher Education Department for review. The Departments funding recommendation for FY09 is a continuance of FY08 recurring funding in the amount of $81,000 with no additional funding at this time.

The HED's evaluation table of FY09 Research and Public Service Projects provided to the LFC classifies this project as a "supports state priorities" project. Reasons for this classification

decision are not provided. (LFC Report 07-20, Higher Education Department Review of Selected Research and Public Service Projects, January 12, 2008, Table 4, p74.)

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to NMSU - The purpose of the Southern New Mexico Science, Engineering, Mathematics, and Aerospace Academy (SEMAA) is to use the unique resources of our community to engage historically underrepresented youth (e.g., Hispanic, Native American, young women) in activities in the fields of science, engineering, mathematics, and technology.

- The SEMAA program works with 25 schools in an after school program that includes students from three school districts, Las Cruces Public Schools, Hatch Public Schools, and Gadsden Independent School District. These districts are located on the border of New Mexico and consist of cities that have a very poor socioeconomic population who are primarily second language learners. The program consists of a combination of school based curriculum enhancements, university organized enrichment activities, and parent outreach.
- Each component is designed to work seamlessly with the others as a comprehensive program to improve student achievement and increase participation in science, mathematics, engineering, and technology.
- The major components include eight-week sessions of enriched curriculum that emphasizes science, engineering, and mathematics with an overarching theme of aerospace education; and professional development for the new and continuing SEMAA teachers in order to use teaching strategies that integrate an inquiry approach to teaching science, engineering and mathematical concepts.
- Two of the eight-week sessions for middle and high school students are held on the campus of NMSU at the Aerospace Education Laboratory where the students use many different technological tools.
- SEMAA students join one eight-week session during each of their following grades until they graduate from high school. They have the option of joining a summer session. The curriculum is completely different for each year; so a student can gain a tremendous amount of knowledge if he or she stays with the program. The parents of SEMAA students meet during the eight-week session to talk about science and math education and how to help their children succeed in school.

According to HED, SEMAA has provided academic enrichment and career awareness for students and teachers from the Las Cruces, Gadsden and Hatch districts for the past eight years (semaa.nmsu.edu). It houses the Aerospace Educational Lab that was funded by NASA. Students and teachers come to that Lab on the NMSU campus after participating in after-school programs. Its summer programs have been particularly popular. In addition to NASA funding, SNM-SEMAA has received funding from several foundations. Engineering students, faculty and parents have also been active in the program, as well as students and faculty from the College of Education. SNM-SEMAA has been praised by NASA as its most successful SEMAA. Many of their materials have been translated into Spanish.

PME/mt