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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 01/28/08

SPONSOR Campos LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Luna College High School Preparatory Program SB 284

ANALYST Escudero

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$85.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Public Education Department (PED)
Higher Education Department (HED)
Luna Community College (LCC)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 284 appropriates \$85.0 from the general fund to the Higher Education Department (HED) to fund a summer “crossroads academy;” that is, a developmental and remedial college preparatory program for high school students for expenditure in fiscal year 2009 at Luna Community College (LCC).

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$85.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to 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 not submitted by Luna Community College to the New Mexico Higher Education Department for review and is not included in the departments funding recommendation for FY09.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to HED, Senate Bill 284 is a response to the high percentage of high school students needing remedial coursework upon entering LCC. According to Dr. Mary Ward, Interim Assistant to the President, a pilot project conducted last summer demonstrated that students improved basic skills through summer coursework and showed significant increases in college placement scores compared to students who did not participate in the summer coursework.

Veronica Serna, Director of the Access Department at LCC, attributes program success to the college instructional environment experienced by high school sophomores in the crossroads program. High school students are transported to the college to undertake rigorous eight-week courses with tutorial assistance. They study in the same classes as regular college students.

The crossroads program addresses the needs of some high school students who fall through the cracks. Many of these students go on to enroll in dual credit courses.

In coordination with the Public Education Department, NMHED is actively pursuing statewide solutions to the high percentage of entering college freshman needing remedial coursework. Task forces have worked diligently over the past two years formulating agreements around alignment leading toward dual credit that will help resolve this problem over time. The proposed college readiness assessment test will determine the level of remediation a students needs while in high school. The Cyber Academy will provide options for students

- NMHED recommends further examination of alignment issues between LCC and the local public schools. The School Transportation Bureau at NMPED allows support of the transportation costs of public school students on site or at LCC during the summer if included in the school budget.
- NMHED supports a more systemic approach through existing and future mechanisms to issues related to under-preparedness of high school students entering college. NMHED recommends closer collaboration between institutions of higher education and public schools and plans to create a Developmental Education Task Force to help move the effort forward.

As stated by PED, High school juniors and seniors who attend schools within the Luna Community College service area are able to enroll in dual credit courses at the college campus during the regular school year. To enroll in dual credit courses for credit students must meet the minimum entrance requirements of the college.

- SB 284 will provide funding for an extra help summer program for sophomores who are interested in pursuing the dual credit option during their high school junior year, but who are unable to meet the minimum college placement requirements. This past summer 40 students took advantage of this extra help. After taking the summer classes, 62% of the students showed an improvement in their scores of ten points or more enabling them to meet the dual credit entry requirements. Schools within the LCC service area have requested 72 seats for the coming summer.
- This bill supports the implementation of the dual credit program at Luna Community College; therefore, it could have a positive impact in that the percent of recent New Mexico high school graduates who must enroll in remedial courses in higher educational two-year and four-year schools may decrease.