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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/31/08

SPONSOR Morales LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Middle School College & Career Preparation SB 490

ANALYST Dearing

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$500.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 490 appropriates \$500 thousand from the general fund to the Higher Education department for the purpose of developing a collaborative college and career preparation campaign focused on middle school students.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$500 thousand contained in Senate Bill 490 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.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The educational pipeline conceptualizes the cumulative success of students progressing through high school, college entry, and persistence to a baccalaureate degree. New Mexico ranked 50th in cumulative success in a 2004 National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education policy alert, with only 10-to-11 percent of high school freshmen attaining a college degree. Students are lost at the transition points, the majority failing to graduate from high school. Minority and low income students are disproportionately represented among these dropouts. Efforts to increase

college graduates in the state must be collaborative yet focus *at creating a rigorous middle school curriculum*, improving high school graduation rates, and improving second year retention in higher education institutions. Aligning high school exit requirements with entrance to higher education can include introducing high school and middle school students to a more rigorous curriculum and can be accomplished through several accelerated learning options.

- 9 out of 10 middle school parents expect their children to go to college, but more than 80% reported they don't know what specific steps are necessary to get them there;
- more than 45% of parents surveyed had not taken any of the college planning actions asked in the survey;
- more than a 1/3 of parents reported having no sources of information on college preparation or admission;
- less than 20% of parents reported taking steps such as researching colleges, meeting with teachers or counselors, and looking into the college admissions process – all critical parts of the college enrollment process.¹

Of note, the Higher Education department response specifies this request was not submitted to the department for re-view and is not included in the department's funding recommendation for FY09.

Numerous middle school outreach programs exist at New Mexico's higher education institutions, funded as research and public service programs (RPSP). LFC conducted a review of over the interim and concluded several findings, including:

- Multiple RPSP programs provide the same type of services indicating poor coordination even within institutions and duplicate funding.

Outreach Funding. Outreach programs generally seek to increase the interest of high school students in learning and attending college. They may target a specific ethnic group (Hispanics, Native Americans, African Americans, etc.), a particular academic discipline (science, math, engineering, nursing, law, fine arts, etc.) or a particular region of a state. Similarly, they may occur in a variety of settings: in the high school, on campus, at statewide events (i.e. science fairs) or at national conferences.

There are two qualitatively different approaches to funding and managing outreach programs: line item programs and centrally coordinated programs. New Mexico generally offers line item programs. The most common model for providing outreach services was central funding and coordination through a statewide agency. For example, California and Oklahoma offer Academic Preparation and Summer Academies programs respectively.²

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

If enacted, the LFC recommends that the Higher Education department submit a plan for

¹According to the Higher Education Department, *From Aspirations to Action: The Role of Middle School Parents in Making the Dream of College a Reality*; Institute of Higher Education Policy, November 2007

²Excerpt from LFC, *Review of Selected Research and Public Service Projects* - January 12, 2008
<http://legis.state.nm.us/lcs/lfc/lfcdocs/perfaudit/HED%20RPSP%20final.pdf>

program evaluation with specific program goals and criteria for assessing the effectiveness and provide suggested outputs, outcomes and performance measures to evaluate the performance of state government programs as prescribed in the Accountability in Government Act.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

According to the Higher Education department's response, the department would work to collaborate with other state education agencies, non-profit organizations focusing on college access programs and private organizations that support education outreach activities targeting the middle school population throughout the State of New Mexico.

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