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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 10/22/09

SPONSOR Garcia, M.H. LAST UPDATED _____ HB 19

SHORT TITLE Reduce Math Required for Excellence Diploma SB _____

ANALYST Varela

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY09	FY10	FY11	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
Total		N/A	N/A	N/A		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
Public Education Department

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 19 decreases the mathematics graduation requirement for 9th graders entering high school in the 2009-10 school year from four units of mathematics, of which one shall be the equivalent to or higher than Algebra 2, to three units of mathematics, of which one shall be the equivalent to or higher than Algebra 1. It will also increase elective units from 7.5 units to 8.5 units.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

According to PED, the current law requiring four mathematics units for high school graduation came into effect for 2009-10 entering freshmen. It is difficult to identify any fiscal impact of reducing the requirement to three units of mathematics and increasing elective units from 7.5 elective credits to 8.5. It is unlikely additional math teachers have been hired for the current school year to satisfy the higher math requirement as an increased need for teachers will not likely occur until the current 9th graders reach grade 12 (school year 2012-13). In addition, with dual credit and distance education opportunities, students have expanded opportunities for higher-level math classes.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The effect of the bill appears to roll back some of the educational reforms implemented in the last four or five years.

According to PED, New Mexico joined the American Diploma Project (ADP) Network in the fall 2006, which provides research and development on high schools for the state. ADP requires a rigorous curriculum required for success after high school in either post-secondary institutions or business, a streamlined assessment system and accountability for secondary and postsecondary institutions relative to graduating students. New Mexico's mathematics standards were revised and adopted in 2009 to fully align with the ADP Benchmarks for mathematics, a set of model K-12 academic standards in mathematics.

According to Achieve, "Employers and college leaders report that graduates from high school need to master higher-level mathematics and communications skills more than ever before. Research reveals that the ticket for student success in work or future learning is taking courses in math beyond Algebra II..." and "Today, roughly two-thirds of all new jobs require some form of postsecondary education. Experts say this percentage only will increase in the future." (<http://www.achieve.org/case-action> accessed 10/20/09).

PED notes that the increased mathematics requirement for graduation that went into effect for the 2009-10 school year is part of the *Making Schools Work* agenda that is based in part on rigorous academic standards, high accountability, and college and career readiness. In 2009, 34 percent of 11th graders scored proficient or advanced on the Standards Based Assessment (NMSBA) for mathematics with 66 percent scoring below proficient and 27 percent scoring at the lowest achievement level. The *Ready for College 2009* report released by the Office of Education Accountability states that the data "indicate a strong relationship between how students perform on the 11th grade NMSBA and how many remedial courses they take two years later in college. The better students perform on the 11th grade assessment, the less likely they are to take remedial courses in college."

PED is currently drafting a rule for the process by which parents can choose to waive the Algebra 2 or higher math requirement for their students. According to current plans, notice of public hearing on this rule will be ready by mid-November, 2009.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

PED states that on the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 20 percent of New Mexico 8th graders scored as Proficient or advanced in mathematics. Without continuing educational reform focused on mathematics, not only will students continue to perform at low levels, their opportunity for high-wage jobs in STEM fields will be diminished.

PTV/svb