

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill Number:** HJM 16

**49th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2010**

**Tracking Number:** .180721.1

**Short Title:** Study Reading Curricula in Teacher Education

**Sponsor(s):** Representative Mimi Stewart and Others

**Analyst:** Pamela Herman

**Date:** January 31, 2010

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**FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**

**Bill Summary:**

Among its provisions, HJM 16 requests that:

- the New Mexico Deans and Directors of Colleges of Education form a work group to examine the curricula and assigned materials of all required reading courses in teacher preparation programs to determine if those courses meet statutory requirements that they be based on current scientifically-based research;
- the work group include three Deans or Directors of undergraduate teacher preparation and alternative teacher licensure programs and three members of the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC), and such other representatives as those six members designate;
- the work group establish:
  - a methodology for the study, including qualifications of reading experts to review the curricula and materials;
  - the process by which the reviews will be conducted;
  - the scope of work of the reading experts and the standards to be used to evaluate the curricula and materials; and
  - the timetable for completion of the study; and
- the work group report the results of the study, with findings and recommendations, to the appropriation interim legislative committee and the Governor by November 1, 2010.

**Fiscal Impact:**

Legislative memorials do not contain an appropriation.

**Fiscal Issues:**

HJM 16 requests that the New Mexico Deans and Directors of Colleges of Education undertake the study; therefore, any costs associated with the study will be born by the colleges of education.

The Public Education Department (PED) bill analysis notes that, if the work group selects PED to participate in the study, PED would experience minimal fiscal impact because staff already works closely with deans and directors of colleges of education on a variety of issues and concerns.

### **Substantive Issues:**

In 2001, legislation was enacted in New Mexico to require that PED (the state agency that approves teacher licensure programs) withhold program approval from a college of education or teacher education program that fails to offer a course on teaching reading that:

- is based on current scientifically based reading research;
- aligns with department-adopted reading standards;
- includes strategies and assessment measures to ensure that beginning teachers are proficient in teaching reading; and
- was designed after seeking input from experts in the education field.

In the 2009 interim, in LESC heard a staff presentation on a recent report by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ)<sup>1</sup> called *Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers: Are New Mexico's Education School Graduates Ready to Teach Reading and Mathematics in Elementary Classrooms?* Among its findings and recommendations, the report:

- states that teacher preparation programs fail to ensure that aspiring elementary teachers understand the science of reading instruction at a depth sufficient for instruction; and
- recommends that teacher preparation programs improve reading preparation by building faculty expertise in the science of reading and by helping instructors select strong textbooks.

In a response to this report, the New Mexico Deans and Directors of Colleges of Education presented a plan to the LESC to collaborate with committee members, PED, and experts in reading instruction to conduct a thorough review of the soundness, based on scientific research, of reading instruction for teacher candidates in undergraduate programs in New Mexico.

### **Background:**

Although reading is the fundamental skill required for success in all academic areas, New Mexico students are persistently among the lowest-achieving in the nation in reading:

- New Mexico fourth graders were fifth lowest in the nation in reading on the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and their scale scores that year were no better than in fourth graders in 1992; and
- New Mexico eighth graders were third lowest in the nation on the 2007 NAEP, and their scale scores were lower than eighth graders in 1992.

### **Related Bills:**

None

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<sup>1</sup> NCTQ is a national nonprofit organization that advocates for comprehensive teaching reform.