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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 3/9/15

SPONSOR Lopez LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE School District Family Engagement Programs SB 526

ANALYST Chavez

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY15	FY16	FY17	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		See Fiscal Implications				

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)
 Human Services Department (HSD)
 Department of Health (DOH)
 Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)
 Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 526 adds a new section of the Public School Code to create the Family and Community Engagement Act. The purpose of the Act is to ensure that family and community engagement (FACE) programs are properly designed and implemented and to provide a focus and structure for those programs based on prior experience and research while maintaining local flexibility. Under the Act, local school boards are required to establish a FACE program for each school in the school district. The bill provides guidance and requirements for FACE programs, including annual reviews and assessments of the programs. The department is required to establish structures and positions to promote family and community engagement. Finally, the bill establishes six standards for family-school partnerships. PED analysis points out that these six standards are the

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

This bill does not contain an appropriation. Both school districts and PED would incur additional costs to implement FACE programs under the new Family and Community Engagement Act. However, exact costs to implement the programs are difficult to determine at this time.

Additionally, PED expresses concern that the requirements of this bill create an unfunded mandate that would put a significant financial burden on both the department and school districts. PED also notes that, if implemented, school districts may use federal Title I funds to implement state-mandated FACE programs. However, this does not appear to be in conflict with the Title I requirements (see Significant Issues).

PED analysis notes there may be other costs to implementing the programs. The department states that establishing flexibility and modifying the interventions to design a program that best meets the needs of the local community will require staff and community members to work on a committee, which may need to be paid for their time. Relevant materials will also need to be purchased. Finally, staff will need to be trained in any intervention and that will be an additional cost for local sites.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to the National Network of Partnership Schools, for parent involvement to flourish, it must be meaningfully integrated into a school's programs and community. The network developed a framework of six types of parent involvement that schools can use to guide their efforts: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. A policy paper by the National Education Association (NEA) adds that successful school-parent-community partnerships are well integrated with the school's overall mission and goals. The NEA paper also states research and field work show that parent-school-partnerships improve schools, strengthen families, build community support, and increase student achievement and success.

Additionally, both DOH and PED analysis cite research from SEDL, formerly the Southwest Education Development Laboratory, that found successful programs that welcome parents, address their specific needs, recognize and engage with diversity to address needs and build on strengths, and utilize a philosophy of partnership where the responsibility for children's educational achievement is seen as shared among school staff, families, and community members, positively influence academic success.

DOH analysis also states building life skills in children and adolescents and providing them with psychosocial support in schools and other community settings can help promote good mental and physical health. Programs to help strengthen ties between adolescents and their families are also effective at reducing risk behaviors that lead to acute and chronic illness.

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs345/en/>

Under federal law, schools that receive federal Title I funds “may receive funds...only if such [local education] agency implements programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents in programs assisted under this part consistent with this section. Such programs, activities, and procedures shall be planned and implemented with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.” It does not appear that the requirements of this bill would be in conflict with the Title I requirements; they may, however, be duplicative if the bill requires school districts to implement programs separate from those already included in federal requirements. It is unclear whether the Family and Community Engagement Act is designed to supplement, replace, or duplicate current Title I requirements. PED analysis states approximately 650 or more than two-thirds of New Mexico schools currently receive Title I funding. This bill requires all schools, rather than only those schools receiving Title I funds, to implement FACE

programs. More information about parental involvement in schools with Title I funding can be found at the PED website. (<http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/Title1ParentalInv.html>).

PED analysis also notes the department already has a resource for family involvement. The toolkit, “Working Together: School, Family & Community Partnerships/A Toolkit for New Mexico School Communities”, is designed to provide educators with tools and resources for strengthening partnerships between schools and diverse families and communities. (<http://www.cesdp.nmhu.edu/toolkit/index.asp>)

Additionally, current department resources for building school, family, and community partnership as required by Title I funds can be found here: (<http://ped.state.nm.us/Parents/index.html>)

The Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) notes the action items proposed in the bill such as “utilize the histories and cultures of children, families, and communities as the foundation of educational programs,” “provide for regular and periodic programs throughout the school year that offer learning opportunities,” and “collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities” are all areas in which the education programs at DCA’s museums and historic sites are already involved. This bill would reaffirm, support, and strengthen the mission of these programs.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

PED notes this bill may support the PED strategic lever of ensuring students are ready for success through school connectedness and family engagement.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

SB 526 requires PED to “establish structures and positions with well-defined responsibilities and accountability to promote genuine family and community engagement.” PED analysis states that, “while the intent of the directive to the department may be ambiguous, it is anticipated that the department would need to provide technical assistance in relation family and community engagement.”

School districts would be required to ensure that all schools have FACE programs, and review and audit these programs. This could create a significant administrative burden for school districts.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

The bill as currently written only requires school districts to establish FACE programs; however, state-chartered charter schools are not under the supervision of local school districts.

KC/bb