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LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS
54th Legislature, 1st Session, 2019

Bill Number	<u>HB134</u>	Sponsor	<u>Thomson</u>
Tracking Number	<u>.212145.1</u>	Committee Referrals	<u>HHHC/HEC</u>
Short Title	<u>Pre-K in Community Schools Act</u>		
Analyst	<u>Terrazas</u>	Original Date	<u>1/28/19</u>
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BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 134 (HB134) creates a section in the Community Schools Act to indicate elementary schools may include prekindergarten and early childhood services, and adds that voluntary prekindergarten and early childhood education are essential components of a community school initiative. The bill would allow struggling schools to use a community school initiative to implement comprehensive or targeted support and improvement activities pursuant to the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The bill adds requirements for applications for grants for community school initiatives. HB134 would allow the Public Education Department (PED), school districts, and public schools to use federal Title I funds for community schools and community school initiatives.

HB134 amends the Pre-Kindergarten Act by changing the definition of prekindergarten to include children who have attained their third birthday prior to the 1st day of September if they are attending prekindergarten in a public elementary school implementing a community school initiative.

FISCAL IMPACT

HB134 does not contain an appropriation.

The executive budget recommendation includes \$2 million in recurring funds for community school support.

The Pre-Kindergarten Act requires the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) and PED to jointly review the process for contract awards and for the expenditure and use of contract funds.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Under New Mexico’s Community Schools Act, a community school initiative may be created in any public school in the state and must adhere to a core set of strategies meant to improve student outcomes, including extended learning programs. The Community Schools Act allows a school district, a group of public schools, or a public school to apply to PED for grants to implement a community school initiative. However, since the bill’s enactment, the Legislature has not appropriated funds to specifically support the Community Schools Act and PED has not used its Title I set-aside funds for low-performing schools or multiple special appropriations to award grants pursuant to the Act.

HB134 would require grant recipients to provide at least three types of programming at each community school covered during the grant period. Grant recipients could choose from full-day high-quality prekindergarten, physical and mental health services, high-quality after-school or summer programming; programming that promotes academic excellence aligned with state standards and benchmarks, the acquisition of life skills, parental support of and community engagement in the community school, nonviolent behavior and nonviolent conflict resolution; and programming designed to improve school attendance and prevent students from dropping out of school, and to meet school and community needs identified through the school and its community partners.

Further, the bill would require each application to include specific plans for maintenance of certain data; documentation of meaningful and sustained collaboration between the public school and community stakeholders; ensuring compliance with the nondiscrimination policy of ESSA; and detailed analyses of the needs of certain students in the community school and the needs of the community surrounding the community school. To be consistent with the statewide accountability system required under ESSA, PED recommends the subgroups of students for which HB134 requires analysis to include gender, each major racial and ethnic group, status as an English learner, status as a migratory child, children with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, status as a homeless child or youth, status as a child in foster care, and status as a student with a parent who is a member of the armed forces on active duty or serves on full-time National Guard duty.

For grant recipients providing community school programming at multiple school sites, HB134 would require a program director to oversee and coordinate programming across the multiple school sites and, depending on funding, would require a resource coordinator to be employed at each school site.

The Coalition for Community Schools defines a community school as a place and a set of partnerships between the school and community resources with an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement. Community schools are a place-based strategy in which schools partner with local public and private agencies to address issues that reflect students’ needs and priorities. In New Mexico, there are 39 community schools across three school districts working with three lead partner agencies responsible for overseeing and supporting the implementation of community schools. There are 28 community schools in Albuquerque Public Schools partnered with the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Community School Partnership, one community school in Las Cruces Public Schools partnered with the Las Cruces Partnership for Community Schools, and 10 community schools in Santa Fe Public Schools partnered with Communities in Schools of New Mexico.

After completing a systematic review of 143 community school research studies, the Learning Policy Institute (LPI), a national education research organization, found there is enough evidence to support the community school approach as an evidence-based intervention under the federal ESSA. While not all community schools are the same, LPI found most community schools share four key community school pillars, integrated student supports, extended learning time and opportunity, family and community engagement, and collaborative leadership and practice. Each key pillar improves student outcomes, but research shows community schools are most effective when all four pillars are implemented in a comprehensive approach.

The U.S. Department of Education provides grants through the Full-Service Community Schools Program for local educational agencies to implement full-service community schools, which provide comprehensive academic, social, and health services for students, students' family members, and community members that will result in improved educational outcomes for children. Grants are awarded to provide assistance to full-service community schools to improve the coordination and integration, accessibility, and effectiveness of services for children and families.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

PED indicates staff would need to update guidance on how to leverage funds, including federal Title I funds, to implement a community school initiative. The department's Title I application would need to be updated to include the types of community school programming allowed and the kinds of data analyses required by HB134.

The Pre-Kindergarten Act requires CYFD and PED to cooperate in the development and implementation of a voluntary program for the provision of prekindergarten services throughout the state.

RELATED BILLS

Relates to HB79, Community Schools Act Implementation, which appropriates \$400 thousand to implement the Community Schools Act.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files
- PED
- CYFD

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