



LFC Requester: Liu

**PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
BILL ANALYSIS
2026 REGULAR SESSION**

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Check all that apply:

Original Amendment
Correction Substitute

Date Prepared: January 23 2026

Bill No: HB118

Committee Referrals: Not Printed

Agency Name and Code: PED - 924

Sponsor: Gurrola

PED Lead Analyst: Thomas Cloward

BILITERACY

Phone: (505) 637-1352 **Email:** thomas.cloward@ped.nm.gov

Short DEVELOPMENT AND

PED Policy Senior Manager: denise terrazas

Title: TRAINING PROJECT

Phone: (505) 470-5303 **Email:** denise.terrazas@ped.nm.gov

SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY27	FY28		
\$6,645.0	None	Nonrecurring	General Fund

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY27	FY28	FY29		
None	None	None	N/A	NFA

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY27	FY28	FY29	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	\$425.0	\$575.0	\$875.0	\$1,875.0	Nonrecurring	GF

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act: None as of 1/24/26.

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: House Bill 118 (HB118) would create a new section of the [Public School Code](#) to create a three-year pilot project, the Bilingual Development and Training Project, with the intent to demonstrate that specialized bilingual training and professional development for teachers improves educational outcomes for at-risk students.

Over the span of three years, the pilot project would provide 875 teachers with training on bilingual instruction and state laws and rules regarding bilingual multicultural education. The bilingual training would be required to include best practices for:

- instruction in a language other than English;
- second language literacy for English learners;
- bilingual; and
- transliteracy and multiliteracy across content areas.

This bill does not provide an effective date. Laws go into effect 90 days after the adjournment of the Legislature enacting them, unless a later date is specified. If enacted, this bill would become effective May 20, 2026.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The bill would appropriate \$6.645 million from the General Fund to the PED for expenditure in fiscal years 2027 through 2029 to administer the bilingual development and training project. Any unexpended balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2029 shall revert to the general fund.

To properly supervise bilingual training and run the pilot project, PED would need to hire one additional full-time employee (FTE.) New FTE would cost the PED \$125,000 for salary and benefits per year for the three years of the program. Current literacy training costs about \$1,200 per teacher for a two-year program. Estimating generously by using the two-year training cost for a single year of the bill's bilingual training, training 875 teachers in the three years of the program with the addition of the cost of FTE would result in an operating cost to the department of \$1.425 million. Adding estimated costs for collecting data on student bilingual development, outcomes for at-risk students, teacher credentials and retention, and parental satisfaction would bring the three-year expenditure total to \$1.875 million.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

In the 2024-25 school year, [415 schools](#) (or 46 percent of public schools) implemented 525 Bilingual Multicultural Education Programs (BMEPs.) Currently in New Mexico, approximately 17 percent of students are English learners. Further, approximately 10 percent of the State's students speak an Indigenous language in their home. Overall, New Mexico has a large number of students that may benefit from teachers with extra training in bilingual and large number and variety of BMEP programs. These programs may be better served by a more expansive and differently formatted pilot program.

Some schools offer more than one of the five currently allowed BMEP models:

- (1) **dual language immersion**, which is designed to develop proficiency in two languages;

- (2) **enrichment**, which is designed to further develop the home language, as defined in [statute](#), of fully English proficient students;
- (3) **heritage language**, which is designed to support and revitalize a student’s heritage language and culture through oral and written communication; for Native American languages that are oral only, the literacy component shall be measured only in the skill areas or domains of listening, speaking, and comprehension;
- (4) **maintenance**, which is designed to develop and maintain proficiency and literacy in the home language while developing a student’s literacy and oral skills in English; or
- (5) **transitional**, which is designed to develop skills in the home language and culture while developing continued skills and proficiency in English.

Many of these programs use principles of biliteracy and support education students to receive the New Mexico Seal of Bilingualism–Biliteracy as they graduate. These programs also feature principles of transliteracy, multiliteracy, second language literacy in English, and instruction in a language other than English, which would be the areas for which teachers would receive professional development in the bill.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The bill would require the PED to prioritize, when choosing the teachers to receive the training, teachers from school districts with a significant enrollment of bilingual students, as well as site administrators and teachers from bilingual multicultural education programs. One of the data points that is required by the bill to be reported is outcomes for at-risk students. The bill requires the PED to develop participation criteria for the teachers they choose to receive the training. The department may consider choosing educators from bilingual programs in Spanish or Native American languages in order to have a greater direct impact on Native students and students learning English as a second language, rather than choosing educators from bilingual programs in German or Italian.

PED would be required to select 125 teachers to receive the professional development for fiscal year 2027, 250 teachers for 2028, and 500 teachers for 2029. The PED would also be required to set participation criteria, standards for the training programs, and effectiveness metrics in collaboration with a non-profit organization that specializes in bilingual education. Additionally, the PED would collect data and provide interim reports to the legislature and the governor on these outcomes related to the project:

- Student biliteracy development.
- Outcomes for at-risk students.
- Teacher professional development, credentials, and retention.
- Parental satisfaction.

[The Bilingual Multicultural Education Act](#) (BMEA) requires that school districts and charter schools include professional development for bilingual educators within their professional development plans. Unlike the BMEA, the bill would require the PED to oversee professional development for the selected teachers, which may require the PED to hire a new employee to

oversee professional development. The BMEA also requires that district and charter schools collect bilingual proficiency data to be compiled and reported by the PED. This already existent data collection and reporting structure at the district level and within the department may be utilized to comply with the data reporting requirements from the bill.

The bill would allow the department to contract with a private provider to administer the program, as long as the provider has expertise in biliteracy, experience in the provision of professional development, a history of supporting bilingual programs, adequate capacity, and relationships with districts, multilingual communities, or Indian Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

None.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

None.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

None.

ALTERNATIVES

None.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

None.

AMENDMENTS

None.