



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: HB119

Committee Referrals: Not Printed

**Agency Name and Code:** PED - 924

Sponsor: Gurrola

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**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT**

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

**APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY27	FY28		
None	None	N/A	NFA

**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
<b>Total</b>	None	None	None	None	N/A	NFA

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act: None as of 2/7/26

## **SECTION III: NARRATIVE**

### **BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis: House Bill 119 (HB119) would amend the [program cost calculation section](#) of the [Public School Finance Act](#) (PSFA) to create a new program unit in the state equalization guarantee (SEG) for licensed school employees with a bilingual endorsement who are employed in bilingual multicultural education programs (BMEPs) approved by the Public Education Department (PED).

The bill would also create a new section of statute to establish the criteria and PED verification requirements for generating bilingual endorsement program units, including a requirement that participating school districts and charter schools provide a one-time salary differential equal to or greater than the funding generated by the units.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

HB119 does not contain an appropriation.

Creating a new program unit for licensed school employees with a bilingual endorsement would increase the number of program units generated under the funding formula based on the number of eligible employees. An increase in total program units statewide may result in an increase to the SEG appropriation if funding for the unit value is maintained through the General Appropriation Act. The total fiscal impact would depend on the number of eligible licensed school employees, participation by school districts and charter schools, and the adopted unit value.

Approximately 800 employees with a bilingual endorsement are teaching in state-funded BMEPs. Using the preliminary FY26 unit value of \$6,801.35, the additional statewide SEG cost would be approximately \$5.44 million.

HB119 requires participating school districts and charter schools to provide a one-time salary differential to qualified educators equal to or greater than the SEG funds generated by the additional program units.

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

The Public School Finance Act allows the Legislature to set a single, statewide amount for public school funding, which is then allocated to each school district and charter school based on their number of program units. Units, although primarily based on student enrollment, are weighted for school size, teacher qualifications, the special needs of students, and other factors. To determine the value of each program unit, PED divides the appropriation to the SEG by a forecast of the statewide total number of program units then adjusts after the first reporting period to actual statewide total program units.

**Bilingual Endorsement Program Units and SEG Considerations.** HB119 would link the generation of new program units to both employee licensure and program approval, limiting eligibility to licensed school staff with a bilingual endorsement who are employed in PED-approved BMEPs. As a result, bilingual-endorsed employees serving students outside of approved programs would not generate units under the bill.

State rule establishes specific licensure requirements for obtaining a bilingual education endorsement. Under rule [6.64.10 NMAC, Competencies for Entry-Level Bilingual Education Teachers](#), individuals seeking an endorsement in bilingual education must complete 12 semester hours in the teaching of bilingual education and pass the bilingual education licensure exam, or a predecessor New Mexico teacher licensure examination, or an accepted comparable licensure test or tests in bilingual education from another state. Additionally, candidates who obtain certification in bilingual education for the appropriate grade level of New Mexico licensure from the national board for professional teaching standards are also eligible for bilingual endorsement.

The PED recently held a public comment period for a proposed repeal and replace of 6.64.10 NMAC that would update bilingual endorsement requirements by revising coursework, testing, and portfolio options; expanding pathways for endorsements in languages other than Spanish; and updating competency standards to reflect current bilingual education pedagogy.

HB119 would add a new endorsement-based program unit to the PSFA, increasing the total number of program units generated statewide. Because the unit value is calculated by dividing the total state SEG appropriation by the total number of program units, an increase in program units without a corresponding increase in overall SEG funding would result in a lower unit value. A reduction in the unit value would impact funding distributed through the formula for all school districts and charter schools, not only those generating bilingual endorsement units.

The SEG was established by PSFA of 1974 to equitably distribute state funding to school districts and charter schools and reduce disparities driven by differences in local wealth. The PSFA was most recently amended during the 2025 legislative session, when the legislature enacted significant revisions to the SEG, including changes to the at-risk index methodology, the creation of a separate funding factor for English learners and reclassified fluent English proficient students, increases to basic program weights for secondary students and one-time salary differentials for national board certification of school nurses. These changes were accompanied by an increase to the overall SEG appropriation and took effect on July 1, 2025. The SEG also includes program units for early childhood education, basic education, special education, bilingual multicultural education, fine arts, elementary physical education, size adjustment, enrollment growth or new district adjustment, national board certification, home school students taking a district course, home school and charter school student activities, and K-12 plus. The existing bilingual multicultural education differential is leveraged by districts, who prioritize retention, to issue stipends that meet the requirements of HB119.

**Bilingual Multicultural Education Programs in New Mexico.** BMEPs are authorized under the [Bilingual Multicultural Education Act](#) of 1973, which establishes the statutory framework for bilingual education in New Mexico and outlines program goals related to bilingualism, biliteracy, and academic achievement for English learners. BMEPs are approved by the PED.

In the 2024-25 school year, there were over 500 individual BMEPs operating in over 400 schools, serving approximately 46,000 students statewide. BMEPs provide instruction in English and Spanish, Diné, Keres, Tiwa, Tewa, or Zuni, reflecting the linguistic diversity of students served and the cultural contexts of participating communities. The languages offered through BMEPs vary by region and are tied to community and tribal needs.

Although New Mexico has a substantial number of education staff holding bilingual endorsements,

many are not currently teaching in state funded BMEPs. A little over 4,000 educators hold a bilingual endorsement, while approximately 20 percent were teaching in BMEPs. The PED may grant waivers permitting school districts and charter schools to employ teachers in BMEPs who do not yet hold a bilingual endorsement. These waivers are intended to support program continuity while educators work toward meeting endorsement requirements and reflect the ongoing need for qualified bilingual educators in approved programs. By tying program unit generations to verified bilingual endorsement and employment in PED-approved programs, HB119 may support the placement of qualified bilingual educators in BMEPs.

## **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

To the extent that HB119 incentivizes the employment or recruitment of endorsed educators in BMEPs, it may support program implementation and instructional capacity within participating school districts and charter schools. This would allow students in BMEPs to receive instruction that is more closely aligned with bilingual program models and instructional standards.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

HB119 would require the PED to verify employee licensure, bilingual endorsement status, and employment in approved BMEPs for purposes of generating program units. This verification would rely on existing licensure and program approval processes within the agency. PED may also need to issue guidance to school districts and charter schools to support uniform implementation and verification.

School districts and charter school participating in the program would be responsible for documenting eligible employees and certifying compliance with the bill's requirements to provide a one-time salary differential tied to the funding generated by the program units. PED may need to issue guidance to support uniform implementation and verification.

## **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

- Relates to [House Bill 116, Bilingual Multicultural Education Act Changes](#), which requires eligible programs to use a home or heritage language as the primary medium of instruction or to use a language revitalization instruction model approved by the PED.
- Relates to [House Bill 118, Biliteracy Development and Training Program](#), which creates the biliteracy and training project to demonstrate that specialized biliteracy training and professional development for teachers will improve educational outcomes for at-risk students.
- Relates to [House Bill 161, Change K-12 Program Unit Calculation](#), which proposes to change the program unit calculation for K-12 Plus Schools, based upon the number of additional instructional hours offered.
- Relates to [\\*Senate Bill 19, School Finance Unit Value Reset](#), which would permit the Secretary to adjust the unit value until February 27, 2026.
- Relates to [Senate Bill 178, School Finance Changes](#), which would require school districts allocate at least 90 percent of the funding a public school generates to that particular school.

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

None.

**OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

None.

**ALTERNATIVES**

None.

**WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

None.

**AMENDMENTS**

None.