

LFC Requester:	LFC
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**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS
2026 REGULAR SESSION**

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, EMAIL ANALYSIS TO:

LFC@NMLEGIS.GOV

and

DFA@STATE.NM.US

{Include the bill no. in the email subject line, e.g., HB2, and only attach one bill analysis and related documentation per email message}

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}

Click all that apply:

Original **Amendment**
Correction **Substitute**

Date Prepared: 2026-02-10
Bill No: HM58

Sponsor: Lara, Raymundo
STUDY PUBLIC
SCHOOL

Agency Name and Code NMHED
Number: _____
Person Writing: Weber, Jody

Short Title: TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS

Phone: 5053940030 **Email:** jody.weber@hed.nm.gov

SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue	Recurring	Fund

FY26	FY27	FY28	or Nonrecurring	Affected
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act:

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

House Memorial 58 (HM58) directs two legislative interim committees—the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) and the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC)—to examine how barriers to public school transportation may contribute to chronic absenteeism in New Mexico. The memorial highlights potential impacts on rural students, charter school students, and students who live “within a close distance” to school but do not qualify for bus service under current distance-based eligibility policies.

It further requests that the study review transportation strategies used in other states and assess whether existing transportation funding is effective, efficient, and equitable. Further, HM58 requests that study findings be reported no later than December 31, 2026.

The New Mexico Higher Education Department’s (NMHED) analysis of this bill focuses on the higher education implications of the proposed legislation. Additional insight may be obtained from other agencies’ analyses.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The memorial does not include an appropriation, and a detailed study would take resources.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Despite its deep integration into students’ daily educational experiences, little is known about whether taking the school bus helps children get to school. This gap is especially notable given the current U.S. “absenteeism crisis” (California Attorney General Press Office, 2015; Gottfried, 2019). A lack of understanding of how existing school policies and practices, such as school transportation, can be

leveraged to improve attendance represents a significant oversight. Research does indicate that students who took the school bus had fewer absences and a lower likelihood of chronic absenteeism than peers who traveled by car, bicycle, or on foot (Early Childhood Research Quarterly).

The bill does not directly pertain to NMHED, but may have an indirect impact. Transportation issues that lead to higher absenteeism may reduce dual credit students' access to necessary resources.

- Rural dual credit students may lose access to reliable internet, computers, and other technology-based supports when they are not physically on their high school campus, making it more difficult to complete online dual credit courses or technology-dependent coursework offered through their secondary institution.
- Urban dual credit students who live beyond established school transportation or attendance distance thresholds may face barriers to accessing on-campus resources and supports at their high school, which can similarly hinder their ability to complete online dual credit courses or dual credit classes offered at the secondary school site.
- Reduced access to high school-based resources and supports, including technology, academic assistance, and structured learning environments, may negatively affect student participation and success in the New Mexico Dual Credit Program across both rural and urban contexts.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

N/A

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Research would be done through LESC and LFC.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

N/A

TECHNICAL ISSUES

N/A

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

N/A

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

If this memorial is not enacted, LESC and LFC will not examine transportation barriers for students in New Mexico.

AMENDMENTS

N/A

