LFC Requester: -

PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
BILL ANALYSIS
2026 REGULAR SESSION

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Check all that apply:
Original x **Amendment** ___
Correction ___ **Substitute** ___

Date Prepared: January 17 2026
Bill No: SB29
Committee Referrals: SEC/SFC

Agency Name and Code: PED - 924

Sponsor: Soules / Sariñana

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Short Title: MATH REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHING LICENSE

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
Total	None	None	None	None	N/A	NFA

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act: None.

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: The bill would amend educational requirements for licensure under the School Personnel Act to require six hours of mathematics methods courses for persons seeking a standard or alternative elementary license or a mathematics endorsement, beginning with licenses issued on or after July 1, 2027.

Beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, school districts and charter schools would be required to develop and implement mathematics professional learning plans every two years and administer mathematics screening assessments to all students in kindergarten through third grade within thirty days of the start of the school year.

While the bill does not provide an effective date, the provisions of the bill are to be implemented beginning in FY27. If enacted, this bill would become effective May 20, 2026.

This bill is endorsed by the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC).

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The bill does not contain an appropriation.

Implementing a math screener will generate costs for the Public Education Department (PED). While assessment costs vary, this expense would be absorbed from the PED's assessment budget.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The bill would amend the Mathematics and Science Education Act to define terms related to mathematics instruction and support, including mathematics difficulty, mathematics instructional leadership framework, mathematics professional learning plan, mathematics screening assessment, and mathematics support plan.

Mathematics instructional practices vary widely across school districts in New Mexico. Program review and monitoring indicate variability in access to mathematics professional learning, instructional coaching, and early screening, resulting in inconsistent support for students with mathematics difficulty. As a result, student opportunity to receive timely, evidence-based mathematics instruction *and* intervention can differ depending on local capacity and implementation. The bill would establish statewide requirements related to mathematics instructional leadership, educator preparation, professional learning, K-3 screening, and student support, which would help standardize components of mathematics instruction across school districts and charter schools.

Research consistently shows that early mathematics skills and instructional quality in elementary grades are strongly associated with later academic outcomes. For example, a study by Santagata et al. found that mathematics-focused professional development that emphasizes instructional decision making and analysis of student thinking led to improvements in student learning. In

addition, research from Brendefur et al., and Jordan et al., shows that inadequate support during K–2 years can have cascading effects on numeracy skills, intensifying challenges in later grades and potentially leading to increased dropout rates. This research underscores the importance of coherent, content specific professional learning structures to support effective mathematics instruction statewide.

Research also indicates that mathematics coaching can support improvements in instructional quality and student achievement when implemented with expectations and prepared coaches. For example, Cambell and Malkus found that mathematics coaching was associated with positive impacts on student achievement, particularly when coaching was aligned to instructional goals. Similarly, Russell et al. found evidence that structured coaching models focused on conceptual understanding can improve mathematics instruction. These findings align with the bill's emphasis on a statewide mathematics instructional leadership framework and aligned professional learning plans.

Research further demonstrates the importance of early identification of mathematics difficulty. Validation studies of early numeracy screening tools have shown that brief screening assessments can reliably identify students at risk for mathematics difficulty in early grades. Lopez-Pederson found that early numeracy screeners could accurately identify first grade students who may benefit from targeted intervention.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

Since 2022, statewide mathematics proficiency has remained relatively flat.

Subject	Grades	Test Name	2022	2023	2024	2025	4-Year Change
Math	**Kinder-2**	**Istation**	*Not Required*		46%	48%	**+2%**
	3-8	**NM-MSSA**	26%	26%	25%	27%	**+1%**
	11	**SAT SD**	16%	15%	12%	12%	**-4%**

The bill's provisions related to early mathematics screening, professional learning, and educator preparation will likely have positive implications for student performance by supporting earlier identification of mathematics difficulty and improved instructional practices. An intensive focus in the area of literacy instruction in New Mexico has resulted in literacy proficiency rates for kindergarten through grade eight increasing by 10 percentage points statewide since 2022. This legislation could support similar increases in the content area of math.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The bill would require the mathematics and science bureau (MSB) of the PED, in collaboration with the mathematics and science advisory council (MSAC), to monitor instructional materials being used in districts and charter schools; evaluate mathematics and science instructional and professional learning programs; develop guidelines; and provide training and technical assistance to school districts and charter schools.

The bill would require the PED to develop and implement several new statewide systems and oversight functions. By December 31, 2026, PED would be required to publish a mathematics instructional leadership framework and promulgate rules governing mathematics screening tools, professional learning plan standards, and mathematics intervention requirements. The bill would also require that PED to update educator licensure requirements. Beginning July 1, 2027, new mathematics coursework requirements would apply to standard and alternative elementary licenses and secondary mathematics endorsements.

Beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, school districts and charter schools would be required to implement mathematics professional learning plans aligned to the state framework, administer universal mathematics screening assessments for students in kindergarten through third grade at the beginning of the school year, provide timely parent notification, develop mathematics support plans, and implement mathematics interventions.

The bill would require PED to submit a statewide report on implementation and outcomes by July 1, 2028, and annually thereafter.

The bill would also require the PED to promulgate rules for the implementation of the Act by December 1, 2026, and submit an annual report to the Governor and the LESC.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

None.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

None.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

None.

ALTERNATIVES

None.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

New Mexico students will continue to struggle without the appropriate supports in mathematics.

AMENDMENTS

None.