LFC Requester:	Sunny Liu

AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2026 REGULAR SESSION

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO
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(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

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

Date Prepared: *1/22/2026*
Bill Number: *SB29*

Check all that apply:
Original *X* Correction __
Amendment __ Substitute __

Sponsor: Sen. Soules and Rep. Sariñana
Short Title: Math Requirements For Teaching License

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SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27	FY28		

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate revenue decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

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

(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

Synopsis:

Senate Bill 29 (SB 29) proposes substantial revisions to mathematics instruction and educator preparation requirements in New Mexico. The bill increases mathematics pedagogy requirements for teaching licensure; establishes a statewide mathematics instructional leadership framework; mandates the development of mathematics professional learning plans; requires kindergarten through third-grade mathematics screening assessments and individualized mathematics support plans; and directs the Public Education Department (PED) to promulgate rules, provide technical assistance, and report annually on implementation and outcomes. The bill seeks to improve mathematics achievement statewide through enhanced instructional quality, structured intervention systems, and strengthened oversight by the Mathematics and Science Bureau.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Although SB 29 does not include an appropriation, it may generate fiscal impacts for higher education institutions, school districts, and PED. Institutions of higher education may incur costs associated with revising educator preparation curricula, coordinating with mathematics departments to redesign content courses, securing faculty expertise in mathematics pedagogy and content, and navigating internal and state-level program approval processes. School districts may require additional resources to implement screening assessments, develop professional learning plans, and provide multilayered interventions. PED may require staffing or contracted support to develop the instructional leadership framework, provide technical assistance, and prepare annual reports.

The increased coursework requirements may also raise the cost of educator preparation for students and extend time to degree.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

SB 29 addresses a critical statewide need. Mathematics proficiency remains a significant educational and workforce challenge in New Mexico, and the Senate's attention to this issue is commendable. The bill includes several constructive components—such as the instructional leadership framework, professional learning plans, and structured intervention systems—that have the potential to strengthen mathematics instruction across the state.

From a higher-education perspective, several significant issues arise:

1. Misalignment with National and State Research on Teacher Preparation

National research from the National Center for Teacher Quality (NCTQ) and findings from the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) Elementary Education Report emphasize the need to strengthen mathematics content preparation for elementary educators. Both sources identify insufficient content knowledge—not pedagogy—as a primary barrier to teacher effectiveness in math.

NCTQ recommends that elementary teacher candidates complete focused mathematics content coursework with approximately:

- 45 hours in Numbers and Operations
- 20 hours in Algebraic Thinking
- 25 hours in Geometry and Measurement
- 15 hours in Data Analysis and Probability

These recommendations pertain to mathematics content, not pedagogy. Instead, NCTQ only recommends a 3 credit pedagogy course.

SB 29 does not address mathematics content requirements. Instead, it increases mathematics pedagogy requirements, creating a misalignment between the bill's provisions and the evidence base.

2. Location of Mathematics Content Courses and Need for Statutory Clarity

In many institutions, mathematics content courses for elementary educators are housed in Departments of Mathematics, not Colleges of Education. As a result, Colleges of Education often do not have unilateral authority to revise these courses.

Explicit statutory requirements for mathematics content—aligned with NCTQ's recommended hours and domains—would:

- Provide clear expectations for the scope and depth of mathematics content preparation
- Strengthen the position of Colleges of Education in working with Mathematics departments to revise and align "Math for Educators" courses
- Help ensure that all institutions, including those without strong existing partnerships between education and mathematics units, move toward consistent, research-aligned preparation
- Ensure that teachers have the content preparation to understand and teach math coursework.

At the University of New Mexico, there is a strong working relationship between the College of Education and Human Sciences and the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, and both units are actively engaged in revising mathematics content courses. However, not all institutions benefit from similarly collaborative relationships. Statutory clarity on content expectations would help ensure statewide consistency and support those institutions where coordination is more challenging.

3. Pedagogy Credit Requirements Exceed Best Practice

The bill requires six credit hours of mathematics methods courses. NCTQ and LESC Elementary report identify approximately 45 contact hours (≈3 credit hours) as the recommended amount of mathematics pedagogy for elementary educators.

A six-credit requirement exceeds national best practice and may impose unnecessary burdens on educator preparation programs and students, particularly when content requirements remain unaddressed.

4. Impact on Degree Credit Caps

Increasing required coursework risks pushing many educator preparation programs above the 120-credit cap established in prior New Mexico legislation. This would:

- Increase the cost of becoming a teacher
- Extend time to degree
- Create misalignment with state policy
- Potentially reduce the teacher pipeline

Alternative licensure programs would face similar challenges, as additional coursework would push programs beyond the typical 21–24 credit structure.

5. Implementation Timeline Is Not Feasible

The bill requires new licensure requirements to take effect July 2027, or individuals may not obtain a teaching license. Curricular changes at universities require:

- Approximately 12–18 months for internal faculty governance processes
- Additional time for state-level review and approval through PED's Program Approval (PPSC) process.

A two-year implementation window is necessary to ensure compliance without disrupting program quality or student progression.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

If implemented with appropriate alignment to research and feasible timelines, SB 29 could improve mathematics instruction statewide. However, without addressing mathematics content preparation for educators, the bill may not fully achieve its intended impact on student outcomes. Incorporating explicit mathematics content requirements—aligned with NCTQ's recommended hours and domains—would better position future teachers to deliver high-quality mathematics instruction.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Higher education institutions will be required to:

- Review and revise educator preparation curricula
- Collaborate with Departments of Mathematics to redesign "Math for Educators" and related content courses to align with NCTQ and LESC recommendations
- Navigate internal curriculum committees and approval processes
- Submit program modifications to PED for approval

NMPED will need to:

- Develop the instructional leadership framework
- Approve screening assessments
- Provide technical assistance to districts and charter schools
- Monitor implementation and produce annual reports

School districts and charter schools will need to:

- Administer K–3 screening assessments
- Develop mathematics support plans
- Implement multilayered systems of support
- Create mathematics professional learning plans

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

SB 29 interacts with existing statutes requiring 120-credit bachelor's degrees and may conflict with those limits if additional coursework is mandated. The bill also relates to existing licensure requirements and the Mathematics and Science Education Act.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

- The bill does not address mathematics content requirements for educator preparation, despite strong evidence that content knowledge is a key driver of teacher effectiveness.
- The six-credit pedagogy requirement exceeds national recommendations and may be unnecessarily burdensome.
- The implementation timeline does not align with higher education curriculum approval processes.
- The bill does not explicitly recognize that mathematics content courses are often housed in Departments of Mathematics, which may complicate implementation without clear statutory guidance.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Revising "Math for Educators" and related content courses to align with NCTQ's recommended **45 hours in Numbers and Operations, 20 hours in Algebraic Thinking, 25 hours in Geometry and Measurement, and 15 hours in Data Analysis and Probability** would significantly strengthen the bill. Explicit statutory requirements for mathematics content would support Colleges of Education in working with Mathematics departments to ensure that these revisions occur consistently across institutions.

Without such provisions, the bill may not fully address the underlying issues contributing to low mathematics proficiency.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Require three credit hours of mathematics pedagogy, consistent with NCTQ and LESC recommendations.
2. Add explicit mathematics content requirements aligned with NCTQ's recommended hours in the four content domains.
3. Provide a two-year implementation window to allow for curriculum development, cross-departmental coordination, and approval.
4. Ensure alignment with 120-credit degree caps and alternative licensure program structures.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Without action, New Mexico will continue to face significant challenges in mathematics achievement, with implications for long-term workforce readiness and economic competitiveness.

However, enacting the bill without addressing mathematics content requirements, pedagogy load, and implementation feasibility may limit its effectiveness and create unintended burdens on educator preparation programs and students.

AMENDMENTS

Suggested amendments include:

1. **Revise pedagogy requirement** from six credit hours to **three credit hours**, consistent with national best practice.
2. **Add mathematics content requirements** aligned with NCTQ's recommended hours: 45 hours in Numbers and Operations, 20 hours in Algebraic Thinking, 25 hours in Geometry and Measurement, and 15 hours in Data Analysis and Probability.
3. **Explicitly recognize** that mathematics content courses are often housed in Departments of Mathematics and require coordinated revision with Colleges of Education.
4. **Extend the implementation timeline** to allow for a two-year rollout to accommodate institutional and state-level curriculum approval processes.
5. **Ensure alignment with 120-credit degree caps** and typical alternative licensure program structures (21–24 credits).