

LFC Requester:

Sunny Liu

AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2026 REGULAR SESSION

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO

AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov and email to billanalysis@dfa.nm.gov*(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: 1/27/2026

Check all that apply:

Bill Number: SB 84

Original Correction Amendment Substitute

Sponsor: Sen. Michael Padilla

Agency Name
and CodeOffice of the State Engineer
550

Short School Water Management

Number:

Title: Program

Person Writing

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SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT**APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

| Appropriation | | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|---------------|---------|------------------------------|------------------|
| FY26 | FY27 | | |
| \$5,000 | \$5,000 | Nonrecurring | GF |
| | | | |

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

| Estimated Revenue | | | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|-------------------|------|------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| FY26 | FY27 | FY28 | | |
| NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| | | | | |

(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 | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to: None

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

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis:

The bill would create a two-year pilot high school water management and conservation project administered by the Public Education Department. The Public Education Department would be required to:

- Administer a high school water management and conservation program and develop a curriculum in coordination with the Higher Education Department, Department of Health, State Engineer, and Indian nations.
- Determine the criteria and procedures to select three participating high schools, representing one Class A county, one Class B high-valuation county, and one Class B low-valuation county.
- Establish reporting and evaluation requirements for participating schools, including student and program assessments.
- Submit annual interim and final reports to the Legislature and the Governor evaluating the effectiveness of the program.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

No fiscal impacts other than the appropriation contained in the bill that has not been accounted for elsewhere in the appropriation process. The OSE/ISC's participation in water education will be paid for from a separate special appropriation to OSE/ISC to carry out the Governor's 50-Year Water Action Plan that is in the executive budget recommendation.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Improving water education is a key action under the Governor's 50-Year Water Action Plan. Educating New Mexicans about water is a critical component of ensuring that New Mexico will be prepared for its water future. OSE/ISC is working to educate the public regarding water conservation and having additional resources developed through school programs would be helpful. It is also important to ensure we have a reliable water workforce, and our educational institutions are working proactively with OSE/ISC and NMED to develop additional training programs.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

None

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

None

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

None

TECHNICAL ISSUES

None

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

None

ALTERNATIVES

Existing curriculum materials are available from private sector entities like Project WET, but PED has not yet reviewed the materials to ensure they meet the requirements of High-Quality Instructional Materials so that they can be used in public schools. Some districts, like Albuquerque Public Schools, utilize materials to help inform students regarding water issues, and all schools are required to implement Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs, but they do not include water-specific programs.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

The proposed curriculum will not be developed, and schools will not be required to include water-specific education requirements in their curricula.

AMENDMENTS

None