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| 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: 2026-02-02
Bill No: SM16

Sponsor: Jaramillo, Leo
Short Title: DATA ON PARENTING STUDENTS IN HIGHER ED.

Agency Name and Code: NMHED
Number: _____
Person Writing: Chisholm, Mark
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Phone: 5052716754 **Email:** 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 Affected |
|-------------------|-----------|---------------|
| | | |

| FY26 | FY27 | FY28 | or Nonrecurring | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|-----|
| 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

Senate Memorial 16 (SM16) directs the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) to convene a task force to study, develop recommendations for, and draft legislation for collecting data on students who are also parents. The task force would be comprised of:

- Representation from two four-year public higher education institutions,
- Two (2) two-year community colleges,
- A Tribal college or university,
- Students who are parents from at least two public colleges or universities,
- A member of the Children’s Cabinet,
- A representative from the Data Advisory Group of NMHED, and
- A representative from the New Mexico Student Parent Alliance.

The Task Force is directed to submit its recommendations by November 1, 2026, to the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee, other appropriate legislative committees, the governor, and the Secretary of NMHED.

The report is to develop a definition of “parenting student” that can be used for data collection and reporting. In addition, the report is to assess the current status of parenting student data collection and also recommend specific question phrasing, modes of data collection, and frequency of collection by all public higher education institutions in New Mexico.

NMHED’s 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

There is no appropriation with SM16. If all meetings of the Task Force are virtual, there would be little additional cost, but if in-person meetings are scheduled, there could be some travel costs associated with the meetings.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Data on the parenting status of students at the state level could allow analyses such as:

- How many parenting students are enrolled statewide, by sector (2-year, 4-year, Tribal colleges and universities)?
- Are parenting students persisting and completing at lower rates than non-parenting students?
- Do outcomes differ by age, income proxy, or program of study?
- How do different types of student resources and interventions support student parents?

Such analyses would also help to direct student support strategies, both at the state and institutional levels.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The only performance measure in SM16 is the November 1, 2026 deadline for the Task Force to issue its final report.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

NMHED would need to appoint members to the Task Force, organize meetings, and compile the final recommendations.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

N/A

TECHNICAL ISSUES

N/A

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Five other states have passed legislation mandating assessment of parental status since 2021: California, Illinois, Minnesota, Oregon, and Texas.

Some data on family size already exist for students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). However, not all students complete the FAFSA, and family size does not necessarily indicate that a student is a parent, so this would not be a complete solution. Still, it would allow for preliminary analyses to examine whether family size is related to student retention and success. It would also be a low-cost way to test the usefulness of this data collection, since FAFSA data are already collected and reported to NMHED.

ALTERNATIVES

An alternative to developing a new statewide data collection would be to pilot the use of FAFSA family size data to estimate the relationship between family size and college retention and success among independent students.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Without the statewide study mandated by SM16, some institutions might still collect data on parenting students and develop programs to better serve their needs, but there would be fewer opportunities to coordinate a statewide strategy.

AMENDMENTS

N/A