

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the Legislature. LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 29

SHORT TITLE: Math Requirements for Teaching License

SPONSOR: Sen. Soules/Rep. Sarinana

LAST UPDATE: _____ **ORIGINAL DATE:** 1/22/26 **ANALYST:** Liu

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
		Indeterminate but minimal	\$7,770.4 - \$8,862.0	\$7,770.4 - \$8,862.0	Recurring	General Fund

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Relates to House Bill 89 and Senate Bill 37

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) Files

Agency Analysis Received From

Public Education Department

Because of the short timeframe between the introduction of this bill and its first hearing, LFC has yet to receive some analyses from state, education, or judicial agencies. This analysis could be updated if that analysis is received.

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Senate Bill 29

Senate Bill 29 (SB29) adds new math course requirements for teacher licensure and math endorsement, expands the Public Education Department's (PED) monitoring and technical assistance responsibilities for instructional materials and math plans, requires schools to administer a math screening test to every student in kindergarten through third grade, requires schools to notify parents about the results and provide interventions for struggling students, and adds new reporting to the governor and the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) on math plans and interventions. This bill is endorsed by LESC.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns, which is May 20, 2026. However, certain provisions, such as the math

screening test and interventions, have a delayed implementation date of the beginning of the 2027-2028 school year.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The bill does not include an appropriation but would create additional operating budget costs in FY28 with the implementation of new math screening, parental notification, and math intervention requirements for elementary schools. PED may also incur some additional operating costs to develop the math instructional leadership framework and provide technical assistance on math learning and support plans.

According to PED, the cost of administering a math screener could be absorbed by the department's assessment budget, and many schools already have a means for parental notification in place. As such, the main implementation costs will be providing evidence-based math interventions that are targeted, differentiated, and supplemental to core instruction beginning in FY28. In FY25, PED reported the following math proficiency rates for kindergarten through third grade:

New Mexico Math Proficiency Rates				
Assessment	Grade	2024	2025	2025 N Count
iStation	K	56%	57%	16,601
iStation	1	63%	63%	16,901
iStation	2	25%	25%	17,559
NM-MSSA	3	24%	25%	20,969

Source: PED

Assuming the student counts and proficiency rates are similar by FY28, schools would need to provide math interventions for approximately 42.3 thousand students. On average, 46 percent of students statewide scored at performance level 1 (novice) and 28 percent at performance level 2 (nearing proficiency) in FY25, meaning about 25.8 thousand students would likely need more intensive interventions than the average.

This fiscal impact assumes most schools will provide high-impact tutoring as the primary intervention for students with math difficulties. Providing a 4-to-1 student-to-tutor ratio for 90 minutes per week over the course of 14 weeks at a rate of \$35 per hour for 42.3 thousand students would cost about \$7.8 million. This cost is likely understated due to a lower test participation rate for kindergarten through second grade. Assuming the number of tested students in these grades matches the third grade count, the costs of providing high-impact tutoring could rise to about \$8.9 million.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

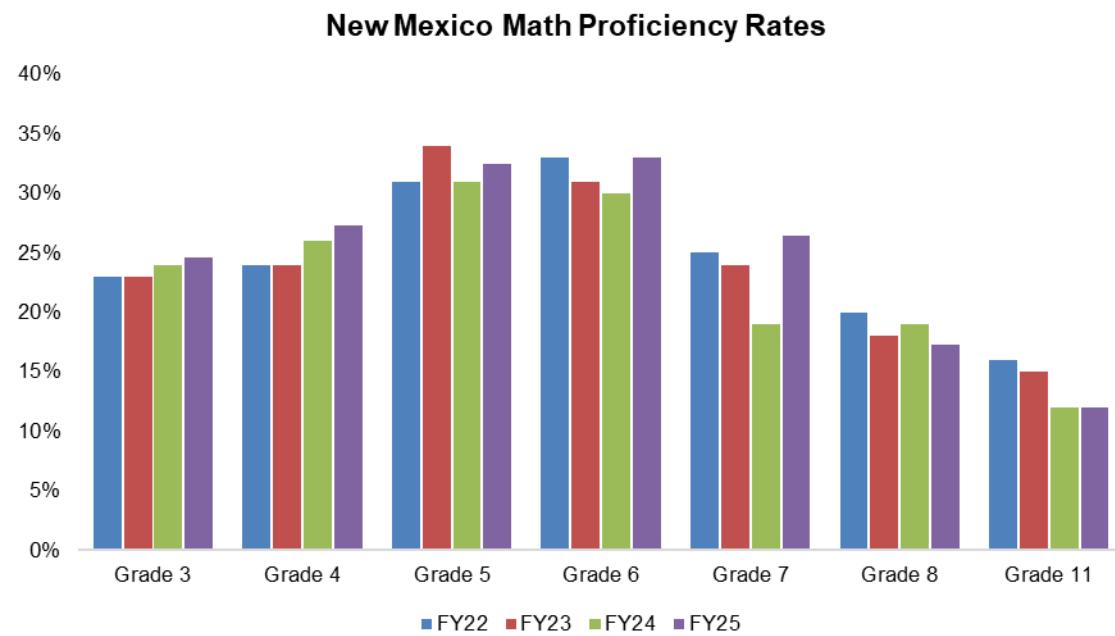
Provisions of this bill are comparable to state practices related to early reading intervention, including the use of an early screening tool, alignment of instructional materials, alignment of professional learning, and development of improvement plans. Recent national movements to incorporate the “science of reading” within public schools have spurred legislative action to retrain teachers, restrict certain instructional approaches, and align operations to evidence-based practices. Unlike reading, however, an equivalent “science of math” does not yet exist, as the body of research and evidence is more limited. Like reading, advocates of math instruction often

debate various aspects, including how much attention should be paid to procedural math knowledge (e.g. algorithms) and explicit instruction versus student discovery (or inquiry) and conceptual understandings of math. Still, early screening practices outlined in this bill may lead to earlier interventions to address low math proficiency. In general, research indicates the use of data to identify student needs and inform changes to instruction is a best practice.

New Mexico uses a computer-adaptive reading assessment and intervention program for grades K-2 called iStation and uses performance on the assessment as a component of the statewide accountability system for elementary schools. The iStation test calibrates the difficulty level of questions for each student as they answer to predict their reading ability and measures growth in ability over time. iStation has a math test component; however, New Mexico does not use it for accountability purposes. The state only starts assessing math proficiency on the annual standardized test (known as MSSA) beginning in third grade. Provisions of this bill may expand the use of K-2 assessments for math and increase the need for professional learning for early mathematics.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

Provisions of this bill may affect math proficiency rates across the state. For FY25, only 25 percent of students in New Mexico tested proficient on grade-level math, which has remained consistently at this level for several years. Notably, performance on student math in the last four years has shown a trend of increasing proficiency between third grade and fifth grade before plummeting in high school.



Source: PED, MSAC

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Provisions of the bill require PED's Math and Science Bureau to monitor implementation of instructional materials for alignment with state standards, a role typically relegated to the

Instructional Materials Bureau. PED must also create a math instructional leadership framework for school administrators that provides standards for math content, core teacher competencies, instruction, professional learning, coaching and collaboration, and technical assistance by December 31, 2026. The bill also requires all school districts and charter schools to develop and implement math professional learning plans aligned to PED's framework by FY28.

The bill requires all elementary and secondary teachers seeking licensure after July 1, 2027, to complete six additional hours of math methods coursework. As such, educator preparation programs may need to add math methods courses to their program for new teacher candidates.

The bill further requires school districts and charter schools to develop and implement professional learning plans for elementary and secondary math in cooperation with teachers and school administrators, with updates every 2 years. Beginning in FY28, schools must begin assessing students' math performance using a math screening assessment for all students between kindergarten and third grade within 30 days of the start of the school year. Schools must analyze test scores and notify parents of the results if their student is at risk of not achieving grade-level proficiency within 30 days of determination. The notice must include information about the student's areas of need, interventions provided by the school, monitoring of the student's progress, and strategies for parents to use at home.

The bill also requires PED to submit a report to the governor and LESC annually on July 1 a report that details the number of students with math difficulties, the types and effectiveness of the interventions implemented, implementation of the math instructional leadership framework, and recommendations to improve instruction and student outcomes.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

This bill relates to Senate Bill 37, which requires a literacy assessment for students in kindergarten through third grade along with parental notification and school interventions, and House Bill 89, which establishes requirements for teachers seeking a computer science endorsement.

SL/sgs/dw/sgs