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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

**BILL NUMBER:** Senate Bill 306

**SHORT TITLE:** Higher Ed Regional Distinction

**SPONSOR:** Tobiassen/Baca/Wilson

**LAST ORIGINAL**  
**UPDATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** 2/9/26 **ANALYST:** Jorgensen

### ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT\* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
	No fiscal impact	No fiscal impact	No fiscal impact	No fiscal impact	Recurring	General Fund

Parentheses ( ) indicate expenditure decreases.

\*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

### Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency or Agencies Providing Analysis

Higher Education Department

## SUMMARY

### Synopsis of Senate Bill 306

Senate Bill 306 (SB306) amends the Post-Secondary Educational Institution Act and the Out-of-State Proprietary School Act to eliminate statutory distinctions between regionally accredited and nonregionally accredited private postsecondary institutions. The bill replaces references to “registration” with “licensure” and requires all private post-secondary educational institutions to apply annually for state authorization through licensure with the New Mexico Higher Education Department (HED). The bill makes conforming changes throughout the statute related to licensure standards, fees, enforcement authority, complaint resolution, bonding requirements, and disciplinary actions.

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.

## FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

HED reports no additional fiscal impact associated with enactment of SB306.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

SB306 standardizes state authorization requirements for private post-secondary institutions. HED reports there are 96 private post-secondary institutions in the state. Of these, 84 are subject to an annual state authorization and renewal cycle and 12 are regionally accredited. The 84 annually accredited institutions would experience little to no change as a result of enactment of SB306. The bill would transition 12 institutions from a multi-year to an annual licensure and reauthorization process.

HED states “the bill supports a consistent authorization and renewal framework regardless of accreditation status, clarifies statutory language, and strengthens NMHED’s ability to oversee private post-secondary institutions in a uniform manner.”

CJ/dw/sgs