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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/10/2007

SPONSOR Leavell LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Lea County Distance Education Consortium SB 556

ANALYST Moser

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	\$100.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to HB 68, HB 201 and SB 209

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

NM Department of Higher Education (HED)

Department of Public Education (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 556 appropriates \$100,000 from the General Fund to the New Mexico Higher Education Department for expenditure in FY08 for New Mexico Junior College (NMJC) to fund operation and expansion of the Lea County distance education consortium. The consortium supports local public school districts and universities in the development, deployment and use of distance education technologies to extend learning.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$100,000 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY08 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Lea County Distance Education Consortium has been in existence for approximately 15 years. The consortium delivers Instructional Television (ITV) courses to all of the Lea County school districts (Hobbs, Eunice, Tatum, Lovington, Jal), and Eastern New Mexico University in Roswell and Portales.

HED states that according to the college president, current bandwidth charges and costs are out of control with the smaller telecommunications companies in the area, and the college looks forward to working with the state to lower these costs. This appropriation would help subsidize the participating members' costs to make it affordable to deliver ITV.

In FY07, Senate Bill 415 appropriated \$75,000 to the other higher education member, Eastern New Mexico University, to fund the distance education consortium operations.

HED indicates that this request for additional funding was not submitted by NMJC to HED for review and is not included in the HED funding recommendation for FY08. However, HED indicates that recurring funding per FY06 SB190 is currently in place for the amount of \$47,500.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

PED indicates that SB 556 relates to HB 68, HB 201 and SB 209. It also relates to the executive recommendation of \$8,501,600 for IDEAL-NM in data processing appropriations and an additional \$2,247,400 included for IDEAL-NM in the HED budget.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The consortium's instructional training program allows for continued teacher trainings and deliver of online courses from local sites and for student participation in and knowledge of technology allow for greater postsecondary and workplace options.

IDEAL-NM will create a sustainable, statewide online support program that will allow public education, higher education and state government agencies to better serve the needs of all New Mexico learners. Institutes of higher education and state agencies may also benefit from the enterprise learning management system discounts, and the enhanced host-site technology. IDEAL-NM stands for Innovative, Digital, Education and Learning, New Mexico.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

PED indicates that the consortium may have to reduce the number courses delivered due to the increasing costs of the technology infrastructure. Teachers and students may not benefit from the support of higher educational trainings and services.