

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill No: SB 30

48th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2008

Short Title: Family Resource Program Grants for Schools

Sponsor(s): Senator Cynthia Nava

Analyst: Peter van Moorsel

Date: January 20, 2008

FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

Bill Summary:

SB 30 amends the *Family and Youth Resource Act* (FYRA) to allow a public school or a group of public schools that has received a grant to establish a FYRA program to continue to be eligible for funding if its percentage of Free or Reduced-Fee Lunch (FRL) program eligibility drops below 80 percent, so long as it maintains a three-year average of 80 percent or more.

SB 30 also appropriates funds to the Family and Youth Resource Fund to award grants to support and increase the number of public schools with Family and Youth Resource Programs.

Fiscal Impact:

\$3.0 million is appropriated from the General Fund to the Family and Youth Resource Fund for expenditure in FY 09 and subsequent fiscal years.

Since FY 05, the Legislature has appropriated approximately \$6.2 million to the Family and Youth Resource Fund to finance the operation of FYRA. For FY 08, the Legislature appropriated \$1.5 million to the FYRA fund, which the Public Education Department (PED) allocated as follows:

- 1.43 million to fund FYRA programs in 72 public, charter or alternative schools, one family school, and three community centers, awarded on a competitive basis based on the eligibility criteria, using Requests for Application;
- \$30,000 to contract with the University of New Mexico (UNM) to evaluate FYRA; and
- \$40,000 for training and support of FYRA sites and the advisory committee.

Issues:

The FYRA was created as part of the comprehensive school reforms passed by the Legislature in 2003 resulting from recommendations of the Education Initiatives and Accountability Task Force. The act permits the creation of a family and youth resource program in any New Mexico public school that meets the eligibility requirement. The purpose of a Family and Youth Resource Program is to serve as an intermediary to assist public school students and their families in accessing social and health care services. More specifically, the act:

- creates the non-reverting PED-administered Family and Youth Resource Fund to carry out the purposes of the act;
- authorizes PED to award grants to a public school or group of public schools that apply in which 80 percent of students are eligible for FRL; and

- creates an advisory committee to make recommendations pertaining to the creation of new FYRA programs in schools, review applications and make recommendations for FYRA grants. The advisory committee is composed of the secretaries of Public Education, Health, Human Services, and Children, Youth and Families, or their designees, as well as five members appointed by the Secretary of Public Education representing four different community-based organizations including faith-based providers, and a superintendent from a school district that has participating schools.

To meet the act's purpose of serving as an intermediary to assist public school students and their families in accessing social and health care services, the act requires that each FYRA program employ a resource liaison. Among other duties, this liaison must:

- assess and match student and family needs with appropriate public and private providers of age-appropriate resources and services;
- make referrals to health care and social service providers;
- recruit service providers and business, community, and civic organizations to provide needed goods and services not otherwise available to students and their families; and
- promote family support and parent education programs.

A review of FYRA presented to the LESC during the 2007 interim found that FYRA programs are successful in providing students and families with the basic needs that enable students to succeed in school. However, the percentage of students eligible for FRL in some schools that had previously received FYRA grants dropped below 80 percent, and because they were no longer eligible, PED discontinued funding to them. To ensure continuity in funding FYRA programs in public schools, the LESC recommended the change in SB 306 that schools remain eligible for FYRA grants so long as the three-year average of the percentage of students eligible for FRL is 80 percent or greater. In addition, because of the success of the program, the LESC recommended that the appropriation to the Family and Youth Resource Fund be increased to allow for FYRA programs to be expanded to more schools statewide.

Since school year 2004-2005, PED has contracted with the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention at UNM to evaluate FYRA. According to this evaluation, from August 2006 to May 2007:

- 70 schools in 18 school districts received FYRA funding;
- a total of 15,883 students were served, of whom 1,487 (9.0 percent) required an extensive amount of assistance and/or services;
- a total of 4,500 family members were served, of whom 905 (20 percent) required an extensive amount of assistance and/or services;
- 3,629 of those individuals participating were first-time students and 2,536 were first-time parents;
- 65 percent of students served were in elementary school, and the majority of those students were Hispanic; and
- the Family and Youth Resource Centers statewide, which are open to students, family, and community members, received 55,658 visits, of which 76 percent were from students, 14 percent were from family members, and 10 percent of visits were from other people.

Related Bills:

None