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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 03/07/11

SPONSOR Pinto LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Academic Champions For Children Task Force SJM 23

ANALYST Haug

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY11	FY12	FY13	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
Total		\$6.1		\$6.1	Non- Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Joint Memorial 23 requests that the interagency behavioral health purchasing collaborative convene a task force to develop a process to train, educate and empower parents, caregivers, social workers and behavioral therapists to become academic champions for children and thereby reduce aggressive behavior in schools and the need for clinical interventions; that the task force develop recommended changes to the contract with OptumHealth to ensure adequate funding for training and support systems for this purpose, including consideration of establishment of a pilot program.

The membership of the task force would include representation from the PED, the Children, Youth and Families Department and other appropriate agencies and individuals and would Report its findings and recommendations to the interim Legislative Health And Human Services Committee and the Governor by October 2011 and to all the members of the legislature when the second session of the fiftieth legislature convenes.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The PED states Senate Joint Memorial 23 would be require PED to participate in the task force, attend meetings, collect data, develop a training and recommendations, write a report, and present findings. This process takes approximately 400 hours of staff time (Educator Administrator-A @\$25.495/hour X 400 hours plus benefits (30%). Total cost is \$13.2). The

PED would participate in the task force but not be the responsible agency for much of the activity. As a result, the PED's estimate is reduced by half to their usual \$6.1 estimate for participation in a task force..

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The children of New Mexico are its most important resource.

New Mexico schools are challenged by serious budget and funding constraints.

Aggressive behavior in schools can result in costly destruction of property and unproductive utilization of both human and capital resources

Training of parents, caregivers, social workers and behavioral therapists to serve as academic champions for children has been shown to be a cost-effective way to raise student academic skills, reduce the incidence of aggressive behavior and reduce the need for clinical interventions.

OptumHealth New Mexico is under a contract to provide behavioral health and ancillary services to children and families in New Mexico in need of such services.

No current program exists, nor is there funding to train, educate and empower parents, caregivers, social workers and behavioral therapists to become academic champions and better prepared advocates for children.

New Mexico parents, children and schools would benefit from such a program.

Cooperation is necessary among the interagency behavioral health purchasing collaborative, the public education department, the children, youth and families department and OptumHealth New Mexico in order to develop a coordinated, cohesive and unified approach to reducing youth violence and aggressive behaviors in the schools and improving educational outcomes for children;.

The PED comments while the vision to training individuals with the intent of reducing aggressive behavior in schools and the need for clinical interventions is worthy of further discussion, creation of a task force would appear to be contrary to efforts during the 2010 interim to create better efficiencies in state government. Further, it is not clear how the proposed memorial would improve transparency, accountability and effectiveness.

GH/bym