

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: SJR 7

51st Legislature, 1st Session, 2013

Tracking Number: .191800.1

Short Title: Northern NM State School Regents, CA

Sponsor(s): Senator Richard C. Martinez

Analyst: Kevin Force

Date: February 25, 2013

Bill Summary:

SJR 7 proposes to amend Article 12, Section 13 the Constitution of New Mexico:

- stipulate that one of the five regents of the Northern New Mexico State School (NNMSS)¹ be a student at the school; and
- direct the governor, upon a vacancy on the school's board, to nominate and, with the consent of the senate, to appoint a student regent for a two-year term.

Fiscal Impact:

SJR 7 does not contain an appropriation.

According to the Fiscal Impact Report of SJR 7 (2009), a joint resolution identical to the current SJR 7, from the Legislative Finance Committee, an estimated additional operating budget impact of \$104,000 reflects the experience of the Office of the Secretary of State for the cost of placing a constitutional amendment on an election ballot.

Substantive Issues:

According to the analysis of SJR 7 by the Higher Education Department (HED), all other schools under Article 7, Section 12, include a student regent on their board, with the exception of the New Mexico School for the Deaf, the New Mexico Military Institute, and the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Since 2005, NNMC has been offering four-year degrees and belongs among the state's four-year institutions of higher education. In its analysis of SJR 7 (2009), the Attorney General's Office supported the amendment, to recognize that NNMC now offers four-year degree programs.

Except for financial transactions, NNMSS is permitted by statute to use the name Northern New Mexico College (NNMC).

¹ In 1959, Northern New Mexico State School was renamed, 1n 1959, the Northern New Mexico College, however the original name still appears in the state constitution (see "Background," below).

Background:

Northern New Mexico College has a long history in the state of New Mexico; indeed, it has been operating since before New Mexico joined the Union²:

- In the early 1900s the New Mexico Territorial Legislature determined that a facility was needed as a “normal school” with the primary function of training teachers for the state’s Spanish-speaking population, and opened the Spanish American Normal School at El Rito in September 1909.
- When the New Mexico Territory applied for statehood in 1912, the State Constitution identified the Spanish American Normal School as one of 10 educational institutions that would be supported by the state.
- In 1953, the State Legislature changed the name of the institution to “Northern New Mexico State School” and implemented a secondary school curriculum.
- In 1959, the Board of Regents renamed the school “Northern New Mexico College,” which continued to teach grades 7-12 along with the new college curriculum.
- In 1969, the high school curriculum was transferred to a newly created public school district and the curriculum at the college was limited to technical-vocational course offerings, leading the Board of Regents again to change the school’s name, to the “New Mexico Technical-Vocational School” to better reflect the curriculum offered by the school.
- In 1976 a task force was created to assess the feasibility of establishing a community college, and recommended the dissolution of the Northern Branch of the University of New Mexico, with its course offerings to be combined with that of the vocational school.
- As a result, the school was renamed the “Northern New Mexico Community College,” becoming the state’s first designated community college.
- In 2004, the college began offering a four-year degree in elementary education.
- In 2005, legislation was enacted permitting the college to offer other four-year degree programs; and the school was renamed, again, the “Northern New Mexico College.”

Committee Referrals:

SRC/SJC

Related Bills:

HJR 8 *Boards of Regents Nominating Committees, CA*

HJR 9 *Boards of Regents Qualifications, CA*

² From the Northern New Mexico College website, at <http://site.nnmc.edu/page/history-nnmc>.