

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: SB 344

52nd Legislature, 1st Session, 2015

Tracking Number: .199260.1

Short Title: Northern NM Early Childhood Programs

Sponsor(s): Senator Pete Campos

Analyst: James Ball

Date: February 12, 2015

Bill Summary:

SB 344 makes an appropriation to improve and expand early childhood education programs in Colfax, Guadalupe, Harding, Mora, Quay, San Miguel, and Taos counties.

Fiscal Impact:

\$150,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Local Government Division of the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) for expenditure in FY 16. Unexpended or unencumbered funds revert to the General Fund.

Substantive Issues:

In 2010, the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) established the Early Childhood Investment Zones (ECIZ). Under the ECIZ, four counties identified in SB 344 were designated as Priority Counties in terms of high-risk factors for young children. These counties are:

- Colfax;
- Harding;
- Quay; and
- Guadalupe.

Background:

According to CYFD's website, the agency has prioritized funding for the ECIZ communities when new funding streams become available for early childhood services.

A taskforce from the New Mexico Department of Health, Public Education Department, and CYFD, used epidemiological data to compare levels of risk and resiliency across New Mexico communities to rank geographical areas by levels of risk. Those with the highest aggregated need were identified as Investment Zones. These ECIZs touch every region and every border of New Mexico and range from frontier to urban population centers covering 11 counties and 35 school districts.

CYFD further indicates that data were gathered and analyzed from all New Mexico counties and school districts. The combined county and school district data allowed an expansive examination of indicators associated with:

- health;
- family environment;
- poverty levels;
- child development; and
- factors that support literacy and school readiness.

Also included were indicators related to school success, including:

- graduation rates;
- resource investment at the school district level; and
- support for pregnant and parenting teens.

Committee Referrals:

SEC/SFC

Related Bills:

SB 301 *Create Early Childhood Funds*

SB 304 *Early Childhood Books and Toys*

SB 343 *Guadalupe County Early Childhood ProgramS*