

LESC bill analyses are available on the New Mexico Legislature website (www.nmlegis.gov). Bill analyses are prepared by LESC staff for standing education committees of the New Mexico Legislature. LESC does not assume any responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS
54th Legislature, 1st Session, 2019

Bill Number HB401 **Sponsor** Gonzales/Small/Garcia, H.
Tracking Number .212099.1 **Committee Referrals** HENRC/ HAF
Short Title School Library Watershed Science Curriculum
Analyst Stiles **Original Date** 2/11/19
Last Updated _____

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 401 (HB401) appropriates \$162 thousand to the Public Education Department (PED) for a comprehensive watershed science curriculum that provides student workbooks and applied lessons for public elementary libraries.

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill appropriates \$162 thousand from the general fund to PED for expenditure in FY20. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY20 shall revert to the general fund.

PED notes school districts and state charter schools receive a yearly legislative appropriation for the purchase of instructional materials. New Mexico Regional Education Cooperative Association and PED note workbooks are consumables, so a yearly appropriation would be necessary to replenish workbooks.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

PED adopted the New Mexico STEM-Ready Science Standards (NMSRSS) July 1, 2017 to incorporate the national Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) in full, including performance expectations, core principles, scientific and engineering practices, and crosscutting concepts that unify science and engineering. PED notes it is not clear whether the comprehensive watershed science curriculum is aligned with NMSRSS.

There are a variety of resources available to educate students about watershed, for example, the watershed institute provides online materials geared toward primary and upper elementary school students. Project Wet also provides watershed curriculum and workshops for teachers as well as instructional materials and children's activity books. All About Watershed, a New Mexico forest and watershed health information clearinghouse, provides resources about watershed that are specific to New Mexico. The New Mexico State Land Office also offers an environmental program

called “Know Your Watershed” to second-, fourth-, and sixth-grade classes across the state at no cost. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish collaborates with high schools in New Mexico, providing a watershed watch program that supports students to study watershed management practices, aquatic insects and invertebrates, water quality, and the connections to sport fish habitat. High school students and educators around the state adopt a stretch of river or stream to monitor on a regular bases.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

HB401 would require PED to develop a process for awarding funds to schools for the comprehensive watershed science curriculum. PED notes it is unclear whether the comprehensive watershed science curriculum is currently available for purchase, or if PED would be charged with providing the curriculum.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files
- Public Education Department (PED)
- New Mexico Regional Education Cooperative Association (RECA)

AMS/mc