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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

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|-------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| SPONSOR | <u>Senate Education Committee</u> | LAST UPDATED | <u>3/1/25</u> |
| | | ORIGINAL DATE | <u>CS/Senate Bill</u> |
| | | BILL | <u>235/SECS/aSEC</u> |
| SHORT TITLE | <u>School Math Changes</u> | NUMBER | <u>235/SECS/aSEC</u> |
| | | ANALYST | <u>Liu</u> |

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT*

(dollars in thousands)

| Agency/Program | FY25 | FY26 | FY27 | 3 Year Total Cost | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|----------------------|------|-------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Numeracy Screener | | \$0.0 | \$552.0- \$1,626.9 | \$552.0- \$1,626.9 | Recurring | General Fund |

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Relates to Senate Bills 242, 344, 416 and 434 and House Bills 157 and 455

Relates to appropriation in the HAFC Substitute for House Bills 2 and 3

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) Files

Agency Analysis Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of SEC Amendment to Senate Bill 235

The Senate Education Committee amendment to Senate Education Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 235 removes all references to dyscalculia.

Synopsis of SEC Substitute for Senate Bill 235

The Senate Education Committee substitute for Senate Bill 235 amends the Mathematics and Science Education Act to:

- Define math difficulty,
- Require the Public Education Department (PED) mathematics and science bureau to monitor instructional materials,
- Require districts and charters to develop professional learning plans for elementary and secondary math,

- Require PED to set minimum course requirements for multiple licenses,
- Require PED to create a math instructional leadership framework and reach out to school districts to adopt this framework,
- Require all school districts to adopt the math instructional leadership framework,
- Require math coaches to hold a specialist endorsement from a PED-approved program,
- Require schools to assess students with an early numeracy screener before they complete second grade,
- Require schools to provide interventions to K-5 students with math difficulties, and
- Require schools to notify parents if their K-5 student has math difficulties and services that will be provided.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns if enacted, or June 20, 2025.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

This bill does not contain an appropriation but will create recurring costs for PED and schools in developing plans, assessing students with an early numeracy screener, and providing interventions and services to students with math difficulties. The HAFS Substitute for House Bills 2 and 3 include \$15.6 million for a 3-year math initiative through PED, a \$3 million nonrecurring appropriation to PED for a science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) initiative, and a \$3 million nonrecurring appropriation to PED for a STEM network.

The costs of a math screener can vary significantly, from very basic screening tools costing as low as \$25 per test to upwards of \$1,000 when professionally administered. The FY25 kindergarten cohort has over 22 thousand students, so the costs of a non-diagnostic screening tool to meet the requirements of this bill could range from \$552 thousand for this cohort (assuming they become second graders in FY27) to \$1.6 million for students between kindergarten and second grade if the screener is applied to more grade levels. Costs of the early numeracy screener will likely be lower if PED procures the screener for use by all schools statewide and will decline annually assuming kindergarten cohorts continue to shrink.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Provisions of this bill are comparable to state practices related to early reading intervention, including the use of an early screening tool, alignment of instructional materials, professional development of educators, and improvement plans. Recent national movements to incorporate the “science of reading” within public schools has spurred legislative action to retrain teachers, ban instructional approaches, and align operations to evidence-based practices. Unlike reading, however, an equivalent “science of math” does not yet exist, as the body of research and evidence is more limited. Like reading, advocates of math instruction often debate various aspects, including how much attention should be paid to procedural math knowledge (e.g. algorithms) and explicit instruction versus student discovery (or inquiry) and conceptual understandings of math.

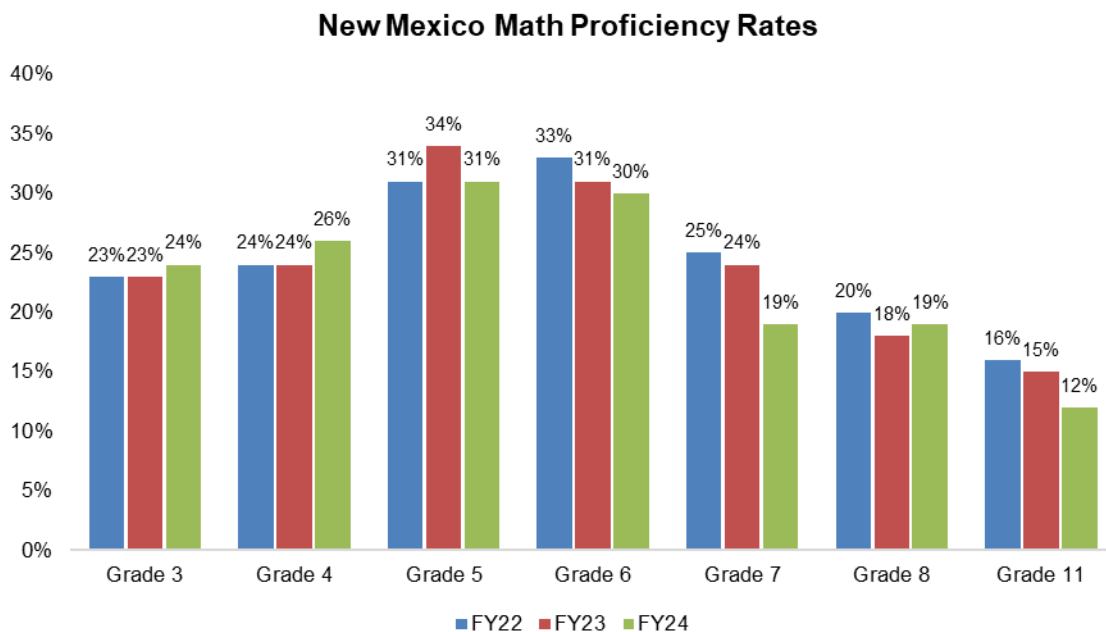
Still, early screening practices outlined in this bill may lead to earlier interventions to address low math proficiency. In general, research indicates the use of data to identify student needs and inform changes to instruction is a best practice.

New Mexico uses a computer-adaptive reading assessment and intervention program for grades K-2 called Istation and uses performance on the assessment as a component of the statewide accountability system for elementary schools. The Istation test calibrates the difficulty level of questions for each student as they answer to predict their reading ability and measures growth in ability over time. Istation has a math test component; however, New Mexico does not use it for accountability purposes. The state only starts assessing math proficiency on the annual standardized test (known as MSSA) beginning in third grade. Provisions of this bill may expand the use of K-2 assessments for math and increase the need for professional learning for early mathematics.

A 2023 LFC evaluation of special education found New Mexico’s special education population grew by 10 percent (an increase of 6,401 students) while total student enrollment declined by 8 percent (a decrease of 25.8 thousand students) over the last decade. The largest growth in special education identification was for students with specific learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, which increased by 37 percent.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

Provisions of this bill may affect math proficiency rates across the state. For FY24, only 23 percent of students in New Mexico tested proficient on grade-level math, which has remained consistently at this level for several years. Notably, performance on student math in the last three years has shown a trend of increasing proficiency between third grade and fifth grade before plummeting in high school.



Source: PED, MSAC

A 2024 national analysis of student math performance on i-Ready assessments by Curriculum Associates, the company that owns the test, found elementary students who scored above average on at least one of four math domains (numbers and operations, algebraic thinking, measurement, and geometry) were more likely to be on track for algebra success. However, algebraic thinking was a stronger predictor of student readiness in later years than the other

domains. The analysis indicates the further behind any student is in algebraic thinking, the more their predicted score in later years declines. Notably, students' starting performance in earlier years did not predetermine later performance, and deficiencies in multiple math domains were associated with lower performance in later years.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Provisions of the bill require PED's Math and Science Bureau to monitor implementation of instructional materials for alignment with state standards, a role typically delegated to the Instructional Materials Bureau. PED must also create a math instructional leadership framework for school administrators that provides standards for math content, instruction, professional learning, coaching, and program evaluation.

The bill also requires all school districts in FY27, subject to available funding, to adopt PED's math instructional leadership framework and math intervention process, effectively requiring the department to complete this framework and process by the end of FY26. Otherwise, subject to available funding, PED must conduct outreach to school districts beginning on July 1, 2025, to strongly encourage adoption of the math instructional leadership framework and intervention process by FY26—superseding the previous deadline. This implies the department may already have a framework in place as the notwithstanding language overrides language within the bill and indicates the only constraint for PED implementation is an appropriation.

The bill authorizes PED to determine minimum course requirements for teacher licenses from prekindergarten to ninth grade, special education, and alternative licenses without specification. As such, PED may need to update rules on minimum course requirements for the listed licenses (see Technical Issues). Additionally, the bill requires math coaches in public schools to hold a math specialist endorsement from a PED-approved program.

The bill further requires school districts and charter schools to develop and implement professional learning plans for elementary and secondary math in cooperation with teachers and school administrators, with updates every two years. Beginning in FY27, schools must begin assessing students' math performance using a PED-approved early numeracy screener before students complete second grade. Provisions of this bill would require schools to notify parents in writing of any K-5 student who has math difficulties 15 days after the numeracy screener or an interim assessment for grades 3-5 has been administered. If the student has math difficulties, the written notice must include information about services and math improvement plans, monthly updates on the student's progress, and strategies for parents to use at home.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

This bill relates to Senate Bill 242, which requires educator preparation programs to teach the science of reading and provides parental notification for reading difficulties; relates to Senate Bill 344, which provides an appropriation for K-4 vision and hearing screening; relates to Senate Bill 416, which provides an appropriation for early childhood tutoring programs; and relates to Senate Bill 434, which requires schools to provide academic supports to struggling students in math and reading.

The bill also relates to House Bill 157, which creates new administrator licenses and preparation requirements, and House Bill 455, which provides an appropriation for early childhood tutoring

programs.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

Provisions of the bill require PED to determine the minimum course requirements for the following licenses:

1. Prekindergarten through third grade,
2. Kindergarten through eighth grade,
3. Fifth grade through ninth grade,
4. Special education, and
5. Alternative licensure.

The bill implies but does not specify new requirements related to math. The sponsor may want to clarify the intent on minimum course requirements. Additionally, the scope of these requirements do not apply to secondary instructors, despite math performance declining substantially in secondary school.

SL/SL2