

LFC Requester:

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**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2026 REGULAR SESSION**

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO

[AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov](http://AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov) and email to [billanalysis@dfa.nm.gov](mailto:billanalysis@dfa.nm.gov)*(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)***SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION***{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}*Date Prepared: 1/29/2026

Check all that apply:

Bill Number: SB 29 aaOriginal  Correction Amendment  Substitute Sponsor: Sen. Soules & Rep. SariñanaShort Math Requirements forTitle: Teaching License

Agency Name

and Code

University of New Mexico-952

Number:

Person Writing Kristopher GoodrichPhone: 505-277-2231 Email kgoodric@unm.edu**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT****APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		

**REVENUE (dollars in thousands)**

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27	FY28		

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate revenue decreases)

**ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)**

	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
<b>Total</b>						

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

## **SECTION III: NARRATIVE**

### **BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis: Senate Bill 29 (SB29) increases statewide mathematics requirements for teacher preparation and licensure. The bill requires six credit hours of mathematics methods courses for individuals seeking an elementary teaching license or a secondary mathematics endorsement, beginning with licenses issued on or after July 1, 2028.

SB 29 also directs the Public Education Department (PED), in consultation with the Mathematics and Science Advisory Council (MSAC), to develop a statewide Mathematics Instructional Leadership Framework, and requires school districts and charter schools to develop mathematics professional learning plans and administer K–3 mathematics screening assessments beginning in the 2027–2028 school year.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

SB 29 does not include an appropriation. However, the implementation of statewide math screenings, math intervention supports, and the mathematics instructional leadership framework may generate costs for PED and for districts. PED reports that screening costs may be absorbed within the existing assessment budget, but development of frameworks, technical assistance, and professional learning guidance may require staff time and operational resources.

The bill requires educator preparation programs to adjust course requirements, but because those changes fall within existing institutional curricular review and state approval processes, no direct fiscal impact to higher education institutions is anticipated.

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

I appreciate the amendment delaying the implementation of the new licensure requirements to July 2028, as this is essential to ensure educator preparation programs have sufficient time to move changes through internal curricular processes and required state approval cycles. This delayed timeline appropriately recognizes the complexity of higher education governance and ensures programs can align their requirements responsibly.

However, even with the amendment, a core concern remains unaddressed: SB29 continues to require six credit hours of mathematics *methods* coursework without establishing explicit requirements for mathematics content knowledge itself, which has been found to be lacking through national and state level analyses. This misalignment with national research and standards poses several problems:

#### **1. Methods cannot substitute for content.**

Effective mathematics instruction requires strong foundational content knowledge. Without ensuring that elementary and secondary teachers complete adequate coursework in *actual*

*mathematics content (with specific areas being addressed)*, pedagogy-focused courses cannot fully prepare teachers to deliver high-quality mathematics instruction. Pedagogy alone will not address this issue.

## **2. National standards recommend the opposite balance.**

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ)—specifically cited in LESC’s bill analysis of SB29—recommends that teacher preparation programs require substantial mathematics content coursework aligned to elementary and middle-grades standards, while limiting pedagogy-focused mathematics methods coursework to approximately three credit hours.

SB29 instead codifies six credit hours of pedagogy without requiring the specific form of mathematics content supported by NCTQ, which diverges from national best practice.

## **3. Content-first preparation is essential to student achievement.**

Research consistently shows that teachers’ content knowledge is a primary predictor of student outcomes in mathematics. Without adequate mathematical content preparation, teachers may lack deep conceptual understanding needed to:

- teach foundational numeracy,
- diagnose student misconceptions, and
- appropriately scaffold instruction.

## **4. Risk of unintended consequences for educator preparation programs.**

Embedding methods requirements in statute without parallel explicit content requirements may:

- force redistribution of credit hours in preparation programs in ways that limit students’ opportunities to take needed content courses;
- reduce alignment with accreditation expectations and national standards;
- leave New Mexico graduates at a disadvantage compared to programs in other states adhering to evidence-based preparation frameworks.
- Increase student costs and time in degree programs.

## **Recommendation**

To align SB29 with national best practices and ensure teachers possess both the *content* and *pedagogy* necessary for high-quality mathematics instruction, I recommend revising the bill to include:

- Clearly defined mathematics content requirements, aligned with national standards for elementary mathematics teacher preparation; and
- A reduction of required mathematics methods coursework from six credit hours to three, consistent with NCTQ recommendations and national norms.

This adjustment more effectively balances content mastery with instructional skill development and better supports the goal of improving mathematics outcomes statewide.

It appears that this math bill is attempting to mimic the previous literacy bill with the requirement of six credit hours in pedagogy-however, the national research in these two areas are different, and so national norms do not support 6 hours for pedagogy in math like they do in literacy based on current available evidence.

## **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

SB29 is intended to strengthen statewide mathematics instruction by increasing requirements for teacher licensure, developing a statewide mathematics instructional leadership framework, and requiring K–3 math screening and interventions beginning in the 2027–2028 school year. These provisions are designed to improve student access to early identification of mathematics difficulty and support evidence-based intervention, as reflected in LFC and PED analyses.

However, the bill’s continued emphasis on six credit hours of mathematics methods coursework without establishing explicit mathematics content requirements presents several performance risks:

### **1. Insufficient teacher content knowledge may reduce instructional quality.**

National research shows that teacher mathematics content knowledge is one of the strongest predictors of student achievement. By requiring pedagogy without ensuring foundational math content, the bill risks creating conditions in which teachers lack the substantive understanding needed to implement the methods effectively.

### **2. The imbalance contradicts national expectations.**

The NCTQ review cited by LESC emphasizes the importance of substantial math content preparation in teacher education and recommends approximately three credit hours of math methods coursework—not six. SB29’s structure diverges from these standards, potentially reducing teacher effectiveness and undermining the bill’s intended performance outcomes.

### **3. Student outcomes may not improve without content-based preparation.**

Screening and intervention systems (as required by SB29) will identify students needing support, but without teachers who possess deep content knowledge, the long-term instructional improvements envisioned by the bill may not materialize.

### **4. Impacts on educator preparation programs.**

Programs may need to rearrange coursework to meet the mandated pedagogy requirements, which could inadvertently reduce available space for mathematics content coursework—further weakening performance potential. The increase in course requirements will also lengthen time to

graduation, as well as increase student costs for their academic programs. This will also delay individuals' entry into the educator pipeline.

Given these concerns, the performance impact of SB29 will depend heavily on whether teacher preparation programs can incorporate required content knowledge in addition to the mandated methods credits. Without this balance, statewide mathematics outcomes may see limited or inconsistent improvement.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

Educator preparation programs will need to adjust curricula to meet the new requirements by July 2028. This involves internal curricular changes, faculty governance processes, and formal state program approval.

PED will need to develop the instructional leadership framework, guidance for professional learning plans, and screening protocols. These activities may require additional staff time and coordination with MSAC and districts.

## **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

### **Conflicts**

- No direct statutory conflict has been identified; however, the bill's focus on pedagogy without corresponding content expectations conflicts with national preparation standards, as noted in NCTQ-reviewed analyses of New Mexico teacher preparation programs.

### **Duplications**

- There are no explicit duplications with other existing statutes, though some requirements (e.g., math screening, intervention, and ongoing professional learning) overlap in intent with broader multi-layered systems of support (MLSS) frameworks already adopted statewide.

### **Companionship / Relationship**

SB29 relates to:

- House Bill 89 and Senate Bill 37, both noted in the LFC analysis as related legislation.
- The initiative aligns with ongoing statewide goals around improving early literacy and numeracy and interacts with existing MLSS and district-level continuous improvement processes.
- The mathematics leadership framework and professional learning plan requirements intersect with existing obligations under the Mathematics and Science Education Act, which SB29 amends and expands.

## **Dependencies**

- District and charter ability to meet new expectations depends on PED’s development of the instructional leadership framework, professional learning guidance, and technical assistance structures.
- Educator preparation program alignment depends on ample lead time—which the amended implementation date supports—but may still be constrained without statutory inclusion of math content requirements.

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

- SB29 prescribes pedagogy requirements but remains silent on explicit mathematics content preparation standards.
  - Because methods coursework depends on underlying content knowledge, the bill would be strengthened by articulating content expectations aligned to elementary and middle-grades mathematics learning progressions.
  - PED and higher education institutions may face interpretation challenges without statutory clarity on content expectations.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

- New Mexico’s recent legislative focus on improving mathematics outcomes is important and appropriate.
- Ensuring high-quality mathematics content preparation is essential for progress toward statewide proficiency goals.
- SB29’s framework would be more effective if both content knowledge and pedagogy were legislatively balanced.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

- Amend SB29 to include explicit mathematics content coursework aligned to NCTQ and national standards.
  - Reduce mathematics methods coursework to three credits and require complementary content courses.
  - Direct PED, in partnership with higher education institutions, to create content guidelines aligned with research-based preparation models.

## **WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

If SB29 is not enacted:

- The state will miss opportunities to strengthen the structure of K–3 math screening and intervention.
- District-provided mathematics professional learning plans and statewide instructional leadership frameworks will remain inconsistent.
- Teacher licensure requirements will not be updated to reflect current policy intentions.

However, failure to enact SB29 also avoids codifying pedagogy-heavy requirements that lack parallel content knowledge expectations—leaving space for a more balanced, content-grounded legislative approach in the future.

## **AMENDMENTS**

To address the continued concerns about the imbalance between mathematics content and pedagogy, the following amendments are recommended:

### **1. Add explicit mathematics content coursework requirements.**

Align required content with national models, including the NCTQ content expectations for elementary mathematics teachers, which emphasize coursework in:

- Number and operations
- Algebraic reasoning
- Geometry and measurement
- Data analysis and probability  
(Referenced in LESC analysis of NCTQ findings).

### **2. Adjust the mathematics methods requirement from six credit hours to three.**

This aligns with national standards and allows educator preparation programs to preserve space for essential content coursework—ensuring the methods coursework builds on adequate foundational knowledge rather than attempting to substitute for it.

### **3. Direct PED to collaborate with higher education institutions.**

Require that mathematics content and pedagogy expectations be developed jointly by PED, the Mathematics and Science Advisory Council (MSAC), and New Mexico’s educator preparation programs. This collaboration would ensure rigor, alignment, and practical feasibility.

### **4. Ensure that the mathematics instructional leadership framework addresses both content and pedagogy.**

Explicitly require the framework to:

- include content standards for teachers,
- address mathematical reasoning and conceptual understanding, and
- align with K–8 math learning progressions and national best practices.

### **5. Clarify curriculum alignment expectations.**

Require that changes to licensure requirements not limit educator preparation programs’ ability to meet accreditation requirements and national preparation standards.

These amendments would strengthen SB29's potential to improve mathematics outcomes statewide and ensure that New Mexico's teacher workforce is prepared with both the **content knowledge** and **pedagogical skills** necessary for high-quality instruction.