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SENATE BILL

**57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2026**

INTRODUCED BY

Michael Padilla

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; CREATING THE HIGH SCHOOL WATER  
MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION PROGRAM AS A TWO-YEAR PILOT  
PROJECT; ASSIGNING DUTIES TO THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT;  
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. A new section of the Public School Code is  
enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] HIGH SCHOOL WATER MANAGEMENT AND  
CONSERVATION PROGRAM--PILOT PROJECT--REPORTING AND  
EVALUATION.--

A. The "high school water management and  
conservation program" is created as a two-year pilot project  
that creates a one-credit, elective high school course to study  
the feasibility of providing practical environmental education

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1 that prepares high school students for careers in water  
2 management and conservation.

3 B. The department shall:

4 (1) administer the high school water  
5 management and conservation program and develop a suitable  
6 curriculum for the program in collaboration with the higher  
7 education department, the department of health, the state  
8 engineer and Indian nations, tribes and pueblos;

9 (2) determine the criteria and procedures for  
10 selecting three high schools to participate in the program;  
11 provided that the high schools shall be selected from one class  
12 A county, one class B high valuation county and one class B low  
13 valuation county;

14 (3) establish reporting and evaluation  
15 requirements for the participating schools, including student  
16 and program assessments; and

17 (4) provide interim and final reports annually  
18 to the legislature and the governor on the efficacy of the  
19 program.

20 C. The department may use up to four percent of any  
21 appropriation made by the legislature for the high school water  
22 management and conservation program for professional  
23 development for participating educators and department  
24 administrative costs."

25 SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION.--Five million dollars

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1 (\$5,000,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the  
2 public education department for expenditure in fiscal years  
3 2027 and 2028 for curriculum development and operational  
4 expenses, including teacher salaries, for the high school water  
5 management and conservation program. Any unexpended balance  
6 remaining at the end of fiscal year 2028 shall revert to the  
7 general fund.

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