



LFC Requester: Liu

**PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
BILL ANALYSIS
2025 REGULAR SESSION**

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Check all that apply:

Original Amendment
Correction Substitute

Date Prepared: 02/21 /25

Bill No: [SB465](#)

Agency Name and Code: PED - 924

Sponsor: Maestas

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Short Title: PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL SPORTS

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SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
None	None	N/A	NFA

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27	FY28		
None	None	None	N/A	NFA

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	None	None	None	None	N/A	NFA

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act: None.

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: Senate Bill 465 (SB465) would create a new section in the Public School Code to modify athletic activities eligibility. SB465 would allow a student to:

- Participate in an athletic activity, regardless of their participation in the same athletic activity at a different school
- Participate in an athletic activity if they participate in an athletic training camp
- Participate in a high school athletic activity without losing a season of eligibility while they are in the eighth grade

The bill would also modify the membership on the board of directors of the NMAA and allow private high schools to offer a scholarship for a student to participate in an athletic activity.

The bill does not provide an effective date. Laws go into effect 90 days after the adjournment of the legislature enacting them, unless a later date is specified. If enacted, this bill would become effective June 20, 2025.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

This bill does not contain an appropriation.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Commission of the New Mexico Athletic Association (NMAA) consists of 16 members employed by a member school district or an elected member of a school board. Each member of the commission is on a three-year elected membership with unlimited consecutive terms. The commission is responsible for making recommendations to the Board pertaining to NMAA policies, rules, regulations, and operating procedures. SB465 would require the NMAA to restructure the Commission to reflect representation that is proportional to the population of the counties represented by the board. [Research from *Protect Democracy and New America*](#) supports proportional representation in governing bodies, especially for achieving policies that better reflect what citizens want.

For 2023-2024 school year, The NMAA offered 14 sports and 24 interscholastic activities with a total of 88,000 student participants, which represents approximately 28 percent of the student body. According to [6.13.2 NMAC, Interscholastic Activities](#), the NMAA regulates and enforces athletic activities and eligibility, whereas the Public Education Department (PED) approves the rules and regulations set forth by the association. Although the provisions of mandating membership based upon population size is unclear, a switch to proportional representation would allow the NMAA to consider the option of reaching a wider representation with the possibility of reaching rural or underserved communities.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) serves as the national authority for high school athletics and activities, providing guidance and support to state associations, which in turn establish specific eligibility and participation policies for their member schools. The NFHS acknowledges that transfer rules and eligibility are primarily managed by state associations, allowing them to establish bylaws that best serve their member schools and student-athletes. Consequently, policies permitting students to participate in athletic

activities after transferring schools without penalty align with the NFHS's support for state-determined eligibility criteria. Similarly to non-school-sponsored activities, the NFHS allows state associations to determine policies regarding students' participation in training camps and subsequent eligibility for school-sponsored athletics. The NFHS encourages state associations to create regulations that balance extracurricular involvement with academic responsibilities.

The [NMAA Bylaws, Section VI, Eligibility](#) governs the eligibility of student athletes to participate in school sponsored sports. They include certain prohibitions on participation related to recruitment, to prevent student athletes from following particular coaches and programs from school to school, thus discouraging access to unfair participation and advantages. The bill would bar any such considerations, allowing all transfer students to participate in sports in any school district without regard to these considerations. For example, Bylaw 6.1.3, Undue Influence of a Student – Prohibited, bars the provision of an “impermissible benefit”, defined as any arrangement or assistance that is not offered or generally available to all students who apply to attend a school. Doing so can result in the student athlete being barred from all high school athletic participation for 365 days, and the imposition of a fine to the school.

Bylaw 6.17, Age, is provided for commonality among student-athletes and schools in interscholastic competition to promote the equitable participation of younger and less experienced athletes, diminish risks of injury, and inhibits the use of “redshirting” or refraining from placing an athlete in active competition, in order to allow them to better develop their skills. An eighth-grade student must be less than 15 years of age on August 31 of a current school year in order to participate in sports at that grade-level.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

Students learn life skills, including self-discipline, sportsmanship, time management, and teamwork, when they participate in education based athletics and activities. These skills enable students to become well-rounded and productive employees and responsible citizens.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The passage of SB465 would necessitate the amendment and updating of the NMAA Bylaws, particularly Section VI on eligibility. PED would be responsible for reviewing and approving any changes to the bylaws, in accordance with Rule 6.13.2.6(D) NMAC.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Relates to:

- HB54, Defibrillators in Every High School
- HB185, Protection of Women’s Sports Act
- SB148, Anti-Hazing Act
- SB459, Protection of Women’s Sports Act

TECHNICAL ISSUES

None.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

None.

ALTERNATIVES

None.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

None.

AMENDMENTS

None.