



LFC Requester: Hanika-Ortiz

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

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Check all that apply:

Original Amendment
Correction Substitute

Date Prepared: 03/06 /25

Bill No: SB490/aSEC

Agency Name and Code: PED - 924

Sponsor: Lopez

PED Lead Analyst: Duncan Christensen

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Short Title: CENTRAL NM SCHOOL RE-ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

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SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
200.0	None	Nonrecurring	GF

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: The [House Appropriations and Finance Committee Substitute for House Bill 2](#) contains an appropriation of \$500,000 to the Workforce Solutions Department (WSD) for intensive outreach for out-of-school and at-risk youth.

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of SEC Amendment: The Senate Education Committee Amendment to Senate Bill 490 (SB490/aSEC) would remove the phrase “Central New Mexico” in favor of a more specific reference to four counties: Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia.

Synopsis of Original Bill: Senate Bill 490 (SB490) would appropriate funding to the WSD to support evidence-based school re-engagement programs for children in central New Mexico that provide guidance through career exploration, skill development and support with the transition into the workforce or higher education.

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

SB490/aSEC would appropriate \$200,000 from the general fund to the WSD for expenditure in FY26. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY26 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Student [re-engagement programs](#) are often defined initiatives that involve outreach, re-enrollment, and interventions to support engagement and the continued education of youth. New Mexico has experienced higher levels of absenteeism and dropout rates among K-12 students in recent years, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic. [Chronic absenteeism](#), where a student has been absent for 10 percent or more of classes or school days, was 29.77 percent for the 2023-24 school year. Similarly, [excessive absenteeism](#), which indicates a student has been identified as needing intensive support and has not responded to intervention efforts, stood at nine percent of students for the same timeframe. New Mexico also has experienced the [highest dropout rate](#) among K-12 students of all states in recent years with 8.51 percent of students not completing their education.

In New Mexico, chronic absences are highest for Native American students (48.3 percent), followed by Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students (45.7 percent), Black or African American students (40.8 percent), Hispanic students (40.7 percent), Caucasian students (38 percent), and Asian students (23.37 percent). In addition, these factors are compounded by housing status, English learner status, family income, and whether a student has disabilities associated with chronic absences. For these groups in New Mexico, homeless or unhoused students had the highest rates of absenteeism (60.8 percent), followed by students with disabilities (44.2 percent), English language learners (43.1 percent), and economically disadvantaged students (42.5 percent) during the 2022-2023 school year. However, chronic absenteeism rates are similar across genders.

Given these challenges, New Mexico has worked to implement programs and initiatives aimed at

improving student engagement such as career-technical education (CTE). The Public Education Department (PED) began using state funding to support CTE programs in FY20 with a \$5 million investment, increasing to \$10 million in FY2022-23. This state funding complements to the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act grant that the PED receives annually. This focus on CTE has increased the number of high school students participating in these programs substantially, with 81,840 students, or approximately 74.87 percent of high school students in the state, participating in some form of CTE (up from 64 percent in the 2021-2022 school year). New Mexico also has students participating in work-based learning. These programs are designed to provide students with real life experiences in the application of academic and technical skills and bridge the gap between learning and doing.

CTE has been shown to be tied with student engagement and ultimately a strong tool in improving student outcomes in both immediate and long-term measures of success. The results of a [2024 study at the University of Nevada](#) aimed specifically at measuring the effect of CTE exposure on student outcomes suggested that CTE programs, in a broad context, have the potential to serve as an integral part of an educational system, being consistently associated with positive academic and behavioral outcomes including higher on-time graduation rates. Furthermore, CTE has seen particular success in improving the educational chances of disadvantaged students, such as students in poverty and students from groups historically subject to discrimination by such factors as race or English language proficiency. In a [five-year longitudinal study from the Office of Vocational and Adult Education](#) of the United States Department of Education, CTE programs were shown to have a strong track record of improving outcomes for these groups specifically.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

None.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Relates to [House Bill 432](#), which proposes adding legal penalties to parents of excessively absent students and [House Bill 560](#), which proposes establishing workforce readiness programs in public schools. Also relates to [Senate Bill 480](#) which proposes to require the PED to provide reports to adult basic education providers and workforce development programs of students who have not graduated within four years from entering high school, and [Senate Bill 396](#), which proposes requiring the statewide education status report to include initiatives to increase school attendance and report on student achievement to improve educational outcomes for Hispanic students.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

None.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Student re-engagement can also refer to programs aimed at helping former high school dropouts

complete their diploma or earn an associate or vocational degree at the same time. Several states and community colleges offer programs aimed at re-enrolling these students or providing pathways for individuals to come back and pursue further education. Some examples include Everett Community College's [Youth Re-Engagement Program](#) and Chicago Public School's [Student Outreach and Re-Engagement \(SOAR\)](#) Centers.

ALTERNATIVES

None.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

None.

AMENDMENTS

None.