

1 SENATE BILL 42

2 **54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2020**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 Mary Kay Papen

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10 AN ACT

11 RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; CREATING "EARLY PHYSICS EDUCATION"
12 AS A PILOT PROJECT; PROVIDING POWERS AND DUTIES; REQUIRING
13 APPLICATIONS; REQUIRING MATCHING FUNDING; CREATING A FUND;
14 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

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

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

19 "[NEW MATERIAL] EARLY PHYSICS EDUCATION PILOT PROJECT--
20 IMPLEMENTATION.--

21 A. "Early physics education" is created as a five-
22 year pilot project based on three annual student cohorts in
23 sixth, seventh and eighth grades that incorporates hands-on,
24 age-appropriate physics education curricula. The purpose of
25 early physics education is to prove that early education in

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1 physics will increase academic performance in all courses and
2 encourage interest in post-secondary careers in science and
3 mathematics. Early physics education shall include the
4 evaluation of the longitudinal impact on student learning when
5 purposefully sequenced instruction in foundational concepts of
6 physics is introduced starting in the sixth grade. Outcomes
7 shall be measured by academic performance, high school course
8 selection and student post-secondary interest declarations on
9 students' annual next-step plans.

10 B. A school district shall administer early physics
11 education and contract with an organization that provides
12 professional development and materials for teachers to
13 introduce physics education into the sixth through eighth grade
14 curricula.

15 C. School districts may apply on behalf of their
16 public schools, on a form and in a manner as provided by the
17 department, to participate in early physics education and
18 receive a grant from the early physics education fund. The
19 department shall select for participation in the pilot project
20 as many public schools as qualify, but no fewer than ten. To
21 the extent possible, the department shall select public schools
22 that are generally distinct from one another in urban or rural
23 character, geographic location and concentration of poverty. A
24 participating school district shall provide one-half of the
25 funding for the pilot project.

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1 D. Students participating in early physics
2 education shall be evaluated at the beginning of the program,
3 and their progress shall be measured through standardized
4 assessments, longitudinal evaluation, declarations of interest
5 in their next-step plans before high school graduation and any
6 other evaluation tools required by the department. The
7 department shall establish reporting requirements for
8 participating public schools and school districts and shall
9 evaluate those reports to make its own interim and final
10 reports to the governor and the legislature on the efficacy of
11 adopting physics as a mandatory or elective course in sixth
12 through eighth grades."

13 **SECTION 2.** A new section of the Public School Code is
14 enacted to read:

15 "[NEW MATERIAL] EARLY PHYSICS EDUCATION FUND--CREATED.--
16 The "early physics education fund" is created in the state
17 treasury. The fund consists of appropriations, gifts, grants,
18 donations and income from investment of the fund. The
19 department shall administer the fund, and money in the fund is
20 subject to appropriation by the legislature to carry out the
21 purposes of the early physics education pilot project. The
22 department and school districts may seek public and private
23 grants, gifts and donations for the pilot project. Grants and
24 donations received by the department shall be deposited in the
25 fund. Unless unrestricted, money from a grant, gift or

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1 donation shall be expended in accordance with the terms of that
2 grant, gift or donation. Unless otherwise specified by the
3 terms of a grant, gift or donation, the balance in the fund at
4 the end of the pilot project shall revert to the general fund.
5 Expenditures from the fund shall be by warrants of the
6 secretary of finance and administration drawn pursuant to
7 vouchers signed by the secretary of public education or the
8 secretary's authorized representative."

9 SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION.--Six hundred thousand dollars
10 (\$600,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the early
11 physics education fund for expenditure in fiscal years 2021
12 through 2026 to carry out the provisions of the early physics
13 education pilot project. Any unexpended or unencumbered
14 balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2026 shall revert
15 to the general fund.