



2019 SENATE BILL 595

November 27, 2019 - Introduced by Senators DARLING and BERNIER, cosponsored by Representatives THIESFELDT, FIELDS, NYGREN, ALLEN, KRUG, MACCO, NOVAK, RAMTHUN, RODRIGUEZ, STEFFEN, TUSLER, VANDERMEER and WITTKÉ. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 **AN ACT** *to repeal* 20.255 (3) (df); and *to create* 20.255 (3) (df) of the statutes;
2 **relating to:** an online early learning pilot program and making an
3 appropriation.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires the Department of Public Instruction to award a three-year contract to a service provider to administer an online early learning program to low-income children who reside in three urban school districts selected by DPI and three rural school districts selected by DPI. Under the bill, the service provider must administer the online early learning program during the 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23 school years.

Under the bill, a service provider is a nonprofit organization that has successfully conducted an online early learning program in the past and can demonstrate its past success using independent evaluations. To qualify as an online early learning program, a program must satisfy the following criteria:

1. The program provides computer-based instruction to children on a home computer and includes content in reading, math, and science.
2. The program is designed to improve a child's transition to five-year-old kindergarten and aligned with nationally recognized early learning standards.
3. The program requires parental engagement and involvement that includes interaction with a learning coach.
4. The program evaluates a child's growth over the course of the program.
5. The program provides a participating low-income family with access to a computer and Internet service in the family's home at no cost.

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Under the bill, during the term of the contract, the service provider must provide an annual report to DPI that includes specific information about who is participating in the program, the number of families requesting and being provided access to a computer or the Internet at home, and how children participating in the program performed on prekindergarten and kindergarten readiness assessments. By October 15, 2023, DPI must compile the information it received for each year of the contract and submit it to the legislature. Finally, the bill requires the service provider selected to administer the online early learning program to provide \$500,000 in matching funds during the three-year term of the contract.

For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 20.005 (3) (schedule) of the statutes: at the appropriate place, insert
2 the following amounts for the purposes indicated:

	2019-20			2020-21
3 20.255 Public Instruction, department of				
4 (3) AID TO LIBRARIES, INDIVIDUALS AND				
5 ORGANIZATIONS				
6 (df) <i>Online early learning program;</i>				
7 <i>grant</i>	GPR	A	-0-	500,000

8 **SECTION 2.** 20.255 (3) (df) of the statutes is created to read:
9 20.255 (3) (df) *Online early learning program; grant.* The amounts in the
10 schedule for contract payments under 2019 Wisconsin Act (this act), section 4 (1).

11 **SECTION 3.** 20.255 (3) (df) of the statutes is repealed.

12 **SECTION 4. Nonstatutory provisions.**

13 (1) ONLINE EARLY LEARNING PILOT PROGRAM.

14 (a) In this subsection:

15 1. "Department" means the department of public instruction.

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1 2. “Eligible child” means a child who satisfies the income eligibility criteria for
2 a free or reduced-price lunch under 42 USC 1758 (b) (1) and resides in a school
3 district selected by the department under par. (d).

4 3. “Online early learning program” means a program that satisfies all of the
5 following criteria:

6 a. The program provides computer-based instruction to children on a home
7 computer connected by the Internet to a centralized file storage facility.

8 b. The program is designed to improve a child’s transition to 5-year-old
9 kindergarten.

10 c. The program contains content in reading, math, and science.

11 d. The program is aligned with nationally recognized early learning standards.

12 e. At no cost to low-income families participating in the program, the program
13 provides access to a computer or Internet service, or both, in the homes of low-income
14 families participating in the program that do not have a computer or Internet service
15 access in their home.

16 f. The program includes a parental engagement and involvement component
17 that includes interaction with a learning coach provided by the program.

18 g. The program includes an evaluation component that measures a child’s
19 growth over the course of the program.

20 4. “Service provider” means a nonstock, nonprofit organization described under
21 section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code that has successfully conducted an
22 online early learning program. An organization must demonstrate past success to
23 the department using independent and reliable evaluations.

24 (b) The department shall award, using a competitive request-for-proposals
25 process, a contract to a service provider to administer an online early learning

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1 program to eligible children. The contract shall require the service provider to
2 administer the online early learning program from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2023.

3 (c) 1. For each school year of the contract under par. (b), the department shall
4 pay the amount appropriated under s. 20.255 (3) (df) to the service provider awarded
5 the contract under par. (b) for administering the online early learning program.

6 2. A service provider awarded a contract under par. (b) shall provide a total of
7 \$500,000 in matching funds during the 3 years of the contract.

8 (d) The department shall select 3 urban school districts and 3 rural school
9 districts in which the service provider awarded a contract under par. (b) shall
10 administer the online early learning pilot program.

11 (e) The department shall require the service provider awarded a contract under
12 par. (b) to submit an annual report to the department that contains all of the
13 following information for each school district selected under par. (d):

14 1. The number of eligible children who applied to participate in the online early
15 learning program.

16 2. The number of eligible children selected to participate in the online early
17 learning program.

18 3. The number of low-income families that requested a computer or home
19 Internet service.

20 4. The number of low-income families that were provided a computer or home
21 Internet service.

22 5. The frequency with which children participating in the online early learning
23 program used the instructional software provided by the program.

24 6. How children participating in the online early learning program performed
25 on prekindergarten and kindergarten readiness assessments.

