

**REPORT TO
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL RULES CLEARINGHOUSE
GRANTS FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS (STEM) PROGRAMS
PI 31, WISCONSIN ADMINISTRATIVE CODE**

Statute interpreted: s. 115.28 (46), Stats.

Statutory authority: s. 227.11(2) (a), Stats.

Explanation of agency authority:

Section 227.11 (2) (a), Stats., gives an agency rule-making authority to interpret the provisions of any statute enforced or administered by it, if the agency considers it necessary to effectuate the purpose of the statute.

Section 115.28 (46), Stats., is a new grant program created under 2007 Wisconsin Act 20, that provides \$61,500 annually to school districts for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics programs.

Because this is a grant program, rules need to be in place so applicants know what criteria are being used in the awarding of funds.

The department will promulgate these rules as emergency rules effective January 30, 2008, in order to establish application criteria and procedures in time for the program to operate in the second semester of the school year.

Court decisions directly relevant: None.

Related statute or rule: None.

Plain language analysis:

2007 Wisconsin Act 20, the biennial budget bill, created a new competitive grant program under s. 115.28 (46), Stats., appropriating \$61,500 annually for school districts to: 1) develop innovative instructional programs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; 2) support pupils who are typically underrepresented in these subjects; and 3) increase the academic achievement of pupils in those subjects.

A new rule chapter must be created to implement this grant program.

Summary of, and comparison with, existing or proposed federal regulations: N/A

Comparison with rules in adjacent states:

Illinois – does not currently have a rule relating to grant programs for STEM. It does have a rule that awards grants to school districts to provide classroom computers and student lap tops.

Minnesota, Iowa and Michigan do not have rules relating to grant programs for STEM.

Summary of factual data and analytical methodologies:

Wisconsin faces the challenge of developing an economy that is more knowledge based than is presently the case. Encouraging a significantly higher number of students to consider careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) could be an important step in remedying this situation. Equally important, given STEM-related advances and the influence of those advances on the economy, there is a great need for all Wisconsin students to have a solid foundation in these areas of study. Finally and perhaps most critically, there are troublesome participation gaps in STEM that have the potential to widen the achievement gap if they are not successfully addressed.

Section 115.28 (46), Stats., allows grants to be awarded to school districts to, in part, increase the participation of underserved students and the academic achievement of pupils in STEM. In order to overcome some of the issues resulting in achievement and participation gaps in STEM courses and career pursuits, and to better prepare Wisconsin students for meaningful careers in STEM-related fields, the rules expand the definition of “academic achievement” to include the achievement of pupils in STEM courses, career or technical applications.

Because 2007 Wisconsin Act 20 creating this grant program became effective October 27, 2007, the rule established an application deadline of February 15 to expedite the awarding of funds in 2007-08. In subsequent years, applications will be due May 1 to coincide with application timelines established for other grants awarded by the department.

Analysis and supporting documents used to determine effect on small business or in preparation of economic impact report: N/A

Anticipated costs incurred by private sector: N/A

Effect on small business:

The proposed rules will have no significant economic impact on small businesses, as defined in s. 227.114 (1) (a), Stats.

Agency contact person (including email and telephone):

Sharon Wendt, Director, Career and Technical Education, (608) 267-9251, sharon.wendt@dpi.state.wi.us.

Place where comments are to be submitted and deadline for submission:

The department will publish a hearing notice in the *Administrative Register* which will include this information.

Agency procedure for promulgation:

Notice to Legislative Council pursuant to s. 227.15, Stats., and proceeding under the ten day notice/hearing process pursuant to ss. 227.16 to 227.18, Stats.

Description of any forms (attach copies if available):

PI-2770 STEM Grant Application