AN ACT to amend 119.04 (1); and to create 20.255 (2) (dq) and 115.453 of the statutes; relating to: grants for participation in esports competitions and making an appropriation.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill creates a pilot program under which the Department of Public Instruction awards grants to eligible teams for expenses related to participating in esports competitions. Under the bill, an esports competition is an organized, multiplayer video game competition. To be eligible for an esports participation grant, a team must consist of pupils and at least one mentor and must demonstrate to DPI that it will provide matching funds equal to the amount of the grant. Under the bill, DPI must administer the esports participation grant pilot program in the 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 school years. Finally, the bill requires DPI to publish a list of grant recipients on its Internet site and to submit a report on the pilot program to the legislature.

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:

SECTION 1. 20.005 (3) (schedule) of the statutes: at the appropriate place, insert the following amounts for the purposes indicated:
20.255 Public instruction, department of

(2) AIDS FOR LOCAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

(dq) Esports participation grant program

SECTION 2. 20.255 (2) (dq) of the statutes is created to read:

20.255 (2) (dq) Esports participation grant program. The amounts in the schedule for grants to eligible teams under s. 115.453. No moneys may be encumbered from this appropriation after June 30, 2025.

SECTION 3. 115.453 of the statutes is created to read:

115.453 Esports participation grants; pilot program. (1) In this section:

(a) “Allowable expenses” includes equipment, software, fees, and supplies required to participate in an esports competition and a stipend for the mentor of an eligible team.

(b) “Eligible team” means a team that consists of pupils and at least one mentor.

(c) “Esports competition” means an organized, multiplayer video game competition.

(2) (a) By no later than April 1, 2023, April 1, 2024, and April 1, 2025, respectively, the department shall notify school boards, operators of charter schools under s. 118.40 (2r) and (2x), governing bodies of private schools, and administrators of home-based private educational programs that applications for grants to participate in one or more esports competitions will be accepted from eligible teams until a date set forth in the notice. As a condition of receiving a grant under this section, an applicant eligible team shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the
department that the applicant eligible team will provide matching funds in an
amount equal to the amount awarded under this section.

(b) In the 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 school years, from the appropriation
under s. 20.255 (2) (dq), the department shall award grants to eligible teams selected
from the applicants under par. (a). Grant funds awarded under this section may be
applied only towards allowable expenses. The department may not award more than
$10,000 to an eligible team in a school year.

(3) The department shall publish on its Internet site a list of grant recipients
and submit to the appropriate standing committees of the legislature under s. 13.172
(3) a report on the program under this section.

SECTION 4. 119.04 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

119.04 (1) Subchapters IV, V and VII of ch. 115, ch. 121 and ss. 66.0235 (3) (c),
66.0603 (1m) to (3), 115.01 (1) and (2), 115.28, 115.31, 115.33, 115.34, 115.343,
115.453, 118.001 to 118.04, 118.045, 118.06, 118.07, 118.075, 118.076, 118.10, 118.12,
118.125 to 118.14, 118.145 (4), 118.15, 118.153, 118.16, 118.162, 118.163, 118.164,
118.18, 118.19, 118.196, 118.20, 118.223, 118.225, 118.24 (1), (2) (c) to (f), (6), (8), and
(10), 118.245, 118.25, 118.255, 118.258, 118.291, 118.292, 118.293, 118.30 to 118.43,
118.46, 118.50, 118.51, 118.52, 118.53, 118.55, 118.56, 120.12 (2m), (4m), (5), and (15)
to (27), 120.125, 120.13 (1), (2) (b) to (g), (3), (14), (17) to (19), (26), (34), (35), (37),
(37m), and (38), 120.137, 120.14, 120.20, 120.21 (3), and 120.25 are applicable to a
1st class city school district and board but not, unless explicitly provided in this
chapter or in the terms of a contract, to the commissioner or to any school transferred
to an opportunity schools and partnership program.