



State of Wisconsin
2021 - 2022 LEGISLATURE

LRB-0628/P2
KRP:emw&amn

DOA:.....Sherwin, BB0194 - TEACH IT Infrastructure Grants

FOR 2021-2023 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION

AN ACT ...; relating to: the budget.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

STATE GOVERNMENT

OTHER STATE GOVERNMENT

TEACH information technology block grant program

This bill makes various changes to the information technology block grant program administered by DOA. The Technology for Educational Achievement program, known as TEACH, offers telecommunications access to school districts, private schools, cooperative educational service agencies, technical college districts, independent charter school authorizers, juvenile correctional facilities, private and tribal colleges, and public library boards at discounted rates and by subsidizing the cost of installing data lines. As part of the TEACH program, DOA awards information technology block grants to rural school districts and rural public libraries to improve information technology infrastructure.

The bill makes the following changes to the information technology block grant program:

1. Extends the sunset for awarding grants from June 30, 2021, to June 30, 2025.
2. Adjusts the amounts DOA may award annually under the grant program.

Under current law, DOA may award up to \$3,000,000 in each of fiscal years 2019-20 and 2020-21. Under the bill, DOA may award \$3,000,000 in each fiscal year, but, if DOA does not award the full amount in the first fiscal year of a biennium, DOA may award that unawarded amount in the second fiscal year of the biennium.

3. Specifies that eligibility for school districts based on membership and for public libraries based on municipal population is determined in the first fiscal year of a biennium and that the determination applies for both fiscal years of the biennium.

4. Specifies that a school district's eligibility is based on its membership in the most recent school year for which finalized data is available, rather than membership in the previous school year.

5. Modifies the definition for what constitutes a "rural" public library for eligibility purposes. Under the bill, a public library is eligible for the grant program if the population of the municipality within which the library is located is 20,000 or less and the library is located outside of urban areas, as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Finally, the bill requires DOA to, at least annually, provide all school districts and public libraries in this state that are eligible for information technology block grants with information regarding how to apply for the grants.

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. 16.9945 (1) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

16.9945 (1) COMPETITIVE GRANTS. (intro.) ~~In fiscal years 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21, the~~ The department may annually award grants on a competitive basis to eligible school districts and to eligible public libraries for the purpose of improving information technology infrastructure. For purposes of awarding grants under this section, "improving information technology infrastructure" includes purchasing and installing on a bus a portable device that creates an area of wireless Internet coverage and purchasing for individuals to temporarily borrow from a school or for patrons to check out from a public library a portable device that creates an area of wireless Internet coverage. In awarding grants to eligible school districts under this section, the department shall give priority to applications for school districts in which the percentage of pupils who satisfy the income eligibility criteria under [42 USC 1758](#) (b) (1) for a free or

reduced-price lunch is greater than in other applicant school districts. The department shall require an applicant for a grant under this section to provide all of the following:

SECTION 2. 16.9945 (2) of the statutes is amended to read:

16.9945 (2) ELIGIBLE SCHOOL DISTRICTS. A school district is eligible for a grant under this section in a fiscal year biennium if the school district's membership in the previous most recent school year for which finalized school year data is available, as determined in the first year of the fiscal biennium, divided by the school district's area in square miles is 16 or less.

SECTION 3. 16.9945 (2m) (a) 1m. of the statutes is created to read:

16.9945 (2m) (a) 1m. "Rural territory" means any territory located outside of urban areas.

SECTION 4. 16.9945 (2m) (a) 2. of the statutes is repealed.

SECTION 5. 16.9945 (2m) (a) 3. of the statutes is amended to read:

16.9945 (2m) (a) 3. "Urbanized Urban area" means an urban area, as defined by the U.S. bureau of the census, ~~with a population of 50,000 or more~~ that is located in this state.

SECTION 6. 16.9945 (2m) (b) (intro.) of the statutes is renumbered 16.9945 (2m) (b) and amended to read:

16.9945 (2m) (b) A public library, including a library branch, is eligible for a grant under this section in a fiscal year biennium if the population of the municipality within which the public library or library branch is located, as determined in the first year of the fiscal biennium, is 20,000 or less and if the public library or library branch is located in ~~one of the following areas of the state:~~ a rural territory.

SECTION 7. 16.9945 (2m) (b) 1. to 3. of the statutes are repealed.

SECTION 8. 16.9945 (3m) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

16.9945 **(3m)** (a) If the population of the municipality within which the eligible public library or library branch, as defined in sub. (2m) (a) 1., is located is 2,000 or less, \$5,000.

SECTION 9. 16.9945 (3m) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

16.9945 **(3m)** (b) If the population of the municipality within which the eligible public library or library branch, as defined in sub. (2m) (a) 1., is located is at least 2,001 but less than 5,000, \$7,500.

SECTION 10. 16.9945 (3m) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

16.9945 **(3m)** (c) If the population of the municipality within which the eligible public library or library branch, as defined in sub. (2m) (a) 1., is located is at least 5,000 but less than 20,001, \$10,000.

SECTION 11. 16.9945 (4) of the statutes is renumbered 16.9945 (4) (a) and amended to read:

16.9945 **(4)** (a) The Except as provided in par. (b), the department cannot ~~may not~~ award grants under this section that total more than \$3,000,000 in ~~the 2019-20 or 2020-21~~ any fiscal year.

SECTION 12. 16.9945 (4) (b) of the statutes is created to read:

16.9945 **(4)** (b) In the second fiscal year of a fiscal biennium, the department may increase the maximum amount under par. (a) by an amount equal to the difference between the maximum amount under par. (a) and the amount the department awarded in the first fiscal year of the fiscal biennium.

SECTION 13. 16.9945 (4m) of the statutes is created to read:

16.9945 (**4m**) NOTIFICATION. The department, at least annually, shall provide all school districts and public libraries located in this state that are eligible for grants under this section with information regarding how to apply for grants.

SECTION 14. 16.9945 (5) of the statutes is amended to read:

16.9945 (**5**) SUNSET. The department may not award grants under this section after June 30, ~~2021~~ 2025.

(END)