



State of Wisconsin  
2021 - 2022 LEGISLATURE

LRB-0629/P2  
KRP:kjf

DOA:.....Sherwin, BB0195 - TEACH Subsidy Program Changes

**FOR 2021-2023 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION**

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

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*Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau*

**STATE GOVERNMENT**

**OTHER STATE GOVERNMENT**

***Technology for Educational Achievement program (TEACH)***

This bill makes various changes to the Technology for Educational Achievement program, known as TEACH, which 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 (educational agencies) at discounted rates and by subsidizing the cost of installing data lines.

The bill makes the following changes to the TEACH educational telecommunications access program:

1. Under the program, educational agencies are required to pay for the services provided to them by the TEACH program. Under current law, an educational agency's payment to the state may not exceed \$100 per month for each data line that relies on a transport medium that operates at a speed of 1.544 megabits per second or less and may not exceed \$250 per month for each data line that operates at a higher speed. The bill increases the threshold data line speed to which the minimum monthly payment limitation applies from 1.544 megabits per second or less to less than one gigabit per second.

2. Under current law, DOA must ensure that a juvenile correctional facility that receives access to data lines or bandwidth under the program uses that access only for educational purposes. The bill expands this requirement to apply to all types of educational agencies and requires that the access must be used primarily for educational purposes, rather than only for educational purposes.

3. Eliminates a provision under current law that prohibits an educational agency that receives access to a data line under the program from 1) providing access to the data line to any business entity unless certain conditions are met; or 2) requesting access to an additional data line for purposes of providing access to a political subdivision under a shared service agreement.

4. Eliminates a provision under current law that allows a public library board that receives access to a data line under the program to enter into a shared service agreement with a political subdivision, subject to certain conditions, to provide the political subdivision with access to any excess bandwidth.

The bill also makes statutory language changes to the former TEACH educational technology infrastructure financial assistance program. Under the program, school districts and public libraries could apply for loans and grants to fund the upgrading of electrical wiring in buildings in existence on October 14, 1997, and the installation and upgrading of computer network wiring. The program required DOA to determine the amount of financial assistance for which a school district or library was eligible and to loan the school district or library 50 percent of that amount and to award a grant for the other 50 percent of that amount. Schools and libraries were required to pay the debt service on the loans and to repay the loans within 10 years, and the state paid the debt service for the grants. The program was closed to new applications for assistance as of July 26, 2003. The bill eliminates obsolete language in the statutes related to the former program while retaining language that requires repayment of certain debt service expenditures.

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

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

**SECTION 1.** 16.995 (2) of the statutes is repealed.

**SECTION 2.** 16.997 (2) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

16.997 (2) (b) Establish eligibility requirements for an educational agency to participate in the program established under sub. (1) and to receive additional telecommunications access under s. 16.998, including a requirement that a charter school sponsor use data lines to benefit pupils attending the charter school and a

requirement that Internet access to material that is harmful to children, as defined in s. 948.11 (1) (b), is blocked on the computers of juvenile correctional facilities that are served by data ~~links~~ lines subsidized under this section.

**SECTION 3.** 16.997 (2) (d) of the statutes is amended to read:

16.997 (2) (d) Require an educational agency to pay the department not more than \$250 per month for each data line that is provided to the educational agency under the program established under sub. (1), except that the charge may not exceed \$100 per month for each data line that relies on a transport medium that operates at a speed of 1.544 megabits less than one gigabit per second.

**SECTION 4.** 16.997 (2) (f) of the statutes is amended to read:

16.997 (2) (f) Ensure that ~~juvenile correctional facilities~~ an educational agency that receive receives access under this section to data lines or that receive receives additional access under s. 16.998 to data lines and bandwidth use uses those data lines and that bandwidth ~~only~~ primarily for educational purposes.

**SECTION 5.** 16.997 (2g) of the statutes is repealed.

**SECTION 6.** 16.997 (2r) of the statutes is repealed.

**SECTION 7.** 20.505 (1) (ip) of the statutes is amended to read:

20.505 (1) (ip) *Information technology and communication services; self-funded portal.* From the sources specified in ss. 16.972 (2) (b) and (c), 16.974 (2), (2m), and (3), and 16.997 (2) (d) ~~and (2g) (a) 3.~~, to receive services through a self-funded portal, the amounts in the schedule to be used for the purpose of providing services to state agencies, state authorities, units of the federal government, local governmental units, tribal schools, individuals, and entities in the private sector through the self-funded portal.

**SECTION 8.** 20.505 (1) (is) of the statutes is amended to read:

20.505 (1) (is) *Information technology and communications services; nonstate entities.* From the sources specified in ss. 16.972 (2) (b) and (c), 16.974 (2) and (3), and 16.997 (2) (d) and ~~(2g) (a) 3.~~, to provide computer, telecommunications, electronic communications, and supercomputer services, but not enterprise resource planning system services under s. 16.971 (2) (cf), to state authorities, units of the federal government, local governmental units, tribal schools, and entities in the private sector, the amounts in the schedule.

**SECTION 9.** 196.218 (5) (a) 5. of the statutes is amended to read:

196.218 (5) (a) 5. To pay costs incurred under contracts under s. 16.971 (13) to (16) to the extent that these costs are not paid under s. 16.997 (2) (d), ~~except that no moneys in the universal service fund may be used to pay installation costs that are necessary for a political subdivision to obtain access to bandwidth under a shared service agreement under s. 16.997 (2r) (a).~~

**SECTION 9301. Initial applicability; Administration.**

(1) TEACH ACCESS RATES. The treatment of s. 16.997 (2) (d) first applies to a monthly fee charged by the department of administration on the effective date of this subsection.

(END)