



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2017 Wisconsin Act 142
[2017 Assembly Bill 572]

TEACH Grants for Public Libraries

2017 Wisconsin Act 142 relates to the ability of rural libraries to apply for grants under the Technology for Educational Achievement (TEACH) program and the ability of the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Division for Libraries and Technology to take certain actions regarding the collection and maintenance of public library data.

BACKGROUND

The TEACH program provides competitive grants awarded by the Department of Administration (DOA) to school districts for information technology infrastructure (“information technology block grants”) and formula grants for training for teachers in the use of educational technology (“technology training grants”). DOA is authorized to award information technology block grants in fiscal year 2017-18 of up to \$15 million and in fiscal year 2018-19 of up to \$7.5 million. DOA is also required to award technology training grants of up to \$1.5 million annually, and must prorate grant payments if the appropriation is insufficient for grants to all eligible applicants.

2017 WISCONSIN ACT 142

Act 142 expands eligibility for information technology block grants and technology training grants to include certain public libraries. The Act authorizes DOA to award an information technology block grant to a public library or public library branch if it meets both of the following requirements: (a) the library or branch is located within a municipality that has a population of 20,000 or less; and (b) the library or branch is located within certain rural territories, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. The total amount DOA may award to an eligible library during a fiscal biennium is \$5,000, \$7,500, or \$10,000, depending upon the population of the municipality within which the eligible library or branch is located.

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature’s Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.

The Act also authorizes DOA to award technology training grants to consortia of eligible public libraries and to eligible public library systems for the costs of training librarians to use educational technology. To be eligible, a consortium of public libraries or public library system must consist of or contain three or more public libraries or branches that: (a) are located within a municipality that has a population of 20,000 or less; and (b) are located within certain rural territories, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. The total amount DOA may award to a consortium of eligible public libraries or an eligible library system is \$500, \$750, or \$1,000, depending upon the population of the municipality within which the eligible library or branch in the consortium or system is located.

Additionally, Act 142 authorizes the DPI Division for Libraries and Technology to perform any of the following activities to collect and maintain public library-related data:

- Purchase licenses for data collection software.
- Train library staff on the effective use of data in decision-making.
- Establish digital processes for the efficient collection, analysis, and reporting of data to library patrons and staff.
- Create dashboard tools for libraries to use internally in analyzing, and reporting to the public about, library use.
- Create an automated system for librarian certification.
- Establish library user authentication systems.

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