

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 5980

C 129 L 09

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Renaming components of the formula for allotment of appropriations for school plant facilities.

Sponsors: Senators Oemig, Brandland and Fraser.

Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on Capital Budget

Background: The School Construction Assistance Grant Program provides state funds to eligible school districts, via appropriation to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), to help with construction of school facilities. The amount of state funding is determined by a formula that includes the following factors: student enrollment; a fixed number of square-feet-per-student varying by grade-level; a fixed area cost allowance per-square-foot; and a percent contribution based on the relative property wealth of a district.

The Joint Legislative Task Force on School Construction Funding (Task Force) was created by the 2007 Legislature to review and evaluate school construction funding issues. In the 2008 session the Legislature directed OSPI to undertake a K-12 school construction funding formula study to analyze aspects of the state's grant program and to present options for formula and program improvements to the Task Force. In October 2008 OSPI and consultant Berk & Associates presented the "K-12 School Construction Funding Formula Transparency Study." Berk & Associates found a wide range of clarity of communications between school districts and citizens about state matching funds. They found that the funding formula is complex and suggested that providing information and materials that clearly communicate the state's funding formula and grant program would help increase understanding. The final report included a recommendation that the state take steps to increase formula transparency, including more accurately naming formula components. Finally, the report suggested specific items to be renamed.

Summary: The following elements of the state funding formula are renamed in affected statutes:

- "State matching funds" to "State funding assistance;"
- "State matching percentage" to "State funding assistance percentage;"
- "Percentage of state assistance" to "State funding assistance percentage;"
- "State assistance" to "State funding assistance;"

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- (School district) "matching requirement" to (School district) "local requirement for state funding assistance;" and
- (School district) "matching funds" to (School district) "local funds."

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 47 0

House 98 0

Effective: July 26, 2009