

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6515

As Reported by House Committee On:

Education

Title: An act relating to clarifying the uses of the school district capital projects fund to include the costs of implementing technology facilities plans.

Brief Description: Allowing the school district capital projects fund to provide for costs associated with implementing technology systems.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Finkbeiner, B. Sheldon, Carlson, Kohl-Welles, Shin, Kastama, Jacobsen, Fraser, Fairley, Winsley, Oke and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/20/02, 2/26/02 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by House Committee)

- Permits a school district to include in a capital project the costs of technology systems, facilities, and projects and to pay those costs from most of the revenue sources in the district's capital projects fund.
- Includes among the allowable technology expenditures the costs of acquiring hardware, licensing software, and on-line applications and training associated with the installation of those activities.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Haigh, Vice Chair; Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, McDermott, Rockefeller, Santos, Schindler, Schmidt and Upthegrove.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

By law, school districts must establish a capital projects fund for major capital purposes.

Money in the fund may come from a variety of sources including bond proceeds, money from excess levies, a portion of state basic education dollars, rental and lease dollars, money from the sale of real property, and earnings from capital project fund investments.

Expenditures from the capital projects fund are restricted by law, including restrictions that vary by the source of the money in the fund. Money in the fund that comes from sources other than bond sales or the rental, lease, or sale of property may be used for a variety of purposes described in law. These include the renovation or replacement of facilities and the renovation or rehabilitation of playfields, athletic fields, and other district property. The money may also be used for energy audits, cost-effective energy conservation measures, and for the purchase or installation of equipment and furniture. Vehicles cannot be acquired through these funds.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Money in each district's capital projects fund that is acquired from sources other than bond sales and the rental, lease, or sale of property may be used for certain technology expenses. The expenses include the costs associated with the implementation of technology systems, facilities, and projects. Allowable expenses include the costs associated with the acquisition of hardware, licensing software, and on-line applications and training if the software and applications are an integral part of the project and the on-line applications and training are part of the installation of the project.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

Expenditures for on-line applications and training are limited to the installation of technology systems, facilities, and projects.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This legislation is supported by a broad coalition of school districts. Adopting the statutory change will provide districts with flexibility in the use of local funds, help them accommodate marketing changes in the software industry, and permit them to keep funding these applications as they do now.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor; Charlie Brown, School Technology Coalition; Robert Butts, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Barbara Mertens, Washington Association of School Administrators.