
SENATE BILL 6081

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2014 Regular Session

By Senators Dammeier, Mullet, Honeyford, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Conway, McAuliffe, and Brown

Read first time 01/15/14. Referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a grant program to develop and
2 modernize specialized STEM facilities; and adding a new section to
3 chapter 28A.188 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.188
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) The legislature recognizes that to achieve improvements in
8 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics literacy specialized
9 school plant facilities are required. Adequate STEM facilities are
10 necessary to support interactive, project-based STEM curricula and are
11 necessary to support STEM teachers who are attempting to deliver that
12 interactive, project-based STEM curricula. The legislature also
13 recognizes that to achieve expected improvements in STEM literacy the
14 development and modernization of specialized STEM facilities must occur
15 at a faster pace than the typical thirty to fifty-year cycle of
16 modernizing or replacing school plant facilities. The legislature
17 intends to speed up the development and modernization of specialized
18 STEM facilities through the competitive grant program described in this
19 section.

1 (2) The specialized STEM facility grant program must be
2 administered by the superintendent of public instruction in
3 consultation with the STEM education innovation alliance specified in
4 RCW 28A.188.030 and the statewide STEM organization specified in RCW
5 28A.188.050. The superintendent of public instruction must develop
6 grant application materials in consultation with the statewide STEM
7 organization, must review applications for accuracy and financial
8 reasonableness, and must administer awarded grants. With funds
9 specifically appropriated for this purpose, the superintendent of
10 public instruction must contract with the statewide STEM organization
11 specified in RCW 28A.188.050 to review applications against the
12 criteria specified in subsection (4) of this section and recommend a
13 single rank-ordered list of grant applications for inclusion in the
14 governor's capital budget request. The governor may include all, some
15 or none of the list, but must follow the recommended rank order.

16 (3) One hundred percent of project costs are eligible for grants
17 under this program for:

18 (a) Facilities owned by public school districts or public charter
19 schools used for grades nine through twelve;

20 (b) Facilities built or modernized more than ten years prior to the
21 grant application; and

22 (c) Project costs for design, construction, project management,
23 capitalized and noncapitalized equipment and fixtures, and necessary
24 utility and information technology systems upgrades to support the
25 specialized STEM facilities.

26 (4) The criteria listed in this subsection must be used to rank
27 grant requests. In applying these criteria, the statewide STEM
28 organization should seek to recommend funding for projects that
29 modernize the most inadequate facilities, to be used by the most
30 qualified STEM teachers, expected to result in the greatest gains in
31 STEM literacy for the greatest number of students for the aggregate
32 amount of proposed grant funding, while improving specialized STEM
33 facilities in rural, suburban, and urban districts in all parts of the
34 state. The criteria are:

35 (a) The extent that existing STEM facilities are inadequate
36 including the lack of adequate STEM facilities to meet graduation
37 requirements in RCW 28A.150.220;

1 (b) A demonstration that existing STEM faculty are in place and are
2 qualified to deliver an interactive, project-based STEM curriculum in
3 the proposed specialized STEM facilities, or a plan and budget are in
4 place to recruit or train such STEM faculty;

5 (c) The expected gains in STEM literacy that are expected from the
6 proposed specialized STEM facilities in comparison to the proposed
7 project costs; and

8 (d) A broad distribution of grants across the state benefiting
9 rural, suburban, and urban districts.

10 (5) For the first competitive round of grant applications to be
11 considered for inclusion in the governor's capital budget request for
12 the 2015-2017 biennium, an expedited grant application and review
13 process must be conducted by the superintendent of public instruction
14 and the statewide STEM organization. The first rank-ordered list must
15 consider, in addition to the criteria in subsection (4) of this
16 section, projects that demonstrate innovative approaches to the design
17 and construction of specialized STEM facilities, including facilities
18 for smaller schools that are flexible and convertible to support
19 education in a variety of STEM disciplines. The first rank-ordered
20 list of proposed grants must be submitted to the office of financial
21 management and the appropriate committees of the legislature by October
22 30, 2014. Following that first submission, the superintendent of
23 public instruction must prepare a biennial grant application cycle for
24 subsequent biennia.

25 (6) Modernized spaces funded with this grant program in the prior
26 ten years are not eligible to receive state funding for modernization
27 through this grant program or the school construction assistance
28 program. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
29 write rules to ensure new space added with funding provided by this
30 grant is included in the eligible inventory for the school construction
31 assistance program.

32 (7) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in
33 consultation with the STEM education innovation alliance, must prepare
34 a plan for evaluating the student performance outcomes resulting from
35 the STEM facility grant program. The evaluation plan and estimated
36 cost must be submitted to the appropriate committees of the legislature
37 by January 1, 2015. The evaluation plan must provide an initial

1 evaluation report on student outcomes by January 1, 2019. The report
2 must also consider options for expanding the grant program to improve
3 specialized STEM facilities for middle and elementary schools.

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