S-0917.1

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**SENATE BILL 5478**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Dammeier, Keiser, Honeyford, Angel, and Conway

AN ACT Relating to financing facilities to support education reform; adding a new section to chapter 28A.188 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.150 RCW; creating a new section; and declaring an emergency.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that local school districts design, build, own, and manage public school facilities. School districts are assisted in providing public school facilities primarily through the school construction assistance grant program specified in chapter 28A.525 RCW. This grant program provides financial assistance for new school capacity to accommodate enrollment growth and for the modernization and replacement of existing schools while respecting local decisions and control by locally elected school boards.

(2) The legislature also finds that some school districts may benefit from additional assistance to provide school facilities beyond that which is provided through the school construction assistance grant program.

(3) The legislature intends to provide additional financial assistance to school districts for modernization of their facilities that support science, technology, engineering and mathematics education, and may be helpful to expand state-funded all-day kindergarten.

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

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

(2) The specialized STEM facility grant program must be administered by the superintendent of public instruction in consultation with the STEM education innovation alliance specified in RCW 28A.188.030 and the statewide STEM organization specified in RCW 28A.188.050. The superintendent of public instruction must develop grant application materials in consultation with the statewide STEM organization, must review applications for accuracy and financial reasonableness, and must administer awarded grants. With funds specifically appropriated for this purpose, the superintendent of public instruction must contract with the statewide STEM organization specified in RCW 28A.188.050 to evaluate applications against the criteria specified in subsection (4) of this section and recommend a single rank-ordered list of grant applications. The superintendent of public instruction may modify the rank-ordered list received by the statewide STEM organization for inclusion in the office's capital budget request, but must also submit to the governor and fiscal committees of the legislature the original ranking by the statewide STEM organization with explanations for any changes made to the ranking. The governor may use the original list prepared by the statewide STEM organization or may consider any changes recommended by the office of the superintendent of public instruction in preparing the governor's capital budget request.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(d) The STEM facilities are needed in schools with the highest free and reduced-price school lunch enrollment percentages;

(e) A broad distribution of grants across the state benefiting rural, suburban, and urban districts; and

(f) Economic conditions within the district that limit the ability of the district to finance the necessary classroom space from local sources.

(5) Modernized spaces funded with this grant program in the prior ten years are not eligible to receive state funding for modernization through this grant program or the school construction assistance program for the space that has been modernized with this grant program. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall write rules to ensure new space added with funding provided by this grant is included in the eligible inventory for the school construction assistance program.

(6) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with the STEM education innovation alliance, must prepare a plan for evaluating the student performance outcomes resulting from the STEM facility grant program. The evaluation plan and estimated cost must be submitted to the appropriate committees of the legislature by January 1, 2016. The evaluation plan must provide an initial evaluation report on student outcomes by January 1, 2023. The report must also consider options for expanding the grant program to improve specialized STEM facilities for middle and elementary schools.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.150 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The legislature recognizes that some school districts may need additional financial assistance to provide classroom capacity to support the phase-in of state-funded all-day kindergarten specified in this chapter even though the school construction assistance program under chapter 28A.525 RCW has included all-day kindergarten in the calculation of necessary classroom space since 2001. The legislature intends to assist school districts in the phase-in of all-day kindergarten with the grant program described in this section.

(2) The all-day kindergarten facility grant program must be administered by the superintendent of public instruction in consultation with an advisory committee. The advisory committee must include three school district facility managers, one each from an urban, suburban, and rural school district, selected by the superintendent of public instruction, and four community members selected by the governor representing parents and organizations concerned with early education and student academic performance. The superintendent of public instruction must develop grant application materials in consultation with the advisory committee, must review applications for accuracy and financial reasonableness, and must administer awarded grants. The advisory committee must review applications against the criteria specified in subsection (4) of this section and recommend a single rank-ordered list. The superintendent of public instruction may modify the rank-ordered list received by the advisory committee for inclusion in the agency's capital budget request, but must also submit to the governor and fiscal committees of the legislature the original ranking by the advisory committee with explanations for any changes made to the ranking. The governor may use the original list prepared by the advisory committee or may consider any changes recommended by the office of the superintendent of public instruction in preparing the governor's capital budget request.

(3) One hundred percent of project costs necessary to provide additional classroom space at existing elementary schools are eligible for kindergarten classroom grants under this program for:

(a) Facilities owned by public school districts or public charter schools;

(b) Facilities built or modernized prior to 2003; and

(c) Project costs for design, construction, purchase, and installation of modular buildings, project management, capitalized equipment, and fixtures. Costs for purchase or lease of portables or other facilities not installed on permanent foundations are not eligible.

(4) The criteria listed in this subsection must be used to rank grant requests. In applying these criteria, the advisory committee should seek to recommend funding for projects that provide necessary classroom space in districts furthest behind in implementing state-funded all-day kindergarten, or for districts that have implemented state-funded all-day kindergarten in temporary spaces, with the highest enrollment percentages of students eligible for free and reduced-price school lunches, in districts least able to provide the necessary classroom space from local sources. The criteria are:

(a) The extent that implementing state-funded all-day kindergarten may be assisted by additional classroom capacity as verified by site visits by the office of the superintendent of public instruction. School districts that have implemented state-funded all-day kindergarten in temporary spaces must be ranked as high as schools not having implemented state-funded all-day kindergarten due to a lack of space. For the purposes of this subsection, temporary spaces mean spaces that are not designed as a classroom nor typically used as a classroom, such as the library, auditorium, gymnasium, or in neighboring community facilities not owned by the district;

(b) The kindergarten classroom space is needed in schools with the highest free and reduced-price school lunch enrollment percentages; and

(c) Economic conditions within the district that limit the ability of the district to finance the necessary classroom space from local sources.

(5) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall write rules to ensure new space added with funding provided by this grant is included in the eligible inventory for the school construction assistance program. Grant funds provided under this section must not be counted as local match for the school construction assistance program. The all-day kindergarten program is not intended to replace the school construction assistance program for providing state assistance for the construction of new schools.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately.

**--- END ---**