AN ACT Relating to procuring and supporting appropriate computers and devices for public school students and instructional staff; amending RCW 28A.650.010; adding new sections to chapter 28A.650 RCW; creating new sections; and repealing RCW 28A.650.005, 28A.650.015, 28A.650.020, 28A.650.025, 28A.650.030, 28A.650.900, and 28A.650.901.

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

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. (1) The legislature recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the importance of internet-accessible learning devices for the ability of students to receive a modern education. When Washington schools closed in March 2020, schools and school districts shifted quickly to offering education in an online environment. Teachers adapted their lessons for videoconferencing platforms and arranged for students to submit homework via email. However, limited opportunities for in-person instruction amplified digital deserts and disparities among students that are likely to continue to grow for the foreseeable future.

(2) The legislature finds that students from low-income families face disproportionate barriers to accessing learning over the internet in their homes, partly because they do not have internet-accessible devices appropriate for learning. The legislature also recognizes that accessing learning over the internet requires more
than just an internet-accessible device appropriate for learning. For students and their families to be truly connected, they need the digital literacy, digital skills, and digital support to use internet-accessible devices and to navigate the web in support of student learning.

(3) Therefore, it is the goal of the legislature to: Accelerate universal 1:1, which means one learning device for each student, by increasing student access to, and training for, learning devices and other technology-related services and products; expand the provision of training and technical assistance to instructional staff using technology to support student learning; and build the capacity of schools to provide digital navigation services to students and their families.

Sec. 2. RCW 28A.650.010 and 2017 c 90 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) “Digital citizenship” includes the norms of appropriate, responsible, and healthy behavior related to current technology use, including digital and media literacy, ethics, etiquette, and security. The term also includes the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, develop, produce, and interpret media, as well as internet safety and cyberbullying prevention and response.

(2) (“Education technology” or “technology” means the effective use of electronic and optical tools, including telephones, and electronic and optical pathways in helping students learn.

(3) “Network” means integrated linking of education technology systems in schools for transmission of voice, data, video, or imaging, or a combination of these.) “Learning device” means an internet-accessible computer, tablet, or other device, with an appropriate operating system, software applications, and data security, that can be used to access curricula, educational web applications and websites, and learning management systems, and with telecommunications capabilities sufficient for videoconferencing.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 28A.650 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Each educational service district shall provide technology consultation, procurement, and training as described in this section.
An educational service district may meet the requirements of this section in cooperation with one or more other educational service districts.

(2) Technology consultation involves providing technical assistance and guidance to local school districts related to technology needs and financing, and may include consultation with other entities.

(3)(a) Technology procurement involves negotiating for local school district purchases and leasing of learning devices and peripheral devices, learning management systems, cybersecurity protection, device insurance, and other technology-related services and products.

(b) When selecting services and products for procurement, the educational service district must consider a variety of student needs, as well as accessibility, age appropriateness, privacy and security, data storage and transfer capacity, and telecommunications capability.

(c) Technology procurement may be performed in consultation and contract with the department of enterprise services under chapter 39.26 RCW.

(4) Technology training involves developing and offering direct services to local school districts related to staff development and capacity building to provide digital navigation services to students and their families. These services may be provided on a fee-for-service basis.

(5) Technology consultation, procurement, and training under this section must be provided to local public schools, as defined in RCW 28A.150.010, the Washington center for deaf and hard of hearing youth, and the school for the blind, in addition to local school districts.

(6) The educational service districts must cooperate with the office of the superintendent of public instruction to provide the data required under section 5(1) of this act.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. A new section is added to chapter 28A.650 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall develop and administer a technology grant program, as described in this section, to accomplish the following goals:
(a) Universal 1:1, which means one learning device for each student;
(b) Technology training for school and district staff; and
(c) Capacity building to provide digital navigation services that train students and their families to use technology in support of student learning.

(2) The following entities, individually or in cooperation, may apply to the office of the superintendent of public instruction for a grant under this section: A public school as defined in RCW 28A.150.010; a school district; an educational service district; the Washington center for deaf and hard of hearing youth; and the state school for the blind.

(3) At a minimum, grant applications must include:
(a) The applicant's technology plan for accomplishing the goals of the grant program, the applicant's student demographics, including the percent of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals, and any specialized technology needs of the applicant's students, such as students with disabilities and English learners who may need adaptive or assistive technologies; and
(b) A description of preexisting programs and funding sources used by the applicant to provide learning devices to students, staff, or both.

(4) When ranking and selecting applicants, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must prioritize both of the following:
(a) Applicants without preexisting programs to provide a device for every student and that have 30 percent or more students eligible for free and reduced-price meals; and
(b) Applicants with students who have specialized technology needs.

(5) When selecting applicants, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must, to the extent possible, select applicants representing geographic diversity.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 5. A new section is added to chapter 28A.650 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall collect and analyze the following data:
(a) Demographic, distribution, and other data-related technology initiatives; and
(b) Biennial survey data on school and school district progress to accomplish the goals listed in section 4(1) of this act.

(2) By November 1, 2022, and by November 1st every even year thereafter, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall provide a report to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the legislature, in accordance with RCW 43.01.036, with:

(a) A summary of the technology initiatives data collected under subsection (1) of this section;
(b) The status of the state's progress in accomplishing the goal described in section 1(3) of this act;
(c) Recommendations for improving the administration and oversight of the technology initiatives; and
(d) An update on the activities of the office of the superintendent of public instruction, educational service districts, school districts, the Washington center for deaf and hard of hearing youth, and the state school for the blind, performed in collaboration with other state, local, or community-based initiatives related to learning devices and other technology-related services and products, training and technical assistance for school and district staff, and building the capacity of schools and districts to provide digital navigation services to students and their families.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "technology initiatives" means the technology grants awarded by the office of the superintendent of public instruction under section 4 of this act, and the provision of technology consultation, procurement, and training by educational service districts under section 3 of this act.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 6. The following acts or parts of acts are each repealed:

(1) RCW 28A.650.005 (Findings—Intent) and 1993 c 336 s 701;
(2) RCW 28A.650.015 (Education technology plan—Educational technology advisory committee) and 2011 1st sp.s. c 43 s 725, 2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 133, 2009 c 556 s 17, 2006 c 263 s 917, 1995 c 335 s 507, 1994 c 245 s 2, & 1993 c 336 s 703;
(3) RCW 28A.650.020 (Regional educational technology support centers—Advisory councils) and 1993 c 336 s 705;
(4) RCW 28A.650.025 (Distribution of funds for regional educational technology support centers) and 1993 c 336 s 706;
(5) RCW 28A.650.030 (Distribution of funds to expand the education statewide network) and 1993 c 336 s 707;
(6) RCW 28A.650.900 (Findings—Intent—Part headings not law—1993 c 336); and
(7) RCW 28A.650.901 (Findings—1993 c 336).

NEW SECTION. Sec. 7. If specific funding for the purposes of this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by June 30, 2021, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and void.

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