

This Document can be made available in alternative formats upon request

State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FIRST SESSION

H. F. No. 1178

02/14/2019 Authored by Baker, Poston and Lien
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education finance; increasing funding for school district and library
1.3 telecommunications purposes; requiring a report; appropriating money; amending
1.4 Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 134.355, subdivision 10; Laws 2016, chapter
1.5 189, article 30, section 24, subdivision 1.

1.6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.7 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 134.355, subdivision 10, is amended to read:

1.8 Subd. 10. Award of funds. (a) The commissioner of education shall must develop an
1.9 application and a reporting form and procedures for regional library telecommunications
1.10 aid. Aid shall must be based on actual costs including, but not limited to, connections, as
1.11 documented in e-rate funding commitment decision letters for category one services and
1.12 acceptable documentation for category two services and funds available for this purpose.
1.13 The commissioner shall make payments directly to the regional public library system.

1.14 (b) On March 15 of 2020, 2021, and 2022, the commissioner of education must reallocate
1.15 any unspent amounts appropriated for paragraph (a) to regional library systems for broadband
1.16 innovation programs, including equipment purchases, hot spot access devices, and other
1.17 programs designed to increase Internet access.

1.18 (c) By January 15 of 2021, 2022, and 2023, the commissioner of education must report
1.19 to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over education on the previous fiscal year's
1.20 spending under this subdivision and make any recommendations for necessary program
1.21 changes.

1.22 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.

2.1 Sec. 2. Laws 2016, chapter 189, article 30, section 24, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

2.2 Subdivision 1. **Broadband Wi-Fi hot spots.** (a) A school district is eligible for a
2.3 broadband hot spot grant not to exceed \$50,000 to support wireless off-campus learning
2.4 through a student's use of a data card, USB modem, or other mobile broadband device that
2.5 enables the student to access learning materials available on the Internet through a mobile
2.6 broadband connection. A district's application for a grant under this subdivision must describe
2.7 its approach for identifying and prioritizing access for low-income students and others
2.8 otherwise unable to access the Internet and may include a description of local or private
2.9 matching grants or in-kind contributions.

2.10 (b) When evaluating applications, the commissioner may give priority to grant
2.11 applications that include local in-kind contributions. To the extent practicable, the
2.12 commissioner must distribute the grants to districts located throughout the state including
2.13 in urban areas, suburban areas, and in greater Minnesota. The commissioner may award a
2.14 grant to a school district that received a grant in fiscal year 2017.

2.15 (c) A school district may develop its application in cooperation with its community
2.16 education department, its adult basic education program provider, a public library, or other
2.17 community partner.

2.18 (d) A school district that qualifies for general education transportation sparsity revenue
2.19 under Minnesota Statutes, section 126C.10, may apply to the commissioner of education
2.20 for a school bus Internet access grant as a part of its grant application under paragraph (a).
2.21 The commissioner of education must prioritize grants to districts with the longest bus routes.
2.22 A school district that receives a grant under this subdivision may use the grant to purchase
2.23 or lease equipment designed to make Internet access available on school buses, including
2.24 routers and mobile Wi-Fi hot spots to connect to the Internet, and may also purchase or
2.25 lease one-to-one devices for students. The one-to-one devices may be connected to the
2.26 Internet through the Wi-Fi hot spot or otherwise contain content for age-appropriate,
2.27 self-directed learning.

2.28 Sec. 3. APPROPRIATION; SCHOOL DISTRICT CONNECTIVITY.

2.29 Subdivision 1. Department of Education. The sums indicated in this section are
2.30 appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Education in the fiscal year
2.31 designated.

2.32 Subd. 2. School district innovative connectivity grants. (a) For innovative connectivity
2.33 grants under Laws 2016, chapter 189, article 30, section 24:

3.1 \$ 5,000,000 2020

3.2 (b) Any balance in the first year does not cancel but is available in the second year.

3.3 Subd. 3. **Equity in telecommunications access.** (a) For equity in telecommunications
3.4 access aid under Minnesota Statutes, section 125B.26:

3.5 \$ 9,000,000 2020

3.6 \$ 9,000,000 2021

3.7 (b) Any balance in the first year does not cancel but is available in the second year.

3.8 Subd. 4. **Regional library telecommunications aid.** (a) For regional library
3.9 telecommunications aid under Minnesota Statutes, section 134.355:

3.10 \$ 2,300,000 2020

3.11 \$ 2,300,000 2021

3.12 (b) The 2020 appropriation includes \$230,000 for 2019 and \$2,070,000 for 2020.

3.13 (c) The 2021 appropriation includes \$230,000 for 2020 and \$2,070,000 for 2021.