

## Assembly Bill No. 948

### CHAPTER 871

An act to amend Section 47614.5 of the Education Code, relating to charter schools.

[Approved by Governor September 30, 2014. Filed with  
Secretary of State September 30, 2014.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 948, Olsen. Charter schools: school facilities: Charter School Facility Grant Program.

Existing law requires the California School Finance Authority to administer the Charter School Facility Grant Program and provides that the grant program is intended to provide assistance with facilities rent and lease costs for pupils in charter schools. Existing law requires the authority, among other requirements, to inform charter schools of the grant program and to determine grant program eligibility based on specified factors, including, among other factors, a charter school's preference in admissions, the geographic location of the charter schoolsite, and pupil eligibility for free and reduced-price meals, as specified.

This bill would require eligibility for the grant program to be expanded, as specified, if funds remain after charter schools that meet the existing free and reduced-price meals threshold are funded. The bill would provide that, with respect to this grant program, charter schools would be subject to the provision that generally imposes the requirement of an annual audit on local educational agencies.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 47614.5 of the Education Code is amended to read:  
47614.5. (a) The Charter School Facility Grant Program is hereby established, and shall be administered by the California School Finance Authority. The grant program is intended to provide assistance with facilities rent and lease costs for pupils in charter schools.

(b) Subject to the annual Budget Act, eligible charter schools shall receive an amount of up to, but not more than, seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750) per unit of average daily attendance, as certified at the second principal apportionment, to provide an amount of up to, but not more than, 75 percent of the annual facilities rent and lease costs for the charter school. In any fiscal year, if the funds appropriated for purposes of this section by the annual Budget Act are insufficient to fully fund the approved amounts

amounts, the California School Finance Authority shall apportion the available funds on a pro rata basis.

(c) For purposes of this section, the California School Finance Authority shall do all of the following:

(1) Inform charter schools of the grant program.

(2) Upon application by a charter school, determine eligibility, based on the geographic location of the charter schoolsite, pupil eligibility for free or reduced-price meals, and a preference in admissions, as appropriate. Eligibility for funding shall not be limited to the grade level or levels served by the school whose attendance area is used to determine eligibility. A charter schoolsite is eligible for funding pursuant to this section if the charter schoolsite meets either of the following conditions:

(A) The charter schoolsite is physically located in the attendance area of a public elementary school in which 70 percent or more of the pupil enrollment is eligible for free or reduced-price meals and the charter schoolsite gives a preference in admissions to pupils who are currently enrolled in that public elementary school and to pupils who reside in the elementary school attendance area where the charter schoolsite is located.

(B) Seventy percent or more of the pupil enrollment at the charter schoolsite is eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

(C) In any year in which additional funds remain after state and federal funds have been allocated to applicants that meet the eligibility criteria in subparagraph (A) or (B), the California School Finance Authority shall expand eligibility to additional charter schools that are eligible pursuant to subparagraph (B) by reducing the free and reduced-price meals threshold one percentage point at a time, but in no case below 60 percent.

(3) Inform charter schools of their grant eligibility.

(4) Make apportionments to a charter school for eligible expenditures according to the following schedule:

(A) An initial apportionment by August 31 of each fiscal year or 30 days after enactment of the annual Budget Act, whichever is later, provided the charter school has submitted a timely application for funding, as determined by the California School Finance Authority. The initial apportionment shall be 50 percent of the charter school's estimated annual entitlement as determined by this section.

(B) A second apportionment by March 1 of each fiscal year. This apportionment shall be 75 percent of the charter school's estimated annual entitlement, as adjusted for any revisions in cost, enrollment, and other data relevant to computing the charter school's annual entitlement, less any funding already apportioned to the charter school.

(C) A third apportionment within 30 days of the end of each fiscal year or 30 days after receiving the data and documentation needed to compute the charter school's total annual entitlement, whichever is later. This apportionment shall be the charter school's total annual entitlement less any funding already apportioned to the charter school.

(D) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the initial apportionment in the 2013–14 fiscal year shall be made by October 15, 2013, or 105 days after enactment of the Budget Act of 2013, whichever is later.

(d) For purposes of this section:

(1) The California School Finance Authority shall use prior year data on pupil eligibility for free or reduced-price meals for the charter schoolsite and prior year rent or lease costs provided by charter schools to determine eligibility for the grant program until current year data and actual rent or lease costs become known or until June 30 of each fiscal year.

(2) If prior year rent or lease costs are unavailable, and the current year lease and rent costs are not immediately available, the California School Finance Authority shall use rent or lease cost estimates provided by the charter school.

(3) The California School Finance Authority shall verify that the grant amount awarded to each charter school is consistent with eligibility requirements as specified in this section and in regulations adopted by the authority. If it is determined by the California School Finance Authority that a charter school did not receive the proper grant award amount, either the charter school shall transfer funds back to the authority as necessary within 60 days of being notified by the authority, or the authority shall provide an additional apportionment as necessary to the charter school within 60 days of notifying the charter school, subject to the availability of funds.

(e) Funds appropriated for purposes of this section shall not be apportioned for any of the following:

(1) Units of average daily attendance generated through nonclassroom-based instruction as defined by paragraph (2) of subdivision (e) of Section 47612.5 or that does not comply with conditions or limitations set forth in regulations adopted by the state board pursuant to this section.

(2) Charter schools occupying existing school district or county office of education facilities, except that charter schools shall be eligible for the portions of their facilities that are not existing school district or county office of education facilities.

(3) Charter schools receiving reasonably equivalent facilities from their chartering authorities pursuant to Section 47614, except that charter schools shall be eligible for the portions of their facilities that are not reasonably equivalent facilities received from their chartering authorities.

(f) Funds appropriated for purposes of this section shall be used for costs associated with facilities rents and leases, consistent with the definitions used in the California School Accounting Manual or regulations adopted by the California School Finance Authority. These funds also may be used for costs, including, but not limited to, costs associated with remodeling buildings, deferred maintenance, initially installing or extending service systems and other built-in equipment, and improving sites.

(g) If an existing charter school located in an elementary attendance area in which less than 50 percent of pupil enrollment is eligible for free or reduced-price meals relocates to an attendance area identified in paragraph

(2) of subdivision (c), admissions preference shall be given to pupils who reside in the elementary school attendance area into which the charter school is relocating.

(h) The California School Finance Authority annually shall report to the department and the Director of Finance, and post information on its Internet Web site, regarding the use of funds that have been made available during the fiscal year to each charter school pursuant to the grant program.

(i) The California School Finance Authority shall annually allocate the facilities grants to eligible charter schools according to the schedule in paragraph (4) of subdivision (c) for the current school year rent and lease costs. However, the California School Finance Authority shall first use the funding appropriated for this program to reimburse eligible charter schools for unreimbursed rent or lease costs for the prior school year.

(j) It is the intent of the Legislature that the funding level for the Charter School Facility Grant Program for the 2012–13 fiscal year be considered the base level of funding for subsequent fiscal years.

(k) The Controller shall include instructions appropriate to the enforcement of this section in the audit guide required by subdivision (a) of Section 14502.1.

(l) The California School Finance Authority, effective with the 2013–14 fiscal year, shall be considered the senior creditor for purposes of satisfying audit findings pursuant to the audit instructions to be developed pursuant to subdivision (k).

(m) The California School Finance Authority may adopt regulations to implement this section. Any regulations adopted pursuant to this section may be adopted as emergency regulations in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of the Title 2 of the Government Code). The adoption of these regulations shall be deemed to be an emergency and necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, or general welfare.

(n) Notwithstanding any other law, a charter school shall be subject, with regard to this section, to audit conducted pursuant to Section 41020.