

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 16, 2000

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 24, 2000

SENATE BILL

No. 1774

Introduced by Senator Bowen

February 23, 2000

An act to add Section 10910.2, to the Education Code, relating to computer access, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1774, as amended, Bowen. Computer access.

Existing law authorizes school districts to organize, promote, and conduct programs of community recreation as well as contribute to the attainment of general educational and recreational objectives for children and adults of the state. Existing law declares that it is in the interest of the people and of the state that there be a general diffusion of knowledge and intelligence through the establishment and operation of public libraries.

This bill would require the State Department of Education to establish a grant program to encourage schools to keep their computer facilities open and available to the public on evenings and weekends and to encourage public libraries that have Internet access to extend the hours and days during which access is available to the public. The bill would provide grant funds to cover the additional costs incurred by the schools and libraries, as well as provide for the cost of technical assistance at a level determined by the State Department of

Education. *The bill would require the grant program to establish preferences, as specified. The bill would require that a grant made under the program not exceed \$100,000. The bill would require grantees to hire staff and recruit volunteers with appropriate levels of computer knowledge and expertise and would require a school to implement a program that enlists pupil volunteers to provide technical support as a condition to receiving the grant.*

The bill would appropriate an unspecified sum from the General Fund to the State Department of Education, according to a specified schedule, to fund the grant programs.

Vote: ²/₃. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

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

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of
2 the following:

3 (a) The ability to use a computer and the Internet are
4 becoming critical skills that are necessary for full
5 participation in modern society.

6 (b) The disparate access to computers and the
7 Internet is known as the “digital divide” and is related to
8 an individual’s income, ethnicity, and geographic
9 location. The digital divide disadvantages people by
10 denying them an equal opportunity to educate
11 themselves, avail themselves of economic opportunities,
12 participate in electronic commerce, and access
13 information.

14 (c) A cost-effective way of helping to bridge the digital
15 divide is to provide educational and training
16 opportunities to pupils as well as provide general access
17 to the public through the extended use of schools,
18 libraries, and other public access computer centers.

19 SEC. 2. Section 10910.2 is added to the Education
20 Code, to read:

21 10910.2. (a) The State Department of Education
22 shall establish a grant program to encourage schools to
23 keep their computer facilities open and available to the
24 public on evenings and weekends, and to encourage



1 public libraries that have Internet access to extend the
2 hours and days during which access is available to the
3 public. The grants shall cover the additional costs,
4 *excluding costs for the construction or lease of the*
5 *facilities*, incurred by a school or library as well as provide
6 for the cost of technical assistance at a level determined
7 by the State Department of Education. As a condition to
8 receiving a grant, a school must implement a program
9 that enlists pupil volunteers to provide technical support.

10 *(b) The grant program established pursuant to this*
11 *section shall establish preferences for the following:*

12 *(1) Schools and libraries with substantial local and*
13 *private sector support.*

14 *(2) Schools and libraries located in areas with poor*
15 *computer access, such as rural and low-income areas.*

16 *(c) Grantees shall hire staff and recruit volunteers*
17 *with appropriate levels of computer knowledge and*
18 *expertise.*

19 *(d) No grant awarded under the program shall exceed*
20 *one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000).*

21 SEC. 3. The sum of _____ (\$_____) is hereby
22 appropriated from the General Fund to the State
23 Department of Education to be allocated according to
24 the following schedule:

25 (a) The sum of _____ dollars (\$_____) to
26 encourage schools to keep their computer facilities open
27 and available to the public on evenings and weekends by
28 providing grant funds to cover the additional costs
29 incurred by a school as well as provide for the cost of
30 technical assistance at a level determined by the State
31 Department of Education.

32 (b) The sum of _____ (\$_____) to encourage
33 public libraries that have Internet access to extend the
34 hours and days during which access is available to the
35 public by providing grant funding to cover additional
36 costs incurred by the library as well as provide for the cost
37 of technical assistance at a level determined by the State
38 Department of Education.

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