

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

FILE NUMBER: H.F. 1811

DATE: April 14, 2005

Version: As Introduced

Authors: Penas and others

Subject: Telecommunication and Internet access aid

Analyst: Tim Strom, 651-296-1886

This publication can be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please call 651-296-6753 (voice); or the Minnesota State Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529 (TTY) for assistance. Summaries are also available on our website at: www.house.mn/hrd.

Overview

This bill creates a state aid for school districts, charter schools and nonpublic schools to reimburse the schools for a portion of their unreimbursed costs for telecommunications and Internet access. For public schools, the aid is equal to 90% of the amount of unreimbursed costs exceeding \$15 per pupil. For nonpublic schools, the aid is equal to 90% of the amount of unreimbursed costs exceeding \$10 per pupil unit (in fiscal year 2001, the basic operating capital revenue for school districts was increased by \$5 per pupil unit and for three years this revenue was required to be used for telecommunications costs).

For fiscal years 2001 to 2003, the state had a similar program in place called the Telecommunications Access Revenue Program (TARP).

Section

- 1** **Telecommunications/Internet access aid.** Requires school districts and charter schools to submit their actual telecommunications and Internet access costs to the commissioner of education. Defines eligible costs. Requires participating districts to file applications for federal Internet funds commonly referred to as e-rate funds. Sets the aid amount under this section for school districts and charter schools equal to 90% of the schools' unreimbursed costs exceeding \$15 per pupil unit. Requires a school district to provide telecommunications and Internet access to nonpublic schools (excluding a home school) located within the district's boundaries. Provides a reimbursement equal to 90% of the nonpublic school's unreimbursed costs exceeding \$10 per pupil unit. Makes the nonpublic school responsible

Section

for any costs in excess of the amount the district receives for this service. Provides a severability clause that states if a court finds any portion of this statute unconstitutional, the court may sever that provision, and the remaining portions of the statute remain in effect.

- 2** **Appropriations.** Appropriates \$4,500,000 in fiscal year 2006 and \$4,600,000 in fiscal year 2007 from the general fund to the commissioner of education for payment of telecommunications/Internet access aid.