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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FOURTH SESSION

H. F. No. 679

02/13/2025 Authored by Freiberg
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Education Finance

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education finance; increasing award amounts of innovative
1.3 service-learning grants; appropriating money; amending Laws 2023, chapter 55,
1.4 article 2, section 59.

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

1.6 Section 1. Laws 2023, chapter 55, article 2, section 59, is amended to read:

1.7 Sec. 59. INNOVATIVE INCUBATOR SERVICE-LEARNING GRANTS.

1.8 Subdivision 1. Definitions. (a) For the purposes of this section, the following terms have
1.9 the meanings given.

1.10 (b) "Eligible school" means a school district or school site operated by a school district,
1.11 charter school, or Tribal contract or grant school eligible for state aid under Minnesota
1.12 Statutes, section 124D.83, or cooperative unit under Minnesota Statutes, section 123A.24,
1.13 subdivision 2.

1.14 (c) "Eligible service-learning partnership" means a partnership that includes an eligible
1.15 school and at least one community-based organization, community education program, state
1.16 or federal agency, or political subdivision. An eligible service-learning partnership may
1.17 include other individuals or entities, such as a postsecondary faculty member or institution,
1.18 parent, other community member, local business or business organization, or local media
1.19 representative. A school district member in an eligible service-learning partnership may
1.20 participate in the partnership through a community education program established under
1.21 Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.19.

2.1 Subd. 2. **Establishment; eligibility criteria; application requirements.** (a) A technical
2.2 assistance and grant program is established to initiate or expand and strengthen innovative
2.3 service-learning opportunities for students in kindergarten through grade 12; increase student
2.4 engagement and academic achievement; help close the academic achievement gap and the
2.5 community, college, and career opportunity gaps; and create a positive school climate and
2.6 safer schools and communities.

2.7 (b) At least one teacher, administrator, or program staff member and at least one
2.8 service-learning specialist, service-learning coordinator, curriculum specialist, or other
2.9 qualified employee employed by an eligible school and designated to develop and share
2.10 expertise in implementing service-learning best practices must work with students to form
2.11 a student-adult partnership. Before developing and submitting a grant application to the
2.12 department, a participating student must work with at least one adult who is part of the
2.13 initial partnership to identify a need or opportunity to pursue through a service-learning
2.14 partnership and invite at least one partner to collaborate in developing and submitting a
2.15 grant application. The fiscal agent for the grant to an eligible service-learning partnership
2.16 is an eligible school that is a member of the partnership or has a program that is a member
2.17 of the partnership.

2.18 (c) An eligible service-learning partnership receiving an innovation service-learning
2.19 grant must:

2.20 (1) include at least two or more enrolled students; two or more school employees of an
2.21 eligible school in accordance with paragraph (b); and an eligible community-based
2.22 organization, community education program, state or federal agency, or political subdivision;
2.23 and

2.24 (2) assist students to:

2.25 (i) actively participate in service-learning experiences that meet identified student and
2.26 community needs or opportunities;

2.27 (ii) operate collaboratively with service-learning partnership members;

2.28 (iii) align service-learning experiences with at least one state or local academic standard,
2.29 which may include a local career and technical education standard;

2.30 (iv) apply students' knowledge and skills in their community and help solve community
2.31 problems or address community opportunities;

2.32 (v) foster students' civic engagement; and

2.33 (vi) explore or pursue career pathways and support career and college readiness.

3.1 (d) An eligible service-learning partnership interested in receiving a grant must apply
 3.2 to the commissioner of education in the form and manner determined by the commissioner.
 3.3 The partnership must work with an eligible school. Consistent with this subdivision, the
 3.4 application must describe the eligible service-learning partnership plan to:

3.5 (1) incorporate student-designed and student-led service-learning into the school
 3.6 curriculum or specific courses or across subject areas;

3.7 (2) provide students with instruction and experiences using service-learning best practices
 3.8 during the regular school day with an option to supplement their service-learning experiences
 3.9 outside of the school day;

3.10 (3) align service-learning experiences with at least one state or local academic standard,
 3.11 which may include a local career or technical education standard, and at least one goal of
 3.12 ~~the world's best workforce~~ comprehensive achievement and civic readiness in accordance
 3.13 with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, or the state plan submitted and approved under
 3.14 the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act;

3.15 (4) make implementing service-learning best practices an educational priority;

3.16 (5) provide student-designed, student-led service-learning experiences that help meet
 3.17 community needs or develop or advance community opportunities; and

3.18 (6) identify at least one eligible school teacher, administrator, or program staff member
 3.19 and at least one service-learning specialist, service-learning coordinator, curriculum specialist,
 3.20 or other qualified eligible school employee designated to develop and share expertise in
 3.21 implementing service-learning best practices to work with students to form a student-adult
 3.22 partnership that includes at least one community-based organization, community education
 3.23 program, state or federal agency, or political subdivision.

3.24 Subd. 3. **Innovation grants.** The commissioner of education must award ~~up to 32~~ grants
 3.25 of up to ~~\$50,000~~ \$75,000 each to allow eligible partnerships to provide student-designed,
 3.26 student-led service-learning opportunities consistent with this section. Grant awards must
 3.27 be equitably distributed throughout Minnesota by congressional district. The commissioner
 3.28 may designate start-up or leader grant categories with differentiated maximum grant dollar
 3.29 amounts up to ~~\$50,000~~ \$75,000. A grantee designated as a leader grantee may be required
 3.30 to meet additional leader grant requirements as established by the commissioner in the grant
 3.31 application criteria developed by the commissioner. In order to receive a grant, a partnership
 3.32 must provide a 50 percent match in funds or in-kind contributions unless the commissioner
 3.33 waives the match requirement for an applicant serving a high number of students whose
 3.34 families meet federal poverty guidelines. A partnership grantee must allocate the grant

4.1 amount according to its grant application. The partnership must convey 50 percent of the
 4.2 actual grant amount to at least one community-based organization, community education
 4.3 program, state or federal agency, or political subdivision to help implement or defray the
 4.4 direct costs of carrying out the service-learning strategies and activities described in the
 4.5 partnership's grant application. A grantee may use grant money awarded for new
 4.6 service-learning initiatives or to maintain or expand service-learning initiatives.

4.7 Subd. 4. **Report.** A grantee must report to the commissioner on the educational and
 4.8 developmental outcomes of participating students and the eligible school's progress toward
 4.9 meeting at least one goal of the ~~world's best workforce~~ comprehensive achievement and
 4.10 academic readiness goals in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, or the
 4.11 state plan submitted and approved under the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary
 4.12 and Secondary Education Act. A grantee must report on the community outcomes achieved
 4.13 through student service-learning experiences and the corresponding student service activities.
 4.14 The commissioner must submit a report on participating student and community outcomes
 4.15 under this section to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over kindergarten through
 4.16 grade 12 education by February 15, ~~2025~~ in each odd-numbered year.

4.17 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2025.

4.18 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION; SERVICE LEARNING GRANTS.**

4.19 Subdivision 1. **Department of Education.** The sums indicated in this section are
 4.20 appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Education in the fiscal years
 4.21 designated.

4.22 Subd. 2. **Innovative service-learning grants.** (a) For innovative service-learning grants
 4.23 under Laws 2023, chapter 55, article 2, section 59:

4.24 \$ \$1,000,000 2026

4.25 \$ \$1,000,000 2027

4.26 (b) Any balance remaining in fiscal year 2026 is available in fiscal year 2027.

4.27 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2025.