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**SENATE BILL 6596**

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**State of Washington**

**66th Legislature**

**2020 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Honeyford and Cleveland

1 AN ACT Relating to school construction assistance program grants  
2 for small, rural districts; and adding a new section to chapter  
3 28A.525 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.525  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) School construction assistance program grants for small,  
8 rural districts must be determined in accordance with this section.

9 (2)(a) School districts with enrollments that are less than or  
10 equal to one thousand students are eligible for small, rural district  
11 construction assistance grants. Districts with incomplete facility  
12 inventory and condition data in the information and condition of  
13 schools data system are not eligible to apply.

14 (b) For school districts that, because of low-assessed property  
15 values or high indebtedness, are not able to access school  
16 construction assistance program grants, the office of the  
17 superintendent of public instruction shall recommend measures for  
18 those school districts to become eligible for the small, rural  
19 district school construction assistance program. The construction  
20 assistance grants may be used for modernization of existing

1 instructional facilities and new construction of instructional  
2 facilities.

3 (3) (a) The superintendent of public instruction must appoint an  
4 advisory committee whose members have experience in financing and  
5 managing school facilities in small school districts to assist the  
6 office in designing the grant application process, developing the  
7 prioritization criteria, and evaluating the grant applications.  
8 Advisory committee members may not be involved in a small, rural  
9 district construction assistance program request for the biennium  
10 under consideration. The office of the superintendent of public  
11 instruction must provide administrative and staff support to the  
12 committee.

13 (b) The advisory committee must develop specific criteria to  
14 achieve the prioritization. The submitted prioritized list must  
15 describe the project, the proposed state funding level, and the  
16 estimated total project cost including other funding and in-kind  
17 resources. In addition to prioritization criteria developed by the  
18 office of the superintendent of public instruction and the advisory  
19 committee, the office and the advisory committee must also prioritize  
20 projects that: (i) Improve student health, safety, and academic  
21 performance for the largest number of students; and (ii) provide the  
22 most available school district resources, including in-kind  
23 resources. The superintendent of public instruction and the governor  
24 may determine the level of funding in their omnibus capital  
25 appropriations act requests to support small, rural district  
26 construction assistance grants, but their funding requests must  
27 follow the prioritized list prepared by the advisory committee unless  
28 new information determines that a specific project is no longer  
29 viable as proposed.

30 (4) The superintendent of public instruction must submit a list  
31 of small, rural district construction assistance projects, as  
32 prioritized by the advisory committee, to the legislature by  
33 September 1st of even-numbered years.

34 (5) The grant may not be awarded until the district has  
35 identified available local and other resources sufficient to complete  
36 the approved project considering the amount of the state grant. When  
37 a district has used local funds for costs eligible for state fund  
38 reimbursement under a small, rural construction assistance grant, if  
39 the state funds are not applied to eligible project costs, use of the  
40 state funds must comply with the requirements of the applicable

1 source of local funds. Upon completing the project, the grantee must  
2 submit a final project report as specified by the office of the  
3 superintendent of public instruction in consultation with the school  
4 facilities citizen advisory panel created in RCW 28A.525.025.

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