87R9677 CXP-F

By:  Raymond H.B. No. 3406

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a mobile Internet access hotspot grant program to provide grants to facilitate distance learning for public school students.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Chapter 32, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter H to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER H. MOBILE INTERNET ACCESS HOTSPOT GRANTS PROGRAM

Sec. 32.321.  ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM. (a) To the extent funds are available for the purpose, the agency shall establish a mobile Internet access hotspot grant program to provide grants to eligible school districts to facilitate distance learning.

(b)  The agency shall develop:

(1)  a method to prioritize grants to serve the highest number of low-income students;

(2)  eligibility criteria for school districts to receive grants under the program; and

(3)  an annual application process for school districts to apply to receive grants under the program.

Sec. 32.322.  FUNDING. The commissioner:

(1)  may solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations from any public or private source, person, or group to implement and administer this subchapter; and

(2)  shall maximize the funding by leveraging federal, state, local, and private money to provide grants under the program.

Sec. 32.323.  USE OF GRANT FUNDS. (a) A school district may use money received from a grant under this subchapter to facilitate a mobile Internet access hotspot program that provides hotspot devices to:

(1)  students enrolled in the district; or

(2)  the parents or guardians of students enrolled in the district.

(b)  A device provided under a mobile Internet access hotspot program established under Subsection (a) must:

(1)  be portable;

(2)  not be subject to a data limitation; and

(3)  comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding online privacy.

Sec. 32.324.  REPORTS TO LEGISLATURE. The agency shall submit a report to the legislature that includes data and analysis regarding the efficacy of the program under this subchapter and any associated recommendations:

(1)  not later than December 1, 2023; and

(2)  not later than December 1, 2027.

Sec. 32.325.  EXPIRATION. This subchapter expires September 1, 2028.

SECTION 2.  This Act applies beginning with the 2022-2023 school year.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.