87R11971 MLH-D

By:  West S.B. No. 1799

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a broadband Internet connectivity and broadband access grant program to facilitate instruction and 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. BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS GRANT PROGRAM

Sec. 32.321.  ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM. (a) The agency shall establish a broadband Internet access grant program to provide grants to school districts for the purpose of incentivizing districts to develop unique or inventive methods for increasing broadband Internet access to facilitate instruction and learning for district students.

(b)  A school district may apply to the commissioner to participate in the grant program. The commissioner shall develop eligibility criteria for school districts to receive grants under the program.

(c)  The commissioner may determine the terms of a grant awarded under this section, including limits on the amount of a grant and the approved uses of grant funds.

Sec. 32.322.  FUNDING. (a) The commissioner shall use funds appropriated or other funds available for the purpose of the grant program authorized under this subchapter.

(b)  The commissioner may solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations from any public or private source, including the federal government.

Sec. 32.323.  RULES. The commissioner may adopt rules as necessary to implement this subchapter.

SECTION 2.  This Act applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2021.