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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FIRST SESSION

H. F. No. 2850

04/23/2019 Authored by Elkins, Edelson and Youakim
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Education Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education; establishing a grant program for school robotics programs;
1.3 requiring a report; appropriating money.

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

1.5 Section 1. SCHOOL ROBOTICS PROGRAM GRANTS; APPROPRIATION.

1.6 Subdivision 1. Grant program established. The commissioner of education must
1.7 establish a program to provide competitive grants to schools that provide pupils in
1.8 kindergarten through grade 12 with expanded opportunities to improve mathematics, science,
1.9 and technology skills by participating in events hosted by a science and technology
1.10 development program or other competitive robotics programs, including programs known
1.11 as FIRST Robotics, FIRST LEGO League Jr., FIRST LEGO League, FIRST Tech Challenge,
1.12 FIRST Robotics Competition, and the Robotics Education and Competition Foundation,
1.13 among others.

1.14 Subd. 2. Eligibility; application. A school district or charter school is eligible to apply
1.15 for a grant under this section in the form and manner determined by the commissioner. To
1.16 be eligible for a grant, an applicant must have an established partnership for the purposes
1.17 of the robotics program with at least one sponsor, business entity, or postsecondary institution.

1.18 Subd. 3. Allowable uses. Grant funds may be used for:

- 1.19 (1) operational costs for school robotics programs, including new and existing programs;
1.20 (2) stipends for robotics program coaches, not to exceed \$1,000 per applicant; and
1.21 (3) event registrations, materials, travel costs, and other expenses associated with the
1.22 preparation for and attendance at robotics events and competitions.

2.1 Subd. 4. **Administration.** (a) The commissioner shall award grants to qualified applicants.
2.2 To the extent practicable, the commissioner must award at least 50 percent of grant funds
2.3 to eligible applicants outside of the seven-county metropolitan area, as defined under
2.4 Minnesota Statutes, section 473.121, subdivision 2.

2.5 (b) Each grant must not exceed 75 percent of the program budget submitted as part of
2.6 the grant application.

2.7 Subd. 5. **Report required.** (a) By January 15, 2022, each grant recipient must submit
2.8 a report to the commissioner detailing the outcomes of the grant-funded activities, including
2.9 a description of how the robotics program enhances the college and career readiness of
2.10 participants.

2.11 (b) By January 15, 2021, the commissioner of education must submit a written report
2.12 to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction
2.13 over kindergarten through grade 12 education. The report must identify the grant recipients
2.14 under this section and summarize the planned grant-funded activities of the grant recipients.

2.15 Subd. 6. **Appropriation.** (a) \$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2020 is appropriated from the
2.16 general fund to the commissioner of education for school robotics program grants under
2.17 this section. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2021. The
2.18 commissioner may retain up to \$30,000 for administration of the grant program.

2.19 (b) \$150,000 in fiscal year 2020 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner
2.20 of education for grants to robotics program mentoring organizations for event administration,
2.21 volunteer and team mentor recruitment, and training. Of this amount, \$75,000 is for a grant
2.22 to High Tech Kids and \$75,000 is for a grant to FIRST in Upper Midwest. This is a onetime
2.23 appropriation and is available until June 30, 2021.