

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2197

Brief Description: Establishes a revolving fund to support the operations and shared infrastructure of the K-20 Education Telecommunications Network.

Background: The 1996 Legislature adopted E2SSB 6705, which created the K-20 Education Network to enhance the education system's ability to access telecommunications resources and to provide citizen access to quality primary, secondary, and postsecondary courses and degree programs state-wide through distance education. The establishment of a common telecommunications backbone network is to provide the infrastructure upon which to build a coordinated educational technology system. A K-20 Technology Account was created to receive all monies from legislative appropriations, gifts, and endowments in support of the K-20 telecommunications system. The account is subject to appropriation by the Legislature. The 1995-97 Appropriations Act provided \$54.3 million for construction and start-up of a shared state educational telecommunications infrastructure. Of that total funding amount, \$12 million was vetoed by the Governor. E2SSB 6705 also created the Telecommunications Oversight and Policy Committee (TOPC) to provide oversight for the K-20 Education Network. The committee's responsibilities include the planning and direction of the K-20 Education Network infrastructure, the purchase of equipment, and the development of a funding structure to support the ongoing operations and maintenance of the network.

Summary: The Education and Technology Revolving Fund is created in the state treasury. The Department of Information Services, in conjunction with educational entities participating in the K-20 network, is to establish a billing structure that results in all network users paying an equitable share of costs based on their usage. The Office of Financial Management must review and approve the billing structure. The revolving fund must only be used for the acquisition of equipment, software, supplies, and services, and other costs incidental to the acquisition, development, operation, and administration of shared educational information technology services, telecommunications, and systems. The director of the Department of Information Services or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the revolving fund. Disbursements from the revolving fund are subject to the Office of Financial Management's allotment procedures as required by Chapter 43.88 RCW.

With the creation of the Education and Technology Revolving Fund, language regarding the K-20 Technology Account is modified. The Department of Information Services is no longer required to deposit all moneys received from legislative appropriations, gifts, grants, and endowments into the K-20 Technology Account.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.