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HOUSE BILL NO. 953

Offered January 8, 2020

Prefiled January 7, 2020

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 22.1 a chapter numbered 26, consisting of sections numbered 22.1-364 and 22.1-365, relating to grants for science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics programs at qualified schools.*

Patrons—Ayala, Tran, Carter, Guzman, Levine and Samirah

Referred to Committee on Education

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 22.1 a chapter numbered 26, consisting of sections numbered 22.1-364 and 22.1-365, as follows:

CHAPTER 26.

**SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ARTS, AND MATHEMATICS EDUCATION FUND;
GRANTS.**

§ 22.1-364. STEAM Education Fund.

From such funds as may be appropriated by the General Assembly and any gifts, grants, or donations from public or private sources, there is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting fund to be known as the STEAM Education Fund to be administered by the Board of Education. The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller. Interest earned on moneys in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any moneys remaining in the Fund, including interest thereon, at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Moneys in the Fund shall be used solely for the purposes of providing grants for science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics education programs at qualified schools. Expenditures and disbursements from the Fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

§ 22.1-365. STEAM programs; grants.

A. As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Fund" means the STEAM Education Fund established in § 22.1-364.

"Qualified school" means a public elementary or secondary school in the Commonwealth at which at least 25 percent of students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

"STEAM" means science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics.

"STEAM organization" means a nonstock, nonprofit corporation that (i) is exempt from taxation under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and (ii) provides, as part of its mission, support for STEAM education and STEAM programs.

"STEAM program" means an academic class, curriculum, or activity focused on a STEAM discipline at a qualified school. "STEAM program" includes classes focused primarily on a STEAM discipline; modules, projects, or activities focused on a STEAM discipline in any academic class; extracurricular activities whose primary objective is to engage students in STEAM-related activities; summer school activities focusing on STEAM education, regardless of whether such activities are held at the school or at a remote location; and textbooks, equipment, or other supplies used specifically for such classes, curricula, or activities.

B. Beginning January 1, 2021, any qualified school may apply for a grant from the Fund to provide a STEAM program, which may be offered in partnership with a STEAM organization or a private, for-profit business. No such grant shall exceed \$50,000 per qualified school per year. No such grant shall be awarded or used for general education purposes or overhead costs. Each qualified school that receives a grant from the Fund shall use such funds for the sole purpose of providing a STEAM program.

C. Grants shall be issued in the order that each completed eligible application is received. In the event that the amount of eligible grants requested in a fiscal year exceeds the funds available in the Fund, qualified schools may reapply for grants in the next fiscal year.

D. The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall publish annually on the Department of Education's website a list of qualified schools that are eligible to apply for grants from the Fund.

E. The Board shall develop guidelines setting forth the general requirements for qualifying for a grant and expending grant funds. Such guidelines shall include a grant application form and a requirement that the recipient qualified school certify how the funds will be expended. Such guidelines shall be exempt from the provisions of the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.).

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59 *F. The Board shall submit a list of all qualified schools that receive grants under this chapter to the*
60 *Chairmen of the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance no later*
61 *than December 1 of each year.*