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3 HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS EDUCATION COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SB1
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8 SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, the Alabama Ahead Act
9 authorizes the Alabama Public School and College
10 Authority to sell and issue up to \$100,000,000 in
11 bonds to fund the purchase of digital textbooks for
12 public high school students, but the authorization
13 is contingent upon separate legislative enactment.

14 This bill would amend the Alabama Ahead Act
15 to require local school systems to establish a high
16 quality, standards-based, broadband Wi-Fi
17 infrastructure and mobile digital computing devices
18 in all public classrooms, subject to available
19 funding.

20 This bill would specify priorities and
21 standards for wireless infrastructure and a cost
22 model.

23 This bill would provide an implementation
24 plan consisting of a technology plan, an
25 infrastructure readiness report, and accountability
26 reporting.

1 This bill would establish a peer review
2 committee to consist of members of the Alabama
3 Educational Technology Association (AETA) and
4 members of the Educational Technology Division of
5 the State Department of Education to review and
6 verify the installation of a standards-based,
7 wireless network infrastructure and, where
8 possible, other approved purchases, by a school
9 system.

10 This bill would also establish an oversight
11 committee.

12
13 A BILL
14 TO BE ENTITLED
15 AN ACT

16
17 Relating to the Alabama Ahead Act; to designate as
18 Article 1 Sections 16-16B-1 to 16-16B-12, inclusive, Code of
19 Alabama 1975; to add a new Article 2, consisting of Sections
20 16-16B-20 to 16-16B-24, inclusive, to Title 16, Chapter 16B of
21 the Code of Alabama 1975; to require local school systems to
22 establish a high quality standards-based broadband Wi-Fi
23 infrastructure and mobile digital computing devices in all
24 public classrooms, subject to available funding; to provide an
25 implementation plan consisting of a technology plan,
26 infrastructure readiness report, and accountability reporting;
27 to establish a peer review committee to consist of members of

1 the Alabama Educational Technology Association (AETA) and
2 members of the Educational Technology Division of the State
3 Department of Education to review and verify the installation
4 of a standards-based, wireless network infrastructure and,
5 where possible, other approved purchases, by a school system;
6 and to establish an oversight committee.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

8 Section 1. An article heading is added before
9 Section 16-16B-1 of the Code of Alabama 1975, to read as
10 follows:

11 Article 1.

12 Section 2. A new Article 2, consisting of Sections
13 16-16B-20 to 16-16B-24, inclusive, is added to Title 16,
14 Chapter 16B of the Code of Alabama 1975, to read as follows:

15 Article 2. Wireless Network Infrastructures.

16 §16-16B-20.

17 For the purposes of this article, the following
18 terms shall have the following meanings:

19 (1) AETA. The Alabama Educational Technology
20 Association.

21 (2) E-RATE. A Federal Communications Commission
22 program that provides discounts of 20 percent to 90 percent to
23 eligible K-12 public schools for approved telecommunications,
24 Internet access, and internal connections costs.

25 (3) INFRASTRUCTURE. The hardware and software
26 resources that enable network connectivity, communication,
27 operations, and management.

1 (4) MOBILE DIGITAL COMPUTING DEVICES. Wireless
2 mobile devices for storing, reading, accessing, exploring, and
3 interacting with digital textbooks and other instructional
4 resources.

5 (5) WI-FI. A wireless networking technology that
6 allows computers and other devices to communicate over a
7 wireless signal.

8 (6) WIRED PLAN. The Wireless Infrastructure
9 Renovation for Education Plan, developed by the Alabama
10 Educational Technology Association and endorsed by the State
11 Board of Education, which establishes the standards for school
12 WLANs, funding distributions, and procedures for
13 implementation.

14 (7) WLAN. A wireless local area network.

15 §16-16B-21.

16 (a) The State Department of Education shall lead and
17 administer this article in accordance with WIRED and shall
18 establish the Alabama Ahead Peer Review Committee to assist in
19 the implementation of this article. The membership of the
20 committee shall consist of, but not be limited to, board
21 members of the Alabama Educational Technology Association
22 (AETA) and members of the Educational Technology Department of
23 the State Department of Education.

24 (b) (1) There is created the Alabama Ahead Oversight
25 Committee to oversee progress of this project. The committee
26 shall consist of the following members:

1 a. The Chair of the House Ways and Means Education
2 Committee or his or her designee.

3 b. The Chair of the Senate Finance and Taxation
4 Education Committee or his or her designee.

5 c. The Secretary of Information Technology or his or
6 her designee.

7 d. An appointee of the State Superintendent of
8 Education.

9 e. An appointee of the President Pro Tempore of the
10 Senate.

11 f. An appointee of the Speaker of the House of
12 Representatives.

13 g. An appointee of the Lieutenant Governor.

14 h. A superintendent recommended by the School
15 Superintendents of Alabama.

16 i. A school system technology coordinator
17 recommended by the Alabama Education Technology Association.

18 (2) With the exception of those members serving on
19 the Alabama Ahead Oversight Committee by virtue of their
20 respective offices, each member shall have proven experience
21 in the areas of instructional technology, network design,
22 public school or private industry business practices, or
23 public school or private industry administration, or have
24 similar experience and knowledge of the WIRED plan, as
25 hereunder provided.

26 (3) Appointed members of the Alabama Ahead Oversight
27 Committee shall not be entitled to receive any direct or

1 indirect personal gain from this assignment. The members shall
2 serve without compensation for their services.

3 (c) The membership of the Alabama Ahead Peer Review
4 Committee and the Alabama Ahead Oversight Committee shall be
5 inclusive and shall reflect the racial, gender, geographic,
6 urban/rural, and economic diversity of the state.

7 §16-16B-22.

8 (a) In accordance with this section and contingent
9 on the availability of funding, commencing with the 2015-2016
10 school year, local school systems may establish a high
11 quality, wireless local area network (WLAN) infrastructure,
12 capable of providing all teachers and students with sufficient
13 Wi-Fi broadband access in all classrooms and common areas of
14 schools. A WLAN shall meet the following standards:

15 (1) Each regular classroom and gymnasium shall be
16 equipped with high quality wireless access for 30 to 40
17 devices simultaneously. Each specialty classroom, that
18 routinely serves groups of less than 20 people, may satisfy a
19 lesser standard.

20 (2) Each cafeteria shall have sufficient wireless
21 access for one-third of the then current enrollment of the
22 school.

23 (3) Each administrative and noninstructional area of
24 a school shall have coverage; however, high density coverage
25 is not required in these areas.

26 (b) Upon verification by the State Department of
27 Education and the Alabama Ahead Peer Review Committee of the

1 installation or existence of a WLAN infrastructure that meets
2 the standards set forth in subdivision (1), a local school
3 system may submit an application to the State Department of
4 Education to use remaining funds in the following areas:

5 (1) Upgrades: Existing WLAN infrastructures shall be
6 augmented in accordance with the WIRED Plan.

7 (2) Other network technology: Funds may be spent to
8 further enhance digital learning environments within the
9 schools of that school system and may include technologies
10 such as:

11 a. Support, licensing, and warranty services.

12 b. Hardware, including, but not limited to, mobile
13 digital computing devices, or software to manage or enhance
14 the digital learning environment.

15 (3) Network debt: Funds may be used for retiring
16 debt for a network brought into compliance with the standards
17 or for networks previously installed that satisfy the
18 standards in this section.

19 §16-16B-23.

20 (a) School systems shall apply for their portion of
21 the funding to comply with Section 16-16B-22 through the
22 Educational Technology Office in the State Department of
23 Education. Any application for funds shall be submitted and
24 signed by the technology coordinator, the superintendent, and
25 the chief school financial officer of the local school system.
26 Applications for funding shall include all of the following:

1 (1) An approved technology plan as required of all
2 school systems as part of the Foundation Program.

3 (2) An infrastructure readiness report describing
4 each school's WLAN as well as the systems used to manage these
5 networks.

6 (b) Funds shall be distributed to each school system
7 based on the distribution formula in the WIRED Plan that
8 allows funds to be used for any of the components of the WLAN
9 but does not dictate the architecture. If the distribution
10 formula changes, it must be approved by the State Department
11 of Education and the Alabama Ahead Oversight Committee.

12 (c) Schools qualifying for E-rate discounts may use
13 these state funds as a match for the requested services.

14 (d) Each application shall be reviewed and approved
15 by the State Department of Education and the Alabama Ahead
16 Peer Review Committee.

17 §16-16B-24.

18 (a) Every six months until the project is complete,
19 the State Department of Education shall provide a report to
20 the Alabama Ahead Oversight Committee detailing the progress
21 of local school systems in meeting the 24-month goal of a
22 statewide implementation. Progress in completion of the plan
23 shall be posted on the State Department of Education website.
24 In addition, the State Board of Education and the public shall
25 also be apprised of the progress twice a year as part of the
26 State Board of Education agenda.

1 (b) As part of the ongoing accountability of this
2 investment, the State Department of Education shall include
3 WLAN infrastructure functionality per school as part of the
4 annual technology plan.

5 Section 3. This act shall become effective on the
6 first day of the third month following its passage and
7 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.