
HOUSE BILL 1734

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Representatives Rule, Nance, Simmons, Springer, Berry, Shavers, Zahn, Parshley, Hill, Scott, Bernbaum, and Pollet

Read first time 01/30/25. Referred to Committee on Capital Budget.

1 AN ACT Relating to outdoor learning grants to expand and improve
2 the delivery of outdoor learning opportunities; adding a new section
3 to chapter 79A.25 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that outdoor
6 school for all, enacted in chapter 112, Laws of 2022, has helped tens
7 of thousands of students from all corners of the state attend outdoor
8 school at one of more than 40 recognized providers. These outdoor
9 school experiences support career-connected learning and are helping
10 create education workforce pathways in areas like forestry, timber,
11 marine biology, and river management.

12 (2) The legislature further finds that the statewide operating
13 grant program, created in chapter 112, Laws of 2022, helps ensure
14 students have a chance to benefit from outdoor education by providing
15 grants to school districts to support educational experience and
16 grants to providers to increase future capacity, with a focus on
17 communities historically underserved by science education.

18 (3) The legislature further finds that expanding the capacity of
19 outdoor school facilities to serve more students can also improve
20 accessibility of outdoor education programs to school districts by

1 making it easier to plan for transportation and support needs across
2 an entire class or grade level.

3 (4) Therefore, the legislature intends to establish a statewide
4 capital facility grant program to expand and improve facilities used
5 for the delivery of outdoor learning opportunities.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 79A.25
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
9 specific purpose, the office must establish a competitive process to
10 solicit proposals for and prioritize projects whose primary objective
11 is to expand access to outdoor education experiences for students
12 enrolled in public schools by acquiring, constructing, or
13 rehabilitating facilities used for the delivery of outdoor learning
14 opportunities.

15 (2) Applicants must demonstrate that the project is likely to
16 increase the number of public school students served by outdoor
17 education experiences at the project locations or is providing
18 infrastructure improvements that are likely to remove barriers to the
19 participation of public school students from underserved communities.

20 (3) Eligible projects include, but are not limited to,
21 renovations that increase bed capacity, rehabilitations that
22 weatherize or improve energy efficiency at existing facilities so
23 they can serve more public school students by extending the operating
24 season for the facility, and upgrades in bathrooms and kitchen
25 facilities that support better service delivery.

26 (4) Eligible grant recipients include federally recognized
27 tribes, local governments, state agencies, federal agencies, and
28 nonprofit organizations.

29 (5) Beginning with the 2027-2029 fiscal biennium, the office must
30 submit a prioritized list of recommended projects for funding to the
31 governor and the legislature as part of the office's biennial capital
32 budget request. The prioritized list must include a description of
33 each project, the amount of recommended state funding, and
34 documentation of nonstate funds to be used for the project.

35 (6) In contracts for grants authorized under this section, the
36 office must include provisions that require:

37 (a) Grant-funded capital improvements be maintained by the
38 grantee for a specified period of time appropriate to the amount of
39 the grant;

1 (b) Grant-funded facilities be used for the express purpose of
2 the grant; and

3 (c) Repayment of the grant award and interest if the grantee is
4 found to be out of compliance with provisions of the contract.
5 Interest must be calculated at the rate of interest on state general
6 obligation bonds issued most closely to the date of award of the
7 grant. Repayments collected by the office must be deposited into the
8 state general fund.

9 (7) For purposes of this section, "outdoor education experiences"
10 and "outdoor learning opportunities" have the same meaning as in RCW
11 28A.300.795, and "public schools" has the same meaning as in RCW
12 28A.150.010.

--- END ---