

Patti Fritz
State Representative

District 26B
Rice and Steele Counties



Minnesota House of Representatives

COMMITTEES: VICE-CHAIR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING FINANCE DIVISION
HEALTH CARE AND HUMAN SERVICES FINANCE DIVISION
LABOR AND CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION

January 12, 2009

Marc Patton
202 4th Ave NW
Blooming Prairie, MN 55917

Dear Marc: *marc*

Thank you for writing to ask about a recent infusion of funding for technology in Minnesota schools. I appreciated hearing from you and having the chance to respond.

The money you referenced was from the 2007 Education Budget Bill (Laws 2007, chapter 146, Article 4, Section 11). This section reads as follows:

Sec. 11. SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY AND OPERATING CAPITAL AID.

For fiscal years 2008, and 2009 only, school technology and operating capital aid equals \$40 for fiscal year 2008 and \$55 for fiscal year 2009 times the district's adjusted marginal cost pupil units for that fiscal year. This aid must only be used for the purposes of Minnesota Statutes, section 126C.10, subdivision 14.

Statewide, this amounted to an appropriation of \$38,145,000 for Fiscal Year 2008 and \$52,676,000 for Fiscal Year 2009, or about \$91 million for the biennium.

The uses of the money are quite broad, as you noted. The district can use the money for any purpose authorized for the use of operating capital, including technology and deferred maintenance (I'm enclosing a copy of MN Statutes 126C.10, subdivision 14, which lists two dozen potential purposes for which the funding may be used). Each school district received \$40 per pupil unit for FY 2008 and \$55 per pupil unit for FY 2009. This was a one-time appropriation, not an ongoing budget item.



January 12, 2009

Page 2

I was glad that we made significant funding available for school technology in the 2007 bill. It needed to be a priority for investment, especially in light of the "D" rating that Minnesota received in the spring of 2007 in a nationwide study of technology in the schools.

Again, thank you for contacting me. I hope you'll keep in touch with your questions and concerns about education issues or anything else.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patti".

Patti Fritz
State Representative

(Attachment)

Subd. 14. **Uses of total operating capital revenue.** Total operating capital revenue may be used only for the following purposes:

- (1) to acquire land for school purposes;
- (2) to acquire or construct buildings for school purposes;
- (3) to rent or lease buildings, including the costs of building repair or improvement that are part of a lease agreement;
- (4) to improve and repair school sites and buildings, and equip or reequip school buildings with permanent attached fixtures, including library media centers;
- (5) for a surplus school building that is used substantially for a public nonschool purpose;
- (6) to eliminate barriers or increase access to school buildings by individuals with a disability;
- (7) to bring school buildings into compliance with the State Fire Code adopted according to chapter 299F;
- (8) to remove asbestos from school buildings, encapsulate asbestos, or make asbestos-related repairs;
- (9) to clean up and dispose of polychlorinated biphenyls found in school buildings;
- (10) to clean up, remove, dispose of, and make repairs related to storing heating fuel or transportation fuels such as alcohol, gasoline, fuel oil, and special fuel, as defined in section 296A.01;
- (11) for energy audits for school buildings and to modify buildings if the audit indicates the cost of the modification can be recovered within ten years;
- (12) to improve buildings that are leased according to section 123B.51, subdivision 4;
- (13) to pay special assessments levied against school property but not to pay assessments for service charges;
- (14) to pay principal and interest on state loans for energy conservation according to section 216C.37 or loans made under the Douglas J. Johnson Economic Protection Trust Fund Act according to sections 298.292 to 298.298;
- (15) to purchase or lease interactive telecommunications equipment;
- (16) by board resolution, to transfer money into the debt redemption fund to: (i) pay the amounts needed to meet, when due, principal and interest payments on certain obligations issued according to chapter 475; or (ii) pay principal and interest on debt service loans or capital loans according to section 126C.70;
- (17) to pay operating capital-related assessments of any entity formed under a cooperative agreement between two or more districts;
- (18) to purchase or lease computers and related materials, copying machines, telecommunications equipment, and other noninstructional equipment;
- (19) to purchase or lease assistive technology or equipment for instructional programs;
- (20) to purchase textbooks;
- (21) to purchase new and replacement library media resources or technology;
- (22) to purchase vehicles;
- (23) to purchase or lease telecommunications equipment, computers, and related equipment for integrated information management systems for:
 - (i) managing and reporting learner outcome information for all students under a results-oriented graduation rule;
 - (ii) managing student assessment, services, and achievement information required for students with individual education plans;and
 - (iii) other classroom information management needs; and
- (24) to pay personnel costs directly related to the acquisition, operation, and maintenance of telecommunications systems, computers, related equipment, and network and applications software.