

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

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**Subject:** Cooperative Facilities Grant; Swanville and Upsala

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### Overview

The cooperative secondary facilities grant program provides state grants to two or more

local school districts that desire to build a new secondary facility. A district must meet the same criteria as required by the cooperation and combination (C&C) program in order to qualify for a grant; a minimum of two school districts must agree to apply for the grant; the facility must serve at least 66 pupils per grade; and each participating district must have fewer than 1,200 pupils in total. Grant amounts are currently limited to the lesser of 75 percent of the project cost or \$6 million (\$1 million of this amount is available to the applicants only if the applicants demonstrate that new school facility will provide for "collocation" of other governmental services).

A group of districts that desire a cooperative secondary facility grant must enter into a joint powers agreement and apply to the department of children, families, and learning for project approval. If the state makes bond proceeds available, districts must hold a referendum to approve the sale of bonds for the local portion of the project costs within 180 days of receiving a grant from the state. The referendum must be approved by a majority of those voting on the bond issue. In recent years, the legislature has awarded a \$100,000 planning grant to potential grant recipients and has also named specific grantees in law when the bond proceeds are made available.

Five cooperative secondary facilities grants were awarded between 1988 and 1994 to groups of school districts forming the Lac qui Parle Valley School, Minnewaska High School, Blue Earth, Grant County and the ACGC school. Individual districts in all five grant projects have consolidated into single districts.

**1 Qualification and amount.** Increases the maximum amount of the cooperative secondary facilities grant from \$5 million to \$12 million.

- 2 **Grant approval.** Authorizes and approves a grant of \$11,500,000 for the Swanville and Upsala school districts.
- 3 **Bond sale; appropriation.** Authorizes the state to sell \$11.5 million in bonds to finance the program. Appropriates \$11.5 million from the bond proceeds fund to the commissioner of children, families, and learning for a cooperative secondary facilities grant to Upsala and Swanville.