An act to add Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 18210) to Part 11 Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education Code, relating to school libraries.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AB 333, as introduced, Hancock. School libraries: online databases: subscriptions.

Existing law requires the governing board of a school district to provide school library services for the pupils and teachers of the district by establishing and maintaining school libraries or by contractual arrangements with another public agency.

This bill would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction, upon appropriation of funding in the annual Budget Act, to contract with a county office of education to convene an Online Database Advisory Committee consisting of school library professionals to prepare requests for purchase proposals and to assist in developing an online database selection process. The bill would also require the Superintendent to contract with a county office of education to purchase subscriptions to high quality online databases for use by the school libraries of public elementary and secondary schools, and to perform additional duties, as specified, regarding the implementation and review of those online databases.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 18210) is added to Part 11 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education Code, to read:

CHAPTER 2.5. CALIFORNIA SCHOOL LIBRARY EQUITABLE ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES AND ONLINE SCHOOL DATABASE PROGRAM

18210. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:
(a) It is critical that all pupils in the state have equitable access to quality controlled digital resources throughout all of the geographic areas of the state and across socioeconomic classes. All pupils need equitable access to age and grade appropriate online resources that span all state content standards. The current state system of school library funding and materials purchasing does not provide equitable access or opportunity.
(b) The best means of ensuring that all pupils in the state have equitable access to online resources is for the state to purchase subscriptions to a core of high quality online databases through which every pupil, regardless of geography or economic status, is able to access information on the Internet from the school library, the classroom, or home. Research shows that the purchase by other states of online database subscriptions has resulted in improved pupil achievement in those states.
(c) In the 2003–04 school year, approximately 47 percent of public schools in the state, including over two million pupils, did not have access to online databases.
(d) Statewide subscriptions to online databases are cost effective.
(e) Subscription to an online database results in savings for school districts as compared to purchasing information products that can be used for additional school library resources.
(f) Subscription to an online database results in all of the following:
(1) Equitable access to high quality information resources for every pupil in the state.
(2) Enhanced Internet safety for pupils because use of online databases is contained and available only to subscription users.
(3) Access to authoritative, current, accurate, and high quality resources.
(4) Access for teachers and pupils to rich content that spans all of the state academic content standards and enhances the content of textbooks.

(5) The availability of resources in a variety of formats, including audio, video, photographic, and primary source documents, that allow for individual learning opportunities.

(6) Access to information in multiple languages.

(7) Preparation of pupils to use academic databases in higher education and in the workplace.

(8) Responsiveness to access issues pursuant to the requirements of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 and following).

18211. Upon appropriation of funding in the annual Budget Act for purposes of this chapter, the Superintendent shall contract with a county office of education to do all of the following:

(a) Convene an Online Database Advisory Committee consisting of school library professionals and at least one current classroom teacher to assist in developing an online database selection process. The advisory committee shall do all of the following:

1. Prepare requests for proposals for the purchase of subscriptions to high quality online databases, including the provision of vendor training for appropriate school district employees on the use of the online databases.

2. Develop selection criteria based on product descriptions and the availability of training to use the products.

3. Review the requests for proposals described in paragraph (1) and make recommendations to the Superintendent regarding the purchase of subscriptions to high quality online databases.

4. Annually review the online databases for which subscriptions are purchased pursuant to subdivision (b) and prepare and submit to the Superintendent a report including recommendations for future subscription purchases.

(b) Purchase subscriptions to high quality online databases, for use by the school libraries of public elementary and secondary schools, using the requests for proposals prepared pursuant to subdivision (a).

(c) Inform school districts of the availability of the online databases for which subscriptions are purchased pursuant to subdivision (b).
(d) Assist with the implementation in school libraries of the online databases for which subscriptions are purchased pursuant to subdivision (b).
(e) Collect data for use in evaluating the online databases for which subscriptions are purchased pursuant to subdivision (b).