GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

SENATE BILL 859

Short Title: Student Internet Connectivity Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Garrett (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

May 27, 2020

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO EXPAND THE SCHOOL CONNECTIVITY INITIATIVE TO PROVIDE HOME MOBILE INTERNET ACCESS POINTS TO ALL PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FEDERALLY SUBSIDIZED FREE OR REDUCED-COST SCHOOL MEALS

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. EXPAND SCHOOL CONNECTIVITY INITIATIVE/HOME MOBILE INTERNET ACCESS POINTS FOR CERTAIN STUDENTS

SECTION 1.(a) The State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction, in collaboration with the Friday Institute at North Carolina State University, shall expand the School Connectivity Initiative to improve student access to broadband Internet outside the classroom by providing home mobile Internet access points to all students in public schools who are eligible for federally subsidized free or reduced-cost school meals.

SECTION 1.(b) To the extent permitted by law, the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction shall leverage any funds made available for community and home mobile Internet access points for students in public schools to achieve the purposes identified in subsection (a) of this section. These funds shall include any of the following:

(2) Federal funds received from any other federal law.
(3) State allocations of federal funds from the Coronavirus Relief Fund as provided in S.L. 2020-4.
(4) Any other State allocations or appropriations of federal or State funds.

SECTION 1.(c) The State Board of Education shall include the following information in its January 15, 2021, report, required pursuant to Section 7.28(d) of S.L. 2007-323:

(1) Recommendations for ensuring that all students have access to broadband Internet inside and outside the classroom.
(2) Results from the expansion authorized pursuant to subsection (a) of this section and recommendations for future programs related to improved student access to broadband Internet services.

PART II. APPROPRIATION

SECTION 2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction for the 2020-2021 fiscal year the sum of one hundred seventy-six million
dollars ($176,000,000) in nonrecurring funds to expand the School Connectivity Initiative to provide home mobile Internet access points for students as provided in Section 1 of this act.

PART III. MISCELLANEOUS

SECTION 3.(a) The provisions of the State Budget Act, Chapter 143C of the General Statutes, are reenacted and shall remain in full force and effect and are incorporated in this act by reference.

SECTION 3.(b) Except where expressly repealed or amended by this act, the provisions of any other legislation enacted during the 2019 Regular Session of the General Assembly expressly appropriating funds to an agency, a department, or an institution covered under this act, shall remain in effect.

SECTION 3.(c) If House Bill 966, 2019 Regular Session, becomes law, and any provision of that act or a provision of the Committee Report described in Section 42.2 of that act conflicts with this act, this act shall control.

PART IV. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 4. This act becomes effective July 1, 2020.