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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**EIGHTY-SIXTH
SESSION**

HOUSE FILE No. 895

February 16, 2009

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The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Finance

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education; creating a grant program to allow rural school districts to
1.3 share services; appropriating money.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. **COMMONWEALTH DISTRICT GRANTS.**

1.6 Subdivision 1. Commonwealth districts. The Minnesota Department of Education
1.7 may make up to three grants of up to \$100,000 to groups of school districts to plan and
1.8 implement the creation of Commonwealth Districts. A Commonwealth District is a
1.9 consortium of at least three rural Independent School Districts and other governmental
1.10 agencies who agree to share administrative and program services. Administrative services
1.11 that may be shared include: superintendent, financial management, transportation, food,
1.12 property, technology, purchasing, evaluation and accountability, and communications
1.13 services. Instructional and learning services that may be shared include: faculty, online
1.14 learning, project based learning, and computer based learning.

1.15 Subd. 2. Grants to implement program. A group of at least three rural
1.16 Independent School Districts may apply to the commissioner of education for a planning
1.17 grant. Grant applications must be in the form and manner specified by the commissioner,
1.18 but must give preference to applications showing the greatest cost advantages. Once a
1.19 Commonwealth District planning group has completed its planning process, it may apply
1.20 for an implementation grant.

1.21 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATIONS.**

2.1 Subdivision 1. **Department of Education.** The sums indicated in this section
 2.2 are appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Education for the fiscal
 2.3 year designated.

2.4 Subd. 2. **Grants for Commonwealth Districts.** For grants to school districts to
 2.5 plan and implement Commonwealth Districts under section 1:

2.6 \$ 300,000 2010

2.7 \$ 300,000 2011

2.8 The 2010 appropriation is for planning grants.

2.9 The 2011 appropriation is for implementation grants.

2.10 The base budget for this program is \$300,000 per year for fiscal years 2012 and
 2.11 2013 for implementation grants.