

State of Arkansas
90th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2015

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1183

By: Representatives Gossage, C. Armstrong, Baltz, Bell, Cozart, Deffenbaugh, C. Douglas, Eubanks, D. Ferguson, M.J. Gray, Harris, G. Hodges, Lampkin, Leding, Linck, Lowery, McElroy, Murdock, Ratliff, Sabin, Sorvillo, Walker
By: Senator Irvin

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO REQUIRE EACH PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL AND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL TO OFFER A COURSE IN COMPUTER SCIENCE; TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE TO REVIEW AND RECOMMEND COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSES, STANDARDS, AND PATHWAYS FOR STUDENTS; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO REQUIRE EACH PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL AND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL TO OFFER A COURSE IN COMPUTER SCIENCE; TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE; AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 16, Subchapter 1, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-16-146. Computer science – Required course offering.

(a) Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, a public high school or public charter high school shall offer at least one (1) computer science course at the high school level.

(b) A computer science course offered by a public high school or public charter high school shall:

(1) Be of high quality;



(2) Meet or exceed the curriculum standards and requirements established by the State Board of Education; and

(3) Be made available in a traditional classroom setting, blended learning environment, online-based, or other technology-based format that is tailored to meet the needs of each participating student.

SECTION 2. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE. DO NOT CODIFY. Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force – Creation – Membership – Duties.

(a) There is created the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force.

(b)(1) The Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force shall consist of up to the following fifteen (15) members:

(A) The Commissioner of Education or his or her designee;

(B) The Director of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission or his or her designee;

(C) The Director of the Department of Career Education or his or her designee;

(D) The Director of the Department of Higher Education or his or her designee;

(E) The Director of the Department of Workforce Services or his or her designee;

(F) The President of the Arkansas Academy of Computing or his or her designee;

(G) The President of the Arkansas chapter of the Computer Science Teachers Association or his or her designee;

(H) The President of the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority or his or her designee;

(I) A high school computer science teacher appointed by the Governor;

(J) A representative of the Arkansas STEM Coalition appointed by the Governor;

(K) A representative in the field of computer programming appointed by the Governor; and

(L) Up to four (4) members at-large appointed by the Governor.

(2) If a vacancy occurs on the Computer Science and Technology

in Public School Task Force, the vacancy shall be filled by the same process as the original appointment.

(c)(1) The Commissioner of Education shall call the first meeting of the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this act and shall serve as the chair of the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force at the first meeting.

(2) At the first meeting of the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force, the members of the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force shall elect from its membership a chair and other officers as needed for the transaction of business.

(3)(A) The Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force shall conduct its meetings in Pulaski County at the Department of Education or another site with teleconference capabilities.

(B) Meetings of the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force shall be held at least one (1) time every two (2) months but may occur more often at the call of the chair.

(4) The Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force shall establish rules and procedures for conducting its business.

(5)(A) A majority of the members of the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force shall constitute a quorum for transacting business of the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force.

(B) No action may be taken by the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force except by a majority vote at a meeting at which a quorum is present.

(6) The Department of Education shall provide staff and support for the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force.

(d) The purpose of the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force is to:

(1) Research and recommend computer science and technology standards and frameworks;

(2) Review and recommend changes to existing computer science and technology standards and frameworks;

(3) Study the computer science and technology needs of the state now and in the future; and

(4) Recommend strategies to meet the anticipated computer science and technology workforce needs in the state.

(e)(1) One or before November 1, 2015, the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force shall file with the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the Department of Education a written report of the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force's activities, findings, and recommendations.

(2) One or before November 1, 2016, the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force shall file with the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the Department of Education a written final report of the Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force's activities, findings, and recommendations.

(f) The Computer Science and Technology in Public School Task Force expires on December 31, 2016.

SECTION 3. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that computer science and technology skills are of vital importance to meet the growing needs of the workforce; that public school students need opportunities to develop computer science and technology skills in order to be competitive in the future; and that this act is immediately necessary to ensure that the Department of Education has the time necessary to develop and modify academic standards for computer science courses before beginning of the 2015-2016 school year. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

(1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

(2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill; or

(3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.