

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
93rd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2021

As Engrossed: H2/10/21

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1232

By: Representative Tollett

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION
PATHWAY ACT OF 2021; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CREATE THE COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION
PATHWAY ACT OF 2021.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 53, Subchapter 1, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-53-108. Computer science course – Instructor requirements.

(a)(1) A computer science course offered under this section shall be considered a career and technical education course, an elective, or other computer science course approved by the State Board of Education that may count towards a graduation requirement.

(2) A public school shall participate in a computer science course or pathway under:

(A) This section;

(B) Section 6-13-1032; or

(C) Section 6-16-147.

(b) Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, an education service cooperative shall:

(1) Offer a:

(A)(i) Career and technical computer science pathway that leads to a technical certificate, an elective, or other computer science course approved by the State Board of Education that may count towards a



graduation requirement.

(ii) An education service cooperative may partner with a local two-year institution of higher education to provide information to enrolled students regarding computer science educational pathways.

(iii)(a) The career and technical computer science pathway that leads to the technical certificate, an elective, or other computer science course approved by the State Board of Education that may count towards a graduation requirement required by subdivision (b)(1)(A)(i) of this section shall be made available to public school students in grades nine through twelve (9-12) who attend public school.

(b)(1) The career and technical computer science pathway that leads to the technical certificate, an elective, or other computer science course approved by the State Board of Education that may count towards a graduation requirement required by subdivision (b)(1)(A)(i) of this section may be offered as an endorsed concurrent enrollment course as defined by § 6-16-1202 to a public school student in grades nine through twelve (9-12) who enrolls in the career and technical computer science pathway.

(2) An education service cooperative shall make an effort to partner with a local two-year institution of higher education for purposes of offering endorsed concurrent enrollment credit under subdivision (b)(1)(A)(iii)(b)(1) of this section; and

(B) Computer science course for public school students in grades seven (7) and eight (8) who attend public school; and

(2) Establish an advisory panel comprised of superintendents for consultation.

(c) A career and technical education course, an elective, or other computer science course approved by the State Board of Education that may count towards a graduation requirement offered by an education service cooperative under this section 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 at least one (1) of the following settings without limitation:

(A) A traditional classroom setting;

(B) A blended-learning environment;
(C) An online-based setting; or
(D) Any other technology-based format that is tailored to meet the needs of each participating student.

(d) By the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year, an education service cooperative shall employ two (2) computer science teachers who hold a teaching license approved by the state board.

(e) The state board may adopt rules to administer this section.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 13, Subchapter 10, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-13-1032. Computer science course – Instructor requirements.

(a) A computer science course offered under this section shall be considered a career and technical education course, an elective, or other computer science course approved by the State Board of Education that may count towards a graduation requirement.

(b) Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, Virtual Arkansas, through the Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative, shall offer a:

(1) Computer science course for public school students in grades seven (7) and eight (8) who are enrolled in Virtual Arkansas, through the Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative; and

(2) Career and technical computer science pathway that leads to a technical certificate, an elective, or other computer science course approved by the State Board of Education that may count towards a graduation requirement for students in grades nine through twelve (9-12).

(c) A computer science course offered by Virtual Arkansas, through the Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative, under subsection (b) of this section 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 at least one (1) of the following settings without limitation:

(A) An online-based setting; or

(B) Any other technology-based format that is tailored to meet the needs of each participating student.

(d) By the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year, Virtual Arkansas, through the Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative, shall employ four (4) computer science teachers who hold a teaching license approved by the state board.

(e) The state board may adopt rules to administer this section.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-16-147, concerning required computer science courses at the high school level, is amended to add an additional subsection to read as follows:

(c)(1) A computer science course may be offered to students in grades seven (7) and eight (8).

(2)(A) A public school that offers a computer science course under subdivision (c)(1) of this section shall be eligible to receive a grant for start-up equipment from the Division of Career and Technical Education.

(B) The division shall determine the qualification requirements and funding amounts for a grant provided under subdivision (c)(2)(A) of this section.

(C)(i) A public school may offer a computer science program of study for students in grades nine through twelve (9-12).

(ii) A computer science program of study under subdivision (c)(2)(C)(i) of this section shall:

(a) Be of high quality;

(b) Meet or exceed the curriculum standards and requirements established by the state board; and

(c) Be made available in at least one (1) of the following settings without limitation:

(1) An online-based setting; or

(2) Any other technology-based format that is tailored to meet the needs of each participating student.

/s/Tollett