HB332

U9TC9GG-2

By Representatives Faulkner, Collins, Hulsey, Baker, Colvin, Shaw, Datcher, Moore (M), DuBose, Woods

RFD: Education Policy

First Read: 25-Feb-25

A BILL

TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

Relating to public K-12 schools; to amend Sections 16-46B-1, 16-46B-2, and 16-46B-7, Code of Alabama 1975, to expand the definition of computer science; to require all Alabama public school students to complete an approved computer science course as a requirement for graduation; and to provide standards for approved computer science courses.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. Sections 16-46B-1, 16-46B-2, and 16-46B-7, Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as follows:

"§16-46B-1

For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms ~~shall~~ have the following meanings:

(1) BOARD. The State Board of Education.

(2) COMPUTER SCIENCE. The study of computers and algorithmic processes, including their principles, their hardware and software designs, their implementation, ~~and~~ their impact on society, and their emerging technologies, including, but not limited to, artificial intelligence. Content should focus on teaching students how to create new technologies, not simply how to use technology.

(3) COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSES AND CONTENT. Courses that teach computer science either as a standalone course implementation in middle and high schools, or, for elementary school, integrated into other content areas.

(4) DEPARTMENT. The State Department of Education.

(5) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. Includes grades kindergarten to six, inclusive.

(6) HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING. Professional development activities that satisfy all of the following:

a. Clarify the conceptual foundations of computer science.

b. Teach research-based practices, including hands-on and inquiry-based learning.

c. Are intended for existing teachers, with or without previous exposure to computer science.

(7) HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROVIDERS. Institutions of higher education, nonprofits, or private entities that have successfully designed, implemented, and scaled high quality, evidence-based computer science professional learning for teachers and recommended by the superintendent and approved by the board.

(8) HIGH SCHOOL. Includes grades nine to 12, inclusive.

(9) MIDDLE SCHOOL. Includes grades seven and eight.

(10) PUBLIC SCHOOL. Includes public K-12 elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools.

(11) SUPERINTENDENT. The State Superintendent of Education."

"§16-46B-2

(a)(1) Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, each public high school shall offer at least one authentic computer science course from a department-approved list.

(2) Beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, each public middle school shall offer instruction in middle school computer science courses approved by the department.

(3) Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, each public elementary school shall offer instruction on the basics of computer science and computational thinking.

(b) A computer science course or instruction in computer science offered by a public school shall satisfy all of the following:

(1) Be of high quality, as defined by the department.

(2) Meet or exceed the standards and curriculum requirements, as they relate to authentic computer science, established by the board in the state course of study for digital literacy and computer science pursuant to Section 16-35-4 and be on the approved list of computer science courses.

(c) A computer science course offered by a public high school should be offered through an in-person setting and shall be offered as a virtual or distance learning course option only when an in-person classroom setting is not practicable. A rationale for using the virtual or distance learning option shall be included in the annual report.

(d) Beginning with public school students who will graduate during the 2030-2031 school year, the department shall ensure that all approved computer science courses and

content that meet graduation requirements pursuant to Section 16-46B-7, shall include, but not be limited to, instruction in the concepts of computer science as defined in Section 16-46B-1.

(e) The enforcement of this section shall comply with Section 16-1-11.1."

"§16-46B-7

(a) Before June 30, 2020, and in accordance with Section 16-35-4, the department shall identify approved computer science courses that may fulfill one unit of academic credit for any mathematics or science course for high school graduation.

(b) Beginning with the graduating class of 2021, for the purposes of high school graduation requirements and satisfying mathematics or science freshman admission requirements for a public institution of higher education physically located in this state, as determined by the institution of higher education, a computer science course successfully completed under subsection (a) shall be equivalent to either of the following:

(1) One mathematics course credit.

(2) One science course credit.

(c)(1) Beginning with the graduating class of 2031, all public school students shall demonstrate digital literacy by earning at least one credit in a department-approved, high school level computer science course. This requirement shall not result in an increase in the number of credits required for graduation.

(2) Each computer science credit earned shall count as a college and career readiness indicator and may fulfill any one of the following, as determined by the local superintendent of education:

a. One mathematics course credit.

b. One science course credit.

c. One career and technical education course credit.

d. One elective credit.

(3) Mathematics course credits and science course credits may only be replaced by department-approved computer science courses if the public school student is on the standard diploma pathway, which requires the completion of both four mathematics course credits and four science course credits."

Section 2. This act shall become effective on October 1, 2025.

House of Representatives

Read for the first time and referred 25-Feb-25
to the House of Representatives
committee on Education Policy

Read for the second time and placed 19-Mar-25
on the calendar:
1 amendment

Read for the third time and passed 01-Apr-25
as amended
Yeas 99
Nays 1
Abstains 2

John Treadwell
Clerk