

Legislative Analysis



REQUIRE COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSE OFFERING

Phone: (517) 373-8080
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House Bill 5649 (H-1) as reported from committee

Sponsor: Rep. Carol Glanville

Committee: Education

Complete to 6-13-24

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

(Enacted as Public Act 206 of 2024)

SUMMARY:

House Bill 5649 would amend the Revised School Code to require a **public high school** to offer at least one **computer science** course, starting with the 2027-2028 school year.

Public high school would mean a public school that offers at least one of grades 9 to 12.

Computer science would mean the study of computers and algorithmic processes, including their principles, hardware and software designs, implementation, and impact on society, that focuses on teaching students how to create new technologies and not solely on the use of technology.

The computer science course would have to meet both of the following:

- Meet or exceed standards established by the State Board of Education.¹
- Be listed as an option on the school's catalog of courses, as confirmed by the district, intermediate school district (ISD), or public school academy (PSA).

Except for a public high school that operates entirely virtually, the public high school would have to make a good-faith effort to offer the course in an in-person setting. However, if an in-person setting is not feasible for purposes of this requirement, the school could offer the course through a virtual or distance-based option.

Proposed MCL 380.1166c

BRIEF DISCUSSION:

Supporters of the bill say that increasing access to computer science courses for students in schools should be a priority of the state in order to ensure that students can compete for the types of jobs that have good pay and will be needed in the coming decades. Ensuring access and opportunity for all students in high school will allow them to explore their interest prior to pursuing a college degree, and even if a student ultimately decides against pursuing a degree related to computer science, proponents say that the skills developed through a computer science class, such as problem-solving and critical thinking, will aid the student in other endeavors.

¹ <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/academic-standards/michigan-k-12-computer-science-standards>

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have no fiscal impact on the state and could increase costs for certain local school districts, intermediate school districts, and public school academies.

The Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) notes that of the 1,265 high schools that reported students in the MSDS Teacher Student Data Link Collection in the 2022-2023 school year, 864 high schools (68%) had students who took at least one computer science–related course and 401 high schools (32%) did not report any students taking computer science–related courses. According to CEPI, these counts should be considered a rough approximation, since they are produced using a methodology that considers school course classification codes and key words in course names.

School districts, ISDs, and PSAs that do not currently offer a qualifying computer science course in each high school would incur costs to meet that requirement under the bill. These costs would vary depending on local factors.

POSITIONS:

Representatives of the following entities testified in support of the bill (5-14-24):

- Michigan Department of Education
- Code.org
- Mackinac City Public Schools

The following entities indicated support for the bill:

- Amazon and Amazon Web Services (5-14-24)
- The College Board (5-14-24)
- Computer Science Teachers Association (5-14-24)
- Education Advocates of West Michigan (6-4-24)
- ExcellnEd in Action (5-14-24)
- Great Lakes Bay Regional Alliance (5-14-24)
- Lutheran High School Association (5-14-24)
- Mason County Promise Board (5-14-24)
- Tech Net (5-14-24)
- West Michigan Tech Talent (5-14-24)

The following entities indicated a neutral position on the bill:

- Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals (6-4-24)
- Michigan Association of School Administrators (5-14-24)

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.