



Legislative Council Staff

Research Note

Version: Final

Date: 5/3/2016

Bill Number

House Bill 16-1291

Sponsors

***Representatives Duran and
Lontine
Senators Hill and Johnston***

Short Title

***Modern Technology Education
In Public Schools***

Research Analyst

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Status

This research note reflects the final version of the bill. The bill was postponed indefinitely by the Senate Appropriations Committee on May 3, 2016.

Summary

This bill modifies state academic standards for kindergarten through twelfth grade public education (K12). Under current law, the State Board of Education (SBE) is required to revise and re-adopt academic content standards by July 1, 2018, and every six years thereafter. This bill requires that, when revising and re-adopting the standards, the board incorporate into the standards for each subject skills relating to the use of information and communications technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information.

No later than July 1, 2017, the bill requires that the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) create and maintain a resource bank of materials pertaining to computer science courses and programs for the optional use of school districts and charter schools.

The bill creates a grant program in the CDE for eligible school districts who wish to help teachers pursue additional postsecondary education and training in order to then provide computer science education to K12 students. The SBE must adopt rules for the grant program and the CDE must administer the program, accept and review grant applications, and make recommendations to the SBE for awarding the grants. The bill establishes minimum priority criteria for the SBE to consider when making grant awards.

No later than January 1, 2017, and annually thereafter, the CDE must report grant activity to the education committees of the General Assembly.

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Background

Computer science is defined by CDE as "the scientific and practical approach to computation and its applications," including the "systematic study of the feasibility, structure, expression, and mechanization of the methodical procedures (or algorithms) that underlie the acquisition, representation, processing, storage, communication of, and access to information." Courses in computer science are offered less than other science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) classes in schools throughout Colorado. In 2015, 661 high school students took the Advanced Placement Computer Science exam, while over 7,200 students took the English and Composition Advanced Placement exam.

House Action

House Education Committee (March 28, 2016). At the hearing, representatives from the business community, the St. Vrain Valley School District, and the Colorado Technology Association spoke in support of the bill.

The committee adopted amendment L.001, and referred the bill, as amended to the House Appropriations Committee. Amendment L.001 clarified the role of the resource bank, clarified the definition of computer science, and allowed school districts to apply for grants instead of individual teachers.

House Appropriations Committee (April 15, 2016). The committee adopted amendment J.002 and referred the bill to the House Committee of the Whole. The amendment adjusts the bill's appropriations clause.

House Second Reading (April 15, 2016). The House passed the bill on second reading with no amendments.

House Third Reading (April 18, 2016). The House passed the bill on third reading with no amendments.

Senate Action

Senate Education Committee (April 28, 2016). At the hearing, representatives from the business community, the Women's Foundation of Colorado, Englewood Public Schools, St. Vrain Valley School District, and several teachers and students spoke about the bill. The committee referred the bill to the Appropriations committee with no amendments.

Senate Appropriations Committee (May 3, 2016). The committee postponed the bill indefinitely.



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