

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to computer coding instruction;  
3 amending s. 1004.015, F.S.; requiring the Higher  
4 Education Coordinating Council to make recommendations  
5 related to computer science instruction; providing  
6 requirements for such recommendations; requiring the  
7 council to report its findings and recommendations to  
8 the Board of Governors of the State University System  
9 and the Legislature; providing for expiration of  
10 certain council duties; amending s. 1007.2616, F.S.;  
11 requiring the Commissioner of Education to develop  
12 certain standards and identify certain courses in the  
13 Course Code Directory; requiring the Florida Virtual  
14 School to offer certain courses identified by the  
15 Commissioner of Education and requiring school  
16 districts to provide students access to such courses  
17 under certain circumstances; requiring the Department  
18 of Education to annually report certain information to  
19 the Board of Governors and the Legislature; requiring  
20 the State Board of Education, the Board of Governors,  
21 and school districts to develop strategies relating to  
22 computer science educator certification and teacher  
23 recruitment; providing an effective date.

24  
25 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
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27 Section 1. Subsection (6) of section 1004.015, Florida  
28 Statutes, is renumbered as subsection (7), and a new subsection  
29 (6) is added to that section, to read:

30 1004.015 Higher Education Coordinating Council.—

31 (6) (a) The council shall develop recommendations to  
32 prepare students for successful postsecondary education and  
33 careers in computer science, information technology, and related  
34 fields. In developing the recommendations, the council shall  
35 consider policies and practices that are designed to increase  
36 access to high-quality educational experiences that help more  
37 students obtain careers in these fields.

38 (b) The council's recommendations must identify:

39 1. High school courses in computer science, including  
40 computer coding and computer programming, of sufficient rigor  
41 that may be used to satisfy specified State University System  
42 admissions requirements, including requirements for foreign  
43 languages, mathematics, and science.

44 2. Common academic and technical skills needed for  
45 students to meet projected labor market demands in computer  
46 science, information technology, and related fields in the  
47 state.

48 3. How middle and high school students, including  
49 underrepresented and nontraditional students, can be encouraged  
50 to pursue further studies and careers in computer science,  
51 information technology, and related fields.

52 4. Secondary course sequences which prepare students to

53 succeed in postsecondary educational programs in computer  
54 science, information technology, and related fields.

55 5. Gaps in current policy, curricula, programs, and  
56 practices at the state, school district, and postsecondary level  
57 which inhibit students from pursuing advanced studies and  
58 careers in computer science, information technology, and related  
59 fields.

60 6. Appropriate educator qualifications and computer  
61 science pedagogy to maintain technologically current  
62 instructional knowledge and practices in teacher preparation  
63 programs.

64 7. Common definitions for terms related to computer  
65 science, including terms such as "computer coding" and "computer  
66 programming," for consistent use across the Florida K-20  
67 education system.

68 (c) By December 31, 2017, the council shall report its  
69 recommendations to the Board of Governors, the State Board of  
70 Education, and the Legislature.

71 (d) This subsection expires July 1, 2018.

72 Section 2. Subsection (4) of section 1007.2616, Florida  
73 Statutes, is renumbered as subsection (5), and a new subsection  
74 (4) is added to that section, to read:

75 1007.2616 Computer science and technology instruction.—

76 (4) (a) By June 30, 2017, the commissioner shall develop  
77 academic standards for computer science, including standards and  
78 benchmarks for computer coding and computer programming, and

79 include in the Course Code Directory high school-level courses  
80 which incorporate the standards and prepare students for  
81 postsecondary success in computer science, information  
82 technology, and related fields.

83 (b) The Florida Virtual School shall offer computer  
84 science courses identified in the Course Code Directory. If a  
85 school district does not offer an identified course, it must  
86 provide students access to the course through the Florida  
87 Virtual School or through other means.

88 (c) If a student is enrolled in an identified course that  
89 satisfies a foreign language, mathematics, or science admissions  
90 requirement for the Florida College System or the State  
91 University System, the school district must notify the student  
92 that he or she should contact any out-of-state or private  
93 postsecondary institution to which the student is applying and  
94 inquire whether the course credit satisfies any of the  
95 institution's admissions requirements.

96 (d) The Department of Education shall annually report to  
97 the Board of Governors and the Legislature:

98 1. The courses identified in the Course Code Directory  
99 that meet the academic standards for computer science.

100 2. The number of students, by district, including the  
101 Florida Virtual School, who are enrolled in a course identified  
102 in the Course Code Directory that meets the academic standards  
103 for computer science.

104 3. The number of individuals who hold a valid educator

105 certificate in computer science or a related field.

106 (e) The State Board of Education shall consult with the  
107 Board of Governors and school districts to develop strategies  
108 for recruiting qualified teachers to provide computer science  
109 instruction, updating computer science educator certification  
110 requirements, providing appropriate professional development to  
111 maintain technologically current instructional knowledge and  
112 practices in the school districts, and identifying and  
113 streamlining traditional and alternative pathways toward  
114 computer science educator certification.

115 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016.