

2016 -- H 8027

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LC005618  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

Introduced By: Representatives Lombardi, Williams, Almeida, Melo, and Regunberg

Date Introduced: April 01, 2016

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Chapter 16-22 of the General Laws entitled "Curriculum [See Title 16  
2 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby amended by adding thereto  
3 the following sections:

4           **16-22-28. Recommendations on the development of computer science curriculum. --**

5           (a) The council on elementary and secondary education (the "council") shall develop  
6 recommendations on a computer science curriculum to prepare students for successful  
7 postsecondary education and careers in computer science, information technology, and related  
8 fields. In developing these recommendations, the council shall consider policies and practices that  
9 are designed to increase access to high-quality educational experiences that help more students  
10 obtain careers in these fields.

11           (b) The council's recommendations shall identify:

12           (1) High school courses in computer science, including computer coding and computer  
13 programming, of sufficient rigor that may be used to satisfy admissions requirements at state  
14 colleges and universities, including requirements for foreign languages, mathematics, and  
15 science;

16           (2) Common academic and technical skills needed for students to meet projected labor  
17 market demands in computer science, information technology, and related fields in and outside of  
18 the state;

19           (3) How middle and high school students, including underrepresented and nontraditional

1 students, can be encouraged to pursue further studies and careers in computer science,  
2 information technology, and related fields;

3 (4) Secondary course sequences which prepare students to succeed in postsecondary  
4 educational programs in computer science, information technology, and related fields;

5 (5) Gaps in current policy, curricula, programs, and practices at the state, school district,  
6 and postsecondary level which inhibit students from pursuing advanced studies and careers in  
7 computer science, information technology, and related fields;

8 (6) Appropriate educator qualifications and computer science pedagogy to maintain  
9 technologically current instructional knowledge and practices in teacher preparation programs;  
10 and

11 (7) Common definitions for terms related to computer science, including terms such as  
12 "computer coding" and "computer programming," for consistent use across both the Rhode Island  
13 K-12 education system and the state's postsecondary education system.

14 (c) By December 31, 2017, the council shall report its recommendations to the board of  
15 education, the governor, and the general assembly.

16 **16-22-29. Computer science and technology instruction. --** (a) By June 30, 2017, the

17 commissioner of elementary and secondary education (the "commissioner") shall develop  
18 academic standards for a computer science high school curriculum, including standards and  
19 benchmarks for computer coding and computer programming, and identify high school-level  
20 courses which incorporate the standards and prepare students for postsecondary success in  
21 computer science, information technology, and related fields. In developing these standards, the  
22 commissioner shall consider and incorporate the recommendations made by the council on  
23 elementary and secondary education pursuant to §16-22-28, to the fullest extent the commissioner  
24 deems practicable.

25 (b) The courses in the computer science curriculum should, to the extent academically  
26 feasible, enable a student to utilize computer science courses to meet foreign language,  
27 mathematics, and science admission requirements at the state colleges and universities, including  
28 the Community College of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and the University of Rhode  
29 Island.

30 (c) If a school district does not offer a course identified by the commissioner pursuant to  
31 subsections (a) and (b) of this section, that district shall provide students access to the course  
32 through a virtual school or education program, an online program, or through other means.

33 (d) If a student is enrolled in an identified course that satisfies a foreign language,  
34 mathematics, or science admissions requirement for a state postsecondary school, including the

1 Community College of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and the University of Rhode Island,  
2 the school district shall notify the student that they should contact any private in-state or out-of-  
3 state public or private postsecondary institution to which the student is applying and inquire  
4 whether the course credit satisfies any of the institution's admissions requirements.

5 (e) The commissioner shall annually report to the council on elementary and secondary  
6 education, the governor, and the general assembly on:

7 (1) The courses identified by the commissioner that meet the academic standards for  
8 computer science;

9 (2) The number of students, by district, including all public schools and charter public  
10 schools, who are enrolled in a course identified by the commissioner that meets the academic  
11 standards for computer science; and

12 (3) The number of teachers, educators and other individuals who hold a valid educator  
13 certificate in computer science or a related field.

14 (f) The council on elementary and secondary education shall consult with the board of  
15 education and school districts to develop strategies for recruiting qualified teachers to provide  
16 computer science instruction, updating computer science educator certification requirements,  
17 providing appropriate professional development to maintain technologically current instructional  
18 knowledge and practices in the school districts, and identifying and streamlining traditional and  
19 alternative pathways toward computer science educator certification.

20 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

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1           This act would direct the council on elementary and secondary education to develop  
2    recommendations on a high school curriculum to prepare students for successful postsecondary  
3    education and careers in computer science. The act would also direct the commissioner of  
4    elementary and secondary education to consider the council's recommendations and develop  
5    academic standards for a computer science high school curriculum. The courses in the computer  
6    science curriculum should, to the extent academically feasible, enable a student to utilize  
7    computer science courses to meet foreign language, mathematics, and science admission  
8    requirements at the state's colleges and universities.

9           This act would take effect upon passage.

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