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## OLR Bill Analysis

### sSB 957

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF COMPUTER SCIENCE INSTRUCTION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM, PROGRAMS OF TEACHER PREPARATION AND ALTERNATE ROUTE TO CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS AND THE CREATION OF AN ADJUNCT COMPUTER SCIENCE INSTRUCTOR PERMIT AND A COMPUTER SCIENCE ENDORSEMENT.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill adds computer science to the list of subjects that must be taught in public schools (§ 1). It makes computer programming a required component of computer science instruction, rather than a stand-alone instruction topic as under current law.

Additionally, the bill makes the following changes in teacher preparation and certification laws relating to computer science:

1. requires teacher preparation programs that lead to professional certification to add “programming and coding” to their existing computer and information technology skills curriculum, which the bill renames “computer science,” (§ 2);
2. allows the State Board of Education (SBE) to issue “adjunct computer science instructor permits” that authorize certain individuals to hold part-time computer science teacher positions (§ 4);
3. requires the Office of Higher Education (OHE), in collaboration and consultation with the State Department of Education (SDE), to develop an alternate route to certification (ARC) program for computer science teachers, which must include mentored apprenticeships and program admission criteria (§ 3); and
4. requires SBE to adopt regulations by July 1, 2020, that provide computer science teaching certification standards, which must

(a) create a computer science endorsement and (b) allow applicants to fulfill certification requirements by completing prescribed courses of study or other experience that SBE deems appropriate (§ 5).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

#### **§ 4 — ADJUNCT INSTRUCTOR PERMIT**

The bill allows SBE to issue, at the request of a local or regional board of education or a regional education service center (RESC), an “adjunct computer science instructor permit” to any applicant with specialized training, experience, or expertise in computer science. The permit authorizes its holder to work as a part-time computer science teacher for up to three years, but the education commissioner may renew it for good cause upon the request of the employing district’s superintendent or RESC.

The bill prohibits individuals who hold this permit from (1) displacing any certified teachers who currently work at a school and (2) joining the teachers’ retirement system, unless they also hold a regular teacher certificate issued by SBE.

Additionally, the bill establishes applicant qualifications for the permit, prescribes a supervisory structure for permit-holders’ employment, and requires employing boards or RESCs to provide support services to instructors who hold this permit.

#### ***Applicant Qualifications***

Under the bill, to be eligible for an “adjunct computer science instructor permit,” an applicant must meet the following criteria:

1. hold a bachelor’s degree from a higher education institution accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or OHE or regionally accredited;
2. have at least three years of computer science work experience, or one year of such work experience and two years of specialized computer science schooling; and

3. achieve a satisfactory score on the SBE-approved subject area test.

***Supervision***

The bill requires regular supervision of permit-holders while they are employed in public schools. Specifically, the school superintendent, principal, an administrator, or another supervisor must regularly observe, guide, and evaluate their performance.

***Support Services***

Under the bill, boards of education or RESCs that employ individuals with this permit must offer them a support services program. The program must be developed in consultation with SDE and must include academic and classroom support service components.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 35    Nay 0    (03/25/2019)