



March 5, 2019

Education Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3100
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: SB 957 Relating to Computer Science

Dear Committee Members,

As a coalition we are working together to support policies that expand access to computer science for all Connecticut students. We believe the best approach is for the Connecticut General Assembly to adopt legislation that **requires all schools to offer computer science courses**, and to **include funding for computer science professional development in the state budget**.

Computing is a foundational skill for K-12 students. It develops students' computational and critical thinking skills and teaches them how to create -- not just use -- new technologies. Computer science is driving job growth and innovation in Connecticut and throughout the United States. **More than half of projected jobs in STEM fields are in computing occupations**, and computer science is one of the most desirable degrees for new college graduates.

According to the Conference Board, there are 5,543 open computing jobs in Connecticut, but the state only produced 505 computer science graduates. **Demand for these jobs is growing at 4.4 times the state average**. Data shows that access to computer science in K-12 can help close this talent gap that exists. A student is 6 times more likely to major in computer science after just one computer science course in high school.

Connecticut can address this issue by creating policies that grant access to all students. This is accomplished when we are able to allocate funding to train teachers through quality computer science professional development. By **committing to \$765,000 annually over the next 4 years to fund computer science professional development**, we will build the teacher capacity that we need. Connecticut can also tackle this issue by requiring every middle and high school in the state to offer high-quality computer science courses. Today, only 25% of middle and high schools in Connecticut offer a single computer science class (K12 Computer Science Access Report code.org/yourschool)

Thank you for your efforts to provide students in Connecticut the education they need to be successful upon leaving the K-12 system. Please consider our organizations a resource as your chamber considers the budget.

Sincerely,

Code.org
Computer Science Teachers Association
College Board
Excel in Education in Action
Microsoft