

March 5, 2019

My name is Cristina Schatz and I live in the town of Cromwell. I am writing in support of Bill # S.B. 957.

I have two children attending CREC magnet schools. My daughter attends Montessori Magnet School in Hartford. She is in 6th grade and has been attending weekly computer science classes as part of her “specials” rotation for a few years now. She struggles with dyslexia and we have found that this class allows her to develop skills that will help her immensely in her future endeavors. Her learning disability makes many subjects in school difficult for her. Computer science allows her to excel in one area of her schooling and this has boosted her self-esteem. My son is at his first year of school at Metropolitan Learning Center in Bloomfield. He no longer receives computer science instruction on a regular basis and he wishes that there was a way to continue learning these important skills.

Even in today’s job market, computer skills are extremely important to securing employment. My husband works at Thule, INC. Recently, they installed a computer controlled laser cutter at their manufacturing plant in Seymour. My husband had difficulty finding a candidate for hire that had the computer skills necessary to run the laser that was not over qualified for the position, In the future, I am certain that all employment will require some level of computer skills. I believe that these skills will be just as important as reading, writing, and math proficiency.

I am so glad that my children have received coding instruction while at elementary school. These are skills I do not possess and would not be able to supplement at home as part of their education. My children come home excited to show me what they learned during computer science classes. Unfortunately, not all children in Connecticut have access to these classes and many also do not have easy access to computers at home. This will put them at an extreme disadvantage once they graduate and begin to look for employment or seek higher education opportunities.

My hope is that both my children and all the children of Connecticut receive the opportunity to gain these important skills during their education at our schools.

Sincerely,

Cristina Schatz