

By: Representatives Felsher, Bennett,
Creekmore IV, Deweese, McCarty, Owen, Summers

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 633
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI COMPUTER SCIENCE AND CYBER
2 EDUCATION EQUALITY ACT; TO AUTHORIZE AND DIRECT THE STATE
3 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO IMPLEMENT A MANDATORY K-12 COMPUTER
4 SCIENCE CURRICULUM BASED ON THE MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE AND
5 CAREER-READINESS STANDARDS FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE, WHICH INCLUDES
6 INSTRUCTION IN, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, COMPUTATIONAL THINKING,
7 CYBER-RELATED, PROGRAMMING, CYBER SECURITY, DATA SCIENCE, ROBOTICS
8 AND OTHER COMPUTER SCIENCE AND CYBER-RELATED CONTENT; TO PRESCRIBE
9 MINIMUM COMPONENTS OF THE CURRICULUM AT EACH GRADE LEVEL; AND TO
10 PROVIDE FOR TEACHER TRAINING AS NEEDED AT ALL GRADE LEVELS; TO
11 AMEND SECTION 37-13-171, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO EXTEND THE
12 REPEALER ON THE STATUTE REQUIRING EVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT TO ADOPT A
13 POLICY TO IMPLEMENT ABSTINENCE-ONLY OR ABSTINENCE-PLUS EDUCATION
14 INTO ITS CURRICULUM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

16 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the
17 "Mississippi Computer Science and Cyber Education Equality Act."

18 **SECTION 2.** The Mississippi Legislature finds that:

19 (a) Education in computer science is a critical need
20 for the students of Mississippi for the twenty-first century;

21 (b) More than half of high schools in Mississippi do
22 not teach a computer science course; and



(c) The logical thinking skills taught by computer science are very valuable in many noncomputer science jobs, as technology has become embedded in most professions.

SECTION 3. As used in this act, the following terms shall have the meaning ascribed in this section:

(a) "Computer science" means the study of computers, algorithmic processes, coding, and logical thinking, including computer principles, their hardware and software designs, their implementation and their impact on society.

(b) "Computer science courses" means high school and middle school courses that teach computer science as stand-alone implementations; and elementary curriculum that provides instruction in computer science as stand-alone implementations or embedded in other subjects and focuses on how to create and understand technology, rather than simply using technology.

(c) "Offer" means providing instruction at the elementary level with licensed teachers, and at the high school and middle school level as a course taught by a computer science teacher:

(i) Who is onsite at the physical location of the school; or

(ii) Who is not onsite at the physical location of the school but conducts the course through virtual means with a proctor onsite at the physical location of the school.



SECTION 4.

(1) The State Department of Education is authorized and directed to implement K-12 computer science curriculum based on the 2018 Mississippi College and Career-Readiness Standards for computer science, which includes instruction in, but not limited to:

- (a) Computational thinking;
- (b) Problem solving;
- (c) Programming;
- (d) Cyber security;
- (e) Data science;
- (f) Robotics;
- (g) Artificial intelligence and machine learning; and
- (h) Other computer science and cyber-related content.

(2) The State Department of Education shall work with the Center for Cyber Education at Mississippi State University to identify and develop K-12 computer science curriculum and delivery options.

(3) Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year:

(a) Each local school district shall provide that all middle schools in its school system offer instruction in foundations of computer science;

(b) Each local school district shall provide that fifty percent (50%) of elementary schools in its school system offer a minimum of one (1) hour of instruction in computer science each week;



(c) Each charter school that serves middle or high school students shall offer a course in computer science; and

(d) Each charter school that serves elementary school students shall offer instruction in computer science.

(4) Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year:

(a) Each local school district shall provide that at least fifty percent (50%) of the high schools in its school system offer a course in computer science;

(b) Each local school district shall provide that all elementary schools in its school system offer a minimum of one (1) hour of instruction in exploratory computer science each week.

(5) Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, each local school district shall provide that all schools in its school system offer instruction in computer science.

SECTION 5. The State Department of Education shall review district-submitted courses to enable schools to utilize high quality online computer science courses to meet the needs of such schools as a result of this act.

SECTION 6. (1) Subject to appropriations made by the Legislature, the State Department of Education shall provide annual training for teachers, counselors and administrators in order to phase in the K-12 computer science curriculum. Preference should be given to districts who have the fewest number of teachers trained in computer science. The State Department of Education shall work with the Center for Cyber Education at



Mississippi State University to develop and coordinate teacher training. The State Department of Education may contract with private and nonprofit providers for teacher training and for student instruction, and is encouraged to utilize available cost-free computer training, instruction and resources. Teachers may receive computer science instruction training through an online platform.

(2) The State Department of Education shall provide a report by January 1, 2022, to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee and the Chairman of the House Education Committee. The report shall include a strategic plan for statewide computer science education initiatives including, but not limited to, the following:

(i) A summary of the current state landscape for K-12 computer science education;

(ii) A plan for expanding computer science education opportunities to every school in the state by the 2024-2025 school year;

(iii) A plan for the development of preservice and in-service teachers seeking a computer science endorsement or course specific license, in order to meet the timeline for course requirements;

(iv) The development of a vetted list of approved vendors in computer science education that are recognized as high



quality computer science courses or instruction, which should weigh preference on cost and ease of implementation; and

(v) The identification of approved computer science courses that may fulfill at least four (4) units of academic credit for high school graduation. The State Department of Education shall work with the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning and the Mississippi Community College Board to approve these courses once identified.

(2) The State Department of Education shall submit a report by December 31 of each year through 2025 to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee and the Chairman of the House Education Committee. The report shall include a list of schools in each district teaching computer science and the number of computer science teachers trained in each district.

SECTION 7. The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning shall work with its member institutions to identify preservice teacher preparation programs to allow for certification in the computer science field.

SECTION 8. Section 37-13-171, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-13-171. (1) The local school board of every public school district shall adopt a policy to implement abstinence-only or abstinence-plus education into its curriculum by June 30, 2012, which instruction in those subjects shall be implemented not later



147 than the start of the 2012-2013 school year or the local school
148 board shall adopt the program which has been developed by the
149 Mississippi Department of Human Services and the Mississippi
150 Department of Health. The State Department of Education shall
151 approve each district's curriculum for sex-related education and
152 shall establish a protocol to be used by districts to provide
153 continuity in teaching the approved curriculum in a manner that is
154 age, grade and developmentally appropriate.

155 (2) Abstinence-only education shall remain the state
156 standard for any sex-related education taught in the public
157 schools. For purposes of this section, abstinence-only education
158 includes any type of instruction or program which, at an
159 appropriate age and grade:

160 (a) Teaches the social, psychological and health gains
161 to be realized by abstaining from sexual activity, and the likely
162 negative psychological and physical effects of not abstaining;

163 (b) Teaches the harmful consequences to the child, the
164 child's parents and society that bearing children out of wedlock
165 is likely to produce, including the health, educational, financial
166 and other difficulties the child and his or her parents are likely
167 to face, as well as the inappropriateness of the social and
168 economic burden placed on others;

169 (c) Teaches that unwanted sexual advances are
170 irresponsible and teaches how to reject sexual advances and how
171 alcohol and drug use increases vulnerability to sexual advances;



172 (d) Teaches that abstinence from sexual activity before
173 marriage, and fidelity within marriage, is the only certain way to
174 avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and
175 related health problems. The instruction or program may include a
176 discussion on condoms or contraceptives, but only if that
177 discussion includes a factual presentation of the risks and
178 failure rates of those contraceptives. In no case shall the
179 instruction or program include any demonstration of how condoms or
180 other contraceptives are applied;

181 (e) Teaches the current state law related to sexual
182 conduct, including forcible rape, statutory rape, paternity
183 establishment, child support and homosexual activity; and

184 (f) Teaches that a mutually faithful, monogamous
185 relationship in the context of marriage is the only appropriate
186 setting for sexual intercourse.

187 (3) A program or instruction on sex-related education need
188 not include every component listed in subsection (2) of this
189 section for abstinence-only education. However, no program or
190 instruction under an abstinence-only curriculum may include
191 anything that contradicts the excluded components. For purposes
192 of this section, abstinence-plus education includes every
193 component listed under subsection (2) of this section that is age
194 and grade appropriate, in addition to any other programmatic or
195 instructional component approved by the department, which shall
196 not include instruction and demonstrations on the application and



197 use of condoms. Abstinence-plus education may discuss other
198 contraceptives, the nature, causes and effects of sexually
199 transmitted diseases, or the prevention of sexually transmitted
200 diseases, including HIV/AIDS, along with a factual presentation of
201 the risks and failure rates.

202 (4) Any course containing sex-related education offered in
203 the public schools shall include instruction in either
204 abstinence-only or abstinence-plus education.

205 (5) Local school districts, in their discretion, may host
206 programs designed to teach parents how to discuss abstinence with
207 their children.

208 (6) There shall be no effort in either an abstinence-only or
209 an abstinence-plus curriculum to teach that abortion can be used
210 to prevent the birth of a baby.

211 (7) At all times when sex-related education is discussed or
212 taught, boys and girls shall be separated according to gender into
213 different classrooms, sex-related education instruction may not be
214 conducted when boys and girls are in the company of any students
215 of the opposite gender.

216 (8) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, * * * 2024.

217 **SECTION 9.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
218 and after July 1, 2021.

