Support K-12 Computer Science Education in Texas

Computer science drives job growth and innovation throughout our economy and society. Computing occupations are the **number 1 source of all new wages in the U.S.** and make up over half of all projected new jobs in STEM fields, making Computer Science one of the most in-demand college degrees. And computing is used all around us and in virtually every field. It's foundational knowledge that all students need. But computer science is marginalized throughout education. Only 57.5% of U.S. high schools teach any computer science courses and only 4% of bachelor's degrees are in Computer Science. We need to improve access for all students, including groups who have traditionally been underrepresented.

93% of parents want their child's school to teach computer science, but only
53% of high schools offer it. More than **70% of** superintendents and principals say offering computer science is just as important as offering subjects like English, math, history, and

50% of Americans rank computer science as one of the two most important subjects of study after reading and writing.

Students who learn computer science in high school are **six times** more likely to major in it, and **women are ten times more likely**. Black students are more interested in CS and more confident in their abilities than white students but are less likely to enroll in a class.

Yet, there were only 5,538 graduates in computer science in 2020 and only 54% of all public high schools teach a foundational computer science course.

Computer science in Texas

- Only 14,483 exams were taken in AP Computer Science by high school students in Texas in 2020 (6,577 took AP CS A and 7,906 took AP CSP).
- Only 29% were taken by female students (24% for AP CS A and 33% for AP CSP); only 3,882 exams were taken by Hispanic/Latino/Latino/Latina students (1,351 took AP CS A and 2,531 took AP CSP); only 558 exams were taken by Black/African American students (197 took AP CS A and 361 took AP CSP); only 72 exams were taken by Native American/Alaskan students (31 took AP CS A and 41 took AP CSP); only 14 exams were taken by Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students (6 took AP CS A and 8 took AP CSP).
- Only **544 schools** in TX (28% of TX schools with AP programs) offered an AP Computer Science course in 2019-2020 (20% offered AP CS A and 20% offered AP CSP), which is 38 more than the previous year. There are fewer AP exams taken in computer science than in any other STEM subject area.
- Teacher preparation programs in Texas only graduated 13 new teachers prepared to teach computer science in 2018.
- According to a representative survey from Google/Gallup, school administrators in TX support expanding computer science education opportunities: 70% of principals surveyed think CS is just as or more important than required core classes.

What can you do to support K-12 CS education in Texas?

- Send a letter to your school/district asking them to expand computer science offerings at every grade level: %a{href:"https://code.org/promote/letter"} www.code.org/promote/letter
- Find out if your school teaches computer science or submit information about your school's offerings at www.code.org/yourschool.
- Visit www.code.org/educate/3rdparty to find out about courses and curriculum from a variety of providers, including Code.org.

Code.org's impact in Texas

- In Texas, Code.org's curriculum is used in
 - 14% of elementary schools
 - 21% of middle schools
 - 15% of high schools
- There are 76,077 teacher accounts and 3,019,509 student accounts on Code.org in Texas.
- Of students in Texas using Code.org curriculum last school year,
 - 59% attend high needs schools
 - 24% are in rural schools
 - 41% are female students
 - 13% are Black/African American students
 - 34% are Hispanic/Latino/Latina students
 - 1% are Native American/Alaskan students
 - 0% are Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students
 - 27% are white students
 - 9% are Asian students
 - 4% are students who identify as two or more races
- Code.org, its regional partner(s) The University of Texas at Austin, and 33 facilitators have provided professional learning in Texas for
 - 10,783 teachers in CS Fundamentals (K-5)
 - 449 teachers in Exploring Computer Science or Computer Science Discoveries
 - 325 teachers in Computer Science Principles

What can your state do to improve computer science education?

States and local school districts need to adopt a broad policy framework to provide all students with access to computer science. The following ten recommendations are a menu of best practices that states can choose from to support and expand computer science. Not all states will be in a position to adopt all of the policies. Read more about these 10 policy ideas at https://advocacy.code.org/2023_making_cs_foundational.pdf and see our rubric for describing state policies at http://bit.ly/9policiesrubric.

State Plan - Texas has not yet created a state plan for K-12 computer science. A plan that articulates the goals for computer science, strategies for accomplishing the goals, and timelines for carrying out the strategies is important for making computer science a fundamental part of a state's education system.

Exercise Computer Science for K-8 in June 2022 and TEKS TeKS) Fundamentals of Computer Science for K-8 in June 2022 and TEKS at the high school level contain computer science standards.

Funding - HB 1 (FY 2024 and 2025) and SB 1 (FY 2022 and 2023) allocated \$2.585M to make an AP Computer Science Principles course available in every high school and HB 3 and HB 963 (2019) consolidated all computer science (or technology applications) courses into CTE and allowed schools to receive weighted funding for students enrolled in those courses in grades 7–12. HB 1 additionally allocated \$5,000,000 in both FY 2024 and FY 2025 is to be used to consolidate and streamline computer science education by establishing a statewide Computer Science Pipeline Initiative. In addition to the \$10M, an additional \$4M is appropriated to the Higher Education Coordinating Board, contingent upon the Computer Science Pipeline Initiative has raised at least \$4,000,000 in gifts and donations by FY 2025.

© Certification - In Texas, teachers with or without existing licensure can obtain an 8–12 certification by completing a state-approved teacher preparation program and passing certification exams.

Dere-Service Programs - The Texas Education Agency has approved teacher preparation programs leading to certification in computer science and lists these programs publicly.

Dedicated State Position - Texas does not yet have dedicated computer science positions in state or local education agencies. Creating a statewide computer science leadership position within the state education agency can help expand state-level implementation of computer science education initiatives. Similar positions at the local level could support districts' expansion of course offerings and professional development.

Require High Schools to Offer - The Texas State Board of Education added computer science courses to the list of required offerings at high schools (19 TAC § 74.3) in 2014.

© Count Towards Graduation - In Texas, AP Computer Science A, IB Computer Science Higher Level, or discrete math can count as a required mathematics course for graduation. Computer science can also count as an advanced science credit, and multiple course options can satisfy the foreign

language requirement.

I Higher Ed Admission - Computer science can count as the fourth mathematics credit required for admission at institutions of higher education in Texas.

Graduation Requirement - Texas does not yet require students to take computer science to earn a high school diploma. Graduation requirements ensure that all students get exposure to computer science.

Follow us!

Join our efforts to give every student in every school the opportunity to learn computer science. Learn more at **code.org**, or follow us on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.

Launched in 2013, Code.org[®] is a nonprofit dedicated to expanding access to computer science, and increasing participation by women and underrepresented youth. Our vision is that every student in every school should have the opportunity to learn computer science.

Who can you connect with locally to talk about K-12 CS education policy?

- You can reach Code.org's policy contact for your state, Anthony Owen, at anthony.owen@code.org.
- The Expanding Computing Education Pathways (ECEP) Alliance (www.ecepalliance.org), an NSF funded Broadening Participation in Computing Alliance, seeks to increase the number and diversity of students in computing and computing-intensive degrees by promoting state-level computer science education. ECEP supports 22 states and the territory of Puerto Rico to develop effective and replicable interventions to broaden participation in computing and to create state-level infrastructure to foster equitable computing education policies. You can reach your ECEP point of contact Dr. Carol Fletcher from the University of Texas at Austin at Cfletcher@tacc.utexas.edu.

Data is from the Conference Board for job demand, the Bureau of Labor Statistics for state salary and national job projections data, the College Board for AP exam data, the National Center for Education Statistics for university graduate data, the Gallup and Google research study Education Trends in the State of Computer Science in U.S. K-12 Schools for parent demand, the 2018 Computer Science Access Report for schools that offer computer science, and Code.org for its own courses, professional learning programs, and participation data.