WEST virginia legislature

2025 regular session

Committee Substitute

for

Senate Bill 558

By Senators Oliverio, Boley, Grady, and Woelfel

[Reported February 28, from the Committee on Education]

A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section, designated §18-2-9b, relating to requiring public high school students to earn a minimum of one-half unit of credit in a computer science course prior to graduating; defining “computer science”; requiring the computer science course to meet or exceed standards established by the State Board of Education; requiring the course to be offered in person in a traditional classroom setting unless not feasible; providing for alternatives when offering in person in a traditional classroom setting is not feasible; specifying grade levels in which the credit may be earned; requiring State Board of Education rules detailing how computer science can fulfil other graduation requirements; requiring rules to ensure maximum flexibility for students; imposing requirements pertaining to a student’s transcript if a student uses a computer science course to fulfil the math or science credit; requiring computer science standards include high school introductory computer science courses that include foundational computer science concepts; requiring State Board of Education make available a list of course options that can meet the requirements for the computer science credit; requiring State Board of Education rules to ensure schools can obtain the necessary teacher capacity to support implementation; and allowing additional rules deemed necessary for implementation.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

Article 2. State Board of Education.

§18-2-9b. Computer Science Course.

(a) Beginning with the ninth-grade class entering in the 2027-2028 school year, a public high school student shall be required to earn a minimum of one-half unit of credit in a high school computer science course before the student graduates.

(b) "Computer science" means the study of computers, programming, and algorithms, including their principles, their hardware and software designs, their implementation, and their impact on society. Computer science does not include the study of everyday uses of computers and computer applications, such as keyboarding, word processing, digital literacy, or accessing the internet.

(c) A computer science course offered for high school credit shall meet or exceed the standards established by the state board. The course shall be offered in person in a traditional classroom setting unless it is not feasible for a school district to do so. If offering the course in person in a traditional classroom setting is not feasible, the course may be offered in a blended learning environment or an online-based or other technology-based format that is tailored to meet the needs of each participating student.

(d) The minimum one-half high school credit required in this subsection may be earned in grades eight through twelve.

(e) The state board shall adopt rules detailing how computer science may fulfil other graduation requirements. The rules shall ensure maximum flexibility for students, including by maximizing the number of computer science course options eligible for graduation credits. If the rules allow a computer science course to fulfill a math credit or a science credit and a student uses a computer science course to fulfil the math or science credit, the school district shall denote that computer science course as equivalent to a high school math course or high school science course, as applicable, on the student’s transcript for the purpose of admission to a higher education institution in this state.

(f) The state board shall update computer science standards to include high school introductory computer science courses that include foundational computer science concepts.

(g) Beginning in August of 2026, the state board shall make available to all public schools a list of course options that can meet the requirements for this credit. The state board shall update the list as often as necessary.

(h) The state board shall adopt additional rules to ensure schools can obtain the necessary teacher capacity to support implementation of this section. Such rules shall include flexible options to license computer science teachers, including, but not limited to, an authorization or endorsement.

(i) In addition to any rules required by this section, the state board may adopt any other rules it deems necessary to administer this section.