

SB 541 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

Action Date: 04/07/25

Action: Do pass with amendments. Refer to Ways and Means by prior reference. (Printed A-Eng).

Vote: 3-1-1-0

Yeas: 3 - Frederick, Gelser Blouin, Sollman

Nays: 1 - Robinson

Exc: 1 - Weber

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 2/5, 4/7

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires all public schools to offer computer science education at all grade levels beginning in the 2028-2029 school year. It also requires the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to develop and maintain teacher supports, hire staff, and support access to computer science education. The measure also requires the State Board of Education to include computer science in its regular review of Common Curriculum Goals, performance indicators, diploma requirements, and to adopt rules. It appropriates \$5 million from the General Fund to ODE for the purpose of this act. This measure declares an emergency and takes effect on July 1, 2025.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- K-5 grade curriculum
- Access to computer science education
- Issues implementing courses at the high school level
- Staffing issues within computer science education
- Computer use in early childhood

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

The amendment adds artificial intelligence to required programming. It requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules, removes the requirement for ODE to develop a state-wide assessment for computer science, and modifies the operative date to require that schools offer computer science courses in the 2028-2029 school year. The amendment modifies the appropriation to ODE from \$20 million to \$5 million.

BACKGROUND:

In May 2022, Governor Brown directed the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to develop a statewide plan for computer science education and ensure access to computer science education opportunities to every public-school student by the 2027-2028 school year. ODE and HECC released the [statewide implementation plan](#) in December 2023. The plan found that 60 percent of public high schools in Oregon offered a foundational computer science course and 22 percent of the 2022 graduating class took a computer science course.

According to the report, Oregon has not dedicated funding to computer science courses from 2016 to 2023. ODE proposed an initial funding of \$20 million for implementing the outcomes and strategies, \$50 million for new equipment and hiring of 128 teachers, and up to \$200 million to sustain a long-term funding program for every school to have a computer science teacher.