HOUSE BILL 126

55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2021

INTRODUCED BY

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FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; REQUIRING EACH PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL TO OFFER A COURSE IN COMPUTER SCIENCE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. A new section of the Public School Code is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] COMPUTER SCIENCE--DEFINITIONS--REQUIRED TO OFFER--REPORTS.--

A. As used in this section:

(1) "computer science" means the study of computers and algorithmic processes, including their principles, their hardware and software designs, their implementation and their impact on society, with content focused on teaching students how to create new technologies, not to simply use technology; and
(2) "computer science courses" means courses at high school that teach computer science as stand-alone implementations or, for elementary and middle schools, are embedded in other subjects.

B. Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, each school district shall offer at least one computer science course at a public high school.

C. Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, each school district shall offer at least one computer science course at no fewer than one-half of all public high schools.

D. Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, every public high school shall offer at least one computer science course.

E. A computer science course offered by a public school shall:

   (1) meet or exceed the standards and curriculum requirements established by the department; and
   (2) be a computer science course offered by a public high school in an in-person setting and be offered as a virtual or distance course option only when a traditional classroom setting is not feasible.

F. Beginning June 1, 2022 and by each June 1 thereafter, each school district shall submit to the department a report for the current academic year that shall include the following:
(1) the names and course codes of computer
science courses offered in each public school, including a
course description and which state computer science standards
are covered, to the extent such information is available;

(2) the number and percentage of students who
enrolled in each computer science course, disaggregated by:
    (a) gender;
    (b) race and ethnicity;
    (c) special education status, including
students under the federal Individuals with Disabilities
Education Act or federal Section 504;
    (d) English language learner status;
    (e) eligibility for free and
reduced-price meals; and
    (f) grade level; and

(3) the number of computer science instructors
at each school, disaggregated by:
    (a) certification, if applicable;
    (b) gender;
    (c) race and ethnicity; and
    (d) highest academic degree.

G. In disaggregating data, unless a category
contains between one and five students, or contains an amount
that would allow the amount of another category that is five or
fewer to be deduced, the number shall be replaced with a
H. The department shall post publicly on its website on or before June 30 of each year the data received, disaggregated by school and aggregated at the state level, for Paragraphs (1) and (2) of Subsection F of this section. The department shall publicly post aggregate statewide data for Paragraph (3) of Subsection F of this section. The department shall publish a list of computer science course codes and names, including a course description and which courses align to the state computer science standards."