

LEGISLATIVE BILL 1112

Approved by the Governor April 18, 2022

Introduced by McKinney, 11; Slama, 1; Vargas, 7.

A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to schools; to amend sections 79-729, 79-760.01, and 79-3003, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2021; to adopt the Computer Science and Technology Education Act; to provide and change graduation requirements; to change duties relating to academic content standards; and to repeal the original sections.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Sections 1 to 5 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the Computer Science and Technology Education Act.

Sec. 2. The Legislature finds and declares that it is the policy of this state to promote computer science and technology education in each school district in order to (1) provide students the skills and competencies to compete in a twenty-first-century workforce, (2) develop skills that translate to high-skill, high-wage jobs, and (3) encourage the creation and retention of new, high-paying jobs in Nebraska.

Sec. 3. For purposes of the Computer Science and Technology Education Act, computer science and technology education includes, but is not limited to, knowledge and skills regarding computer literacy, educational technology, digital citizenship, information technology, and computer science.

Sec. 4. Beginning with school year 2024-25, each school district, in consultation with the State Department of Education, shall include computer science and technology education in the instructional program of its elementary and middle schools, as appropriate, and beginning in school year 2026-27, require each student attending a public school to complete at least one five-credit high school course or the equivalent of a one-semester high school course in computer science and technology prior to graduation. Such computer science and technology education course offered by a school district may be made available in a traditional classroom setting, a blended-learning environment, or an online-based or other technology-based format that is tailored to meet the need of each participating student.

Sec. 5. On or before December 1, 2025, and on or before December 1 of each year thereafter, in order to promote and support computer science and technology education, each school district shall provide an annual computer science and technology education status report to its school board and the State Department of Education, including, but not limited to, student progress in computer science and technology courses and other district-determined measures of computer science and technology education progress from the previous school year.

Sec. 6. Section 79-729, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2021, is amended to read:

79-729 The Legislature recognizes the importance of assuring that all persons who graduate from Nebraska high schools possess certain minimum levels of knowledge, skills, and understanding. Each high school student shall complete a minimum of two hundred high school credit hours prior to graduation. At least eighty percent of the minimum credit hours shall be core curriculum courses prescribed by the State Board of Education. For students attending a public school, beginning Beginning in school year 2023-24, at least five of the minimum credit hours shall be a high school course in personal finance or financial literacy, and beginning in school year 2026-27, at least five of the minimum credit hours shall be a high school course or the equivalent of a one-semester high school course in computer science and technology. The State Board of Education may establish recommended statewide graduation guidelines. This section does not apply to high school students whose individualized education programs prescribe a different course of instruction. This section does not prohibit the governing board of any high school from prescribing specific graduation guidelines as long as such guidelines do not conflict with this section. For purposes of this section, high school means grades nine through twelve and credit hour shall be defined by appropriate rules and regulations of the State Board of Education but shall not be less than the amount of credit given for successful completion of a course which meets at least one period per week for at least one semester.

Sec. 7. Section 79-760.01, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2021, is amended to read:

79-760.01 (1) The State Board of Education shall adopt measurable academic content standards for at least the grade levels required for statewide assessment pursuant to section 79-760.03. The standards shall cover the subject areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies.

(2) The board shall also adopt measurable academic content standards for financial literacy as part of the social studies standards. The board shall also adopt measurable academic content standards for computer science and technology education under the mathematics, science, or career and technical education standards.

(3) Academic content standards adopted or recommended pursuant to this

section shall be sufficiently clear and measurable to be used for testing student performance with respect to mastery of the content described in the state standards.

(4) The State Board of Education shall develop a plan to review and update standards for each subject area every seven years. The state board plan shall include a review of commonly accepted standards adopted by school districts.

Sec. 8. Section 79-3003, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2021, is amended to read:

79-3003 Beginning with school year 2023-24, each school district, in consultation with the State Department of Education, shall include financial literacy instruction, as appropriate, in the instructional program of its elementary and middle schools and require each student attending a public school to complete at least one five-credit high school course in personal finance or financial literacy prior to graduation.

Sec. 9. Original sections 79-729, 79-760.01, and 79-3003, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2021, are repealed.