

## CHAPTER 229

AN ACT concerning computer science education.

**BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:
  - a. Computer science is transforming industry, creating new fields of commerce, driving innovation in all fields of science, and bolstering productivity in established economic sectors.
  - b. The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that by the year 2020, there will be 4.2 million jobs in computing and information technology in the United States, putting these fields among the fastest growing occupational fields.
  - c. The College Board reports that of the 3.4 million Advanced Placement exams given in 2011, only about 20,000 of those were in computer science.
  - d. In the 2012-2013 school year, only 9 states allowed computer science courses to count toward secondary school core graduation requirements, chilling student interest in computer science courses.
  - e. Many states' middle and high school curriculums are almost exclusively focused on skill-based aspects of computing and have few standards on the conceptual aspects of computer science that lay the foundation for innovation and deeper study in the field.
  - f. Computer science education has been encumbered by confusion with technology education and the use of technology in education, which are related but distinct concepts.
  - g. Exposing middle and high school students to computer science education in New Jersey would give them a deeper knowledge of the fundamentals of computing, yielding critical thinking skills that will serve them throughout their lives in numerous fields.
  - h. It is appropriate at this time that the Department of Education review curriculum standards to better educate young people in this important subject area and thus better prepare our students for effective citizenship in the 21 century.
2. The Department of Education shall undertake a review of the Core Curriculum Content Standards to ensure that they incorporate modern computer science standards where appropriate. The department shall report any findings and recommendations to the Governor by December 31, 2015.
3. As used in this act, "computer science" means the study of computers and algorithmic processes and includes the study of computing principles, computer hardware and software design, computer applications, and the impact of computers on society.
4. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 19, 2016.