



OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Robert Moore

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: H.B. 170 of the 132nd G.A.

Status: As Passed by the Senate

Sponsor: Reps. Carfagna and Duffey

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Subject: Instruction in computer science, auxiliary services funds

State & Local Fiscal Highlights

- The bill requires the State Board of Education to adopt academic content standards and a model curriculum for grades K-12 in computer science. The administrative responsibilities of the State Board and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) will increase to develop and communicate the new computer science academic content standards and curriculum to school districts. Public districts and schools are not required to use these new standards and model curriculum.
- The bill adds computer science instruction as an option to several prescribed subjects in the state minimum high school curriculum. Districts and schools choosing to add computer science instruction may incur increased costs to update curricula, lesson plans, instructional materials, and technology for the unit of computer science education that may be included in the required four units of math education, the three units of science education (other than any life sciences or biology courses), or the five units of electives. These costs will likely vary depending on how school districts implement this option. Such districts and schools may also incur costs to reimburse staff members for the cost of professional development for teachers.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

Computer science academic content standards and curriculum

Academic content standards

The bill requires the State Board of Education, by December 31, 2018, to adopt academic content standards and a model curriculum for instruction in computer science in grades kindergarten through 12, including standards for introductory and advanced computer science courses in high school. The bill further directs the State Board, when developing these standards and curriculum, to consider recommendations from computer science education stakeholder groups, including teachers and representatives from higher education, industry, and Ohio and national computer science organizations. The administrative responsibilities of the State Board and the Ohio

Department of Education (ODE) will increase to develop and communicate the new computer science standards and curriculum to school districts. In both FY 2018 and FY 2019, about \$3.8 million in GRF funding is specifically appropriated to ODE in line item 200427, Academic Standards, for developing, revising, and communicating academic content standards and curriculum models to school districts, and for developing professional development programs and other tools on content standards and model curricula. Under the bill, public districts and schools may use all or any part of the standards and model curriculum, but are not required to do so.

High school curriculum

Current law prescribes 20 units of study in specified subject areas as the minimum high school curriculum for a diploma from a public school or a chartered nonpublic school. The bill adds computer science instruction as an option to several of the prescribed subjects in that curriculum. Specifically, for districts and schools choosing to offer courses in computer science, the bill permits a student to apply instruction in advanced computer science as one of the four required units of math, and to apply instruction in computer science as one of the three required units of science or one of the five required units of electives. If a student substitutes more than one computer science course, the bill requires that the course must be (1) sequential and progressively more difficult or (2) cover different subject areas in computer science. The bill also prohibits students from substituting computer science for any life sciences or biology course and requires schools to communicate to students substituting advanced computer science for Algebra II that Algebra II may be required for college admission at some institutions. Also, the parent, guardian, or legal custodian of a student choosing to substitute advanced computer science for Algebra II must sign and submit to the school a document containing a statement acknowledging that not taking Algebra II may have an adverse effect on college admission decisions. Districts and schools choosing to add instruction in computer science may incur increased costs to update curricula, lesson plans, instructional materials, and technology. Such costs will likely vary depending on how school districts implement this option.

Qualification to teach computer science

State Board rules require that a public school teacher generally must be licensed in the subject area the teacher is teaching. The rules also permit a licensed teacher to obtain a supplemental teaching license, which allows an educator to temporarily teach in an additional area while they work toward obtaining a standard license in that area. In line with these rules, the bill generally requires school districts choosing to offer computer science education under the bill to employ an individual who is licensed in computer science or holds a license endorsement in computer technology to teach in the computer science field and permits licensed individuals to qualify for a supplemental teaching license to teach computer science, according to rules adopted by the State Board. Under the bill, these rules must require the individual to pass a content examination in computer science before obtaining the supplemental license. The rules

must also permit an individual, after two or more years teaching under the supplemental license, to advance to a standard educator license in computer science by completing a pedagogy course, unless the individual has already completed such a course for the applicable grade levels.

In addition, in order for a student to apply one unit of instruction in computer science to satisfy one unit of math or one unit of science under the bill, the bill requires the teacher of the course to be appropriately licensed as described above and complete a professional development program determined appropriate by the district board prior to teaching the course. Finally, if an individual is teaching Advanced Placement (AP) computer science, the bill requires completion of a professional development program endorsed or provided by the College Board at any time during the calendar year.

Most school district collective bargaining agreements have a tuition reimbursement clause that specifies the amount the district will reimburse staff members for coursework related to professional development. If the professional development involves university coursework, the district may have an individual limit (e.g., a certain dollar amount or a specified number of credit hours) or a district-wide dollar limit for all staff. If the professional development does not involve university coursework, the district typically pays the full cost of the program. Thus, districts choosing to offer computer science education under the bill may incur additional costs to reimburse staff members for the cost of professional development.

Computer science and technology funds

The bill authorizes a school district, educational service center, community school, or STEM school to establish a computer science and technology fund to be used for various purposes to support computer science programs and professional development related to such programs, including (1) the delivery of online assessments, including instruction and data that support online assessment readiness, (2) wireless connectivity in school buildings, (3) network services, such as improving bandwidth capacity and filtering devices, and (4) the purchase of computers, tablets, and equipment. The fund may consist of district or school moneys designated for such purposes, private moneys donated to the district or school, or any future state moneys allocated to the district or school for such purposes. Districts and schools may use moneys in the fund to leverage or match private donations made to the district or school for those purposes. There appears to be no fiscal effect as a result of this provision, as districts and schools may already support these activities and receive donations under their current powers.

Chartered nonpublic schools – auxiliary services funds

The bill may increase ODE's workload associated with administering auxiliary services funds, which are used by chartered nonpublic schools or by school districts on their behalf to purchase secular textbooks, materials, and equipment as well as tutoring or other special services. Auxiliary services funds are distributed on a per-nonpublic pupil basis from GRF line item 200511, Auxiliary Services. In FY 2018, the per-pupil

amount is currently estimated at \$872. Under current law enacted in H.B. 49 of the 132nd General Assembly, ODE must pay auxiliary services funds directly to each chartered nonpublic school that is not religiously affiliated while maintaining a pass-through funding process for students in religiously affiliated chartered nonpublic schools in which the funds are paid to the school district in which the school is located and the purchases are made by the district for those schools.

Under the bill, to receive funding directly, a chartered nonpublic school that is not religiously affiliated must elect, by April 1 of each odd-numbered year, to do so for the biennium that begins in that odd-numbered year. A school makes the election by both notifying ODE and the district in which it is located and submitting an affidavit certifying that the school is not religiously affiliated. Chartered nonpublic schools that received auxiliary services funds between July 1, 2017 and the effective date of the bill may return to receiving auxiliary services funds from the school district in which the school is located by notifying ODE and the district of its desire to do so within 30 days after the effective date of the bill. Chartered nonpublic schools that elect to receive auxiliary services funds directly may reverse their election under a specified process.

The bill also changes the administration of the auxiliary services funds a chartered nonpublic school receives directly from the state. For instance, the bill requires a school to use any interest earned on those funds for the same purposes and in the same manner as the original payments. However, any unused auxiliary services funds, including interest earned on that money, at the end of a biennium must be returned to ODE within 30 days after the end of the biennium. If a school determines that returning the funds to ODE leaves the school with insufficient money to pay all valid auxiliary services expenses incurred during the biennium, the school may apply to ODE for a refund of the returned money. ODE will determine whether a refund is appropriate. The bill also requires ODE to adopt a rule specifying the party that owns any property purchased with auxiliary services funding and procedures for disposal of the property by the designated owner.