

February 21, 2022



Dear Members of the Minnesota House of Representatives Education Policy Committee::

We write in support of HF 3243 that calls for a foundational blueprint for a statewide computer science program for elementary and secondary schools.

We steer CSforAll-MN, a state advocacy group for computer science education that seeks to increase the number and diversity of K-16 students with access to computer science. We are part of a national alliance called Expanding Computing Education Pathways Alliance (ECEP), which includes 23 U.S. states and territories to support state-level changes to broaden participation in computing. Since 2018 we have worked collaboratively around the state, including with Code.org, the Computer Science Teachers Association Minnesota chapter, the Minnesota Department of Education, and the Minnesota Technology Association (MNTech), to spark an awareness of the need for our state's students to have access to and participate in computer science.

There are many reasons why all K-12 students should learn computer science: equity and social justice; competencies and literacies; citizenship and civic engagement; technological, social and scientific innovation; economic and workforce development; school reform and improvement; and personal agency, joy, fulfillment (Vogel et al., 2017). Our state needs to pass a number of policies to address CS education gaps in our state, and having a foundational blueprint is critical to laying out the strategy to do so.

Did you know that Minnesota ranks last in the country in the number of high schools that teach computer science? According to the most recent 2021 State of Computer Science Education report, 47% of public high schools in the U.S. teach CS. In Minnesota, only 24% of our high schools teach computer science. There is currently no reliable data available for activities happening at the elementary and middle school levels.

CSforAll-MN supports this bill — it is critical for the education of Minnesota's students and the future of our state's economy. Thank you for your ongoing efforts on behalf of all MN students!

Respectfully,

The CSforAll-MN Steering Committee

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