



March 9, 2022

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

On behalf of our broad coalition of education, business and industry groups, we are writing in strong support of HF 3243 (Davnie), a bill that will empower Minnesota to develop the blueprint necessary to expand access to computer science in K-12 schools and help prepare Minnesota students for the 21st century workforce.

Minnesota currently ranks last in computer science education. Only 24% of Minnesota high schools offer a foundational computer science course. Contrast that with Arkansas and South Carolina, both over 90% and where computer science is a high school graduation requirement for all students. Computing is a foundational skill for K-12 students. It develops students' computational and critical thinking skills and teaches them how to create — not just use — new technologies. These skills will benefit students in every subject, in the classroom and beyond.

And computer science is driving job growth and innovation in Minnesota and throughout the U.S. Computer science skills are in high demand in the job market; in fact, more than half of projected jobs in STEM fields are in computing occupations, and computer science is one of the most desirable degrees for new college graduates. According to the Conference Board, there are more than 14,500 open computing jobs in Minnesota, with an average salary of over \$92,000, over two times the average salary in the state. At the same time, only 1,806 exams were taken in AP Computer Science by high school students in Minnesota in 2020.

HF 3243 will help create the blueprint that can address a number of policy and implementation issues to integrate computer science as a new subject into the existing system. The blueprint provides coherence to the overall effort of implementing K-12 computer science, offers the opportunity to involve several stakeholders, and creates a vision that can be publicly communicated.

Thank you for your efforts to provide students in Minnesota the education they need to be successful during and beyond their K-12 education. Our shared goal should be that every K–12 student has access to high-quality computer science.

Thank you for your consideration, and please consider our organizations as a resource as you deliberate this bill.

Sincerely,

Code.org, College Board, CSforAll-MN, CSTA Minnesota, Google, Minnesota Technology Association, National Center for CS Education (at the College of St. Scholastica) and Project Lead the Way