AMENDED

March 21, 2017

**H. 3427**

Introduced by Reps. Lucas, Loftis, Allison, Stringer, Erickson, Simrill, G.R. Smith, McKnight, Robinson‑Simpson, Martin, West, Long, Burns, Atwater, McCoy, Hardee, Hewitt, Fry, Jordan, Murphy, Spires, G.M. Smith, McCravy, Clemmons, McEachern, Taylor, Arrington, Johnson, Huggins, Hamilton, Elliott, Funderburk, Bales, Bannister, Blackwell, Bradley, Chumley, Clary, Clyburn, Cobb‑Hunter, Cole, Crawford, Delleney, Dillard, Douglas, Forrest, Forrester, Hayes, Henderson, Herbkersman, Hiott, Lowe, D.C. Moss, B. Newton, W. Newton, Pope, Quinn, S. Rivers, Ryhal, Sandifer, Tallon, Thayer, Whitmire, Anderson, Anthony, Gagnon, Parks, Pitts, Ott, King, Henegan, Willis, Yow, Williams, Jefferson, Duckworth, White, Finlay, Bernstein, J.E. Smith, Bedingfield, Felder, Bennett, Davis, Mitchell, Rutherford, Neal, Stavrinakis, Govan, Putnam, Collins, Brown, Weeks, Hosey, Bowers, V.S. Moss, Howard, Kirby, Sottile, Whipper, Norrell, Ballentine, Toole, Thigpen, Cogswell, Daning, Crosby, Knight, Wheeler and Hixon

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Read the first time January 11, 2017.

**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, TO ENACT THE “SOUTH CAROLINA COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION INITIATIVE” BY ADDING SECTION 59‑29‑250 SO AS TO PROVIDE THE PURPOSE OF THE SECTION, TO PROVIDE THAT, BEGINNING WITH THE 2018‑2019 SCHOOL YEAR, PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC CHARTER HIGH SCHOOLS SHALL OFFER CERTAIN COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSEWORK, TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT AND ENSURE IMPLEMENTATION OF GRADE‑APPROPRIATE STANDARDS FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE AND COMPUTATIONAL THINKING FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE, TO PROVIDE RELATED REQUIREMENTS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TO PROVIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR TO ESTABLISH CRITERIA AND PROCESSES FOR DESIGNATING SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATH COMMUNITIES AND REGIONS, AND TO PROVIDE RELATED REQUIREMENTS OF SUCH COMMUNITIES AND REGIONS.

Amend Title To Conform

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. This act must be known and may be cited as the “South Carolina Computer Science Education Initiative”.

SECTION 2. Article 1, Chapter 29, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑29‑250. (A) The purpose of this section is to expand access to computer science learning experiences to all students because computer science supports literacy, math, problem‑solving, and technological skills, and advances productivity in every discipline, industry, and profession.

(B) Before August 1, 2018, the State Board of Education shall adopt grade appropriate standards for computer science and computational thinking and computer coding for grades 9‑12. Experts and officials from higher education, business and industry must be included in the development of the standards.

(C) Not later than the 2019‑2020 School Year, each public high school and public charter high school must offer at least one computer science course which:

(1) is rigorous and standards‑based;

(2) meets or exceeds the curriculum standards and requirements established by the State Board of Education;

(3) meets the needs of diverse students who will pursue postsecondary education or who will enter careers in computing and information technology upon graduation; and

(4) is made available in a traditional classroom setting, in a dual enrollment course, blended learning environment, online‑based, or other technology‑based format tailored to meet the needs of each participating student.

(D) Beginning in the 2018‑2019 School Year, the Department of Education shall:

(1) employ one full‑time employee whose sole responsibility is to coordinate and lead the South Carolina Computer Science Education Initiative, provided the employee must have prior work experience in the computer science industry;

(2) support K‑12 academic and computer science teachers in designing interdisciplinary, project‑based instruction and assignments that engage students in applying literacy, math, and computational thinking skills to solve problems;

(3) design career pathways that connect students to postsecondary programs, degrees, or postsecondary credentials in high‑demand career fields including, but not limited to, cybersecurity, information systems, informatics, computer engineering, and software development as identified by the Department of Commerce;

(4) offer professional development and teacher endorsements to new teachers that will teach computer science who complete a two to four‑week, full‑day summer institute;

(5) the State Board of Education shall promulgate regulations to create certification pathways for computer science teachers and the Department of Education also shall develop criteria for postsecondary computer science teacher preparation programs;

(6) provide information and materials which identify emerging career opportunities in computer science and related fields to parents, students, teachers, and guidance counselors; and

(7) assist districts in developing partnerships with business, industry, higher education, and communities to provide afterschool and extracurricular activities that engage students in computer science.

(E) Recognizing that successful implementation of computer science education requires effective instruction, the Department of Education shall develop guidelines for use by school districts and schools outlining the educational and degree requirements for appropriate computer science teachers. The Commission on Higher Education shall determine what, if any, financial incentives are needed by institutions of higher education to design programs to prepare and credential computer science teachers.

(F)(1) To improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education in the State, the Office of the Governor, beginning in fiscal year 2018‑2019, shall establish criteria and a process for designating a STEM community or STEM region. Consistent with federal law, STEM includes computer science.

(2) The criteria for designation as a STEM community or STEM region must include a requirement that educators, administrators, business leaders, students, parents, governmental officials, and business and industry groups within a community or region work to:

(a) create awareness;

(b) promote partnerships with education and industry;

(c) develop and execute action plans for improving STEM education and training;

(d) identify and acquire the needed resources to improve STEM education and training; and

(e) identify and accumulate STEM data within the community or region including, but not limited to:

(i) kindergarten through twelfth grade academic achievement;

(ii) the number of STEM‑related degree holders in the local workforce;

(iii) the number of STEM‑related degrees conferred; and

(iv) the number of STEM‑related certifications or credentials obtained.

(3) The region or community also shall develop a plan to recognize and promote success in both student and teacher accomplishments in the STEM area within the community or region.”

SECTION 3. If any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this act is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such holding shall not affect the constitutionality or validity of the remaining portions of this act, the General Assembly hereby declaring that it would have passed this act, and each and every section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, and word thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more other sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words hereof may be declared to be unconstitutional, invalid, or otherwise ineffective.

SECTION 4. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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