HOUSE BILL REPORT
SB 5657

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to computer science instruction in state long-term juvenile institutions.

Brief Description: Concerning computer science instruction in state long-term juvenile institutions.

Sponsors: Senators Wellman, Hunt, Gildon, Hasegawa, Mullet, Nguyen, Nobles, Rivers and Wilson, C..

Brief History:
Committee Activity:
Education: 2/17/22, 2/24/22 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill
(As Amended By Committee)

- Requires, subject to available and sufficient state funding, and subject to staffing availability, school districts operating an institutional education program in state long-term juvenile institutions to provide an opportunity to access an elective computer science course.

- Directs school districts operating an institutional education program in state long-term juvenile institutions to annually report information about computer science courses provided in these institutions to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Ybarra, Ranking Minority Member; Berg, Bergquist, Callan, McEntire, Ortiz-Self, Rude, Steele and Stonier.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194)

Background:

Institutional Education Program.
The state's statutory program of basic education requires that instruction and associated state funding be provided for school-aged students in institutional education facilities. The institutional education facilities are managed and operated by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), the Department of Social and Health Services, the Department of Corrections, counties, and cities, but the basic education services are generally provided by school districts.

Institutional education facilities include three state long-term juvenile institutions maintained by the DCYF for the diagnosis, confinement, and rehabilitation of juveniles committed by the courts. To the extent it is practical and judged appropriate, a school district must provide to youth in state long-term juvenile institutions the same courses of instruction and school related student activities that are provided to other students.

State funding for institutional education programs is generated using a formula that includes factors such as student enrollment, variable staffing ratios, a 220-day school year, and the materials, supplies, and operating costs to support the education programs.

Computer Science.
Learning Standards. State learning standards adopted by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) describe what students need to know and be able to do at each grade level. The state learning standards for computer science address the following concepts: computing systems, networks and the Internet, data and analytics, algorithms, and programming, and impacts of computing.

Courses. Computer science concepts may be taught in stand-alone courses or integrated into education technology, math, science, or English language arts courses. High schools typically offer computer science courses as electives; although, core math or science credit may be available through Advanced Placement (AP) computer science courses and some career and technical education courses related to computer science.

Beginning with the 2022-23 school year, each school district that operates a high school must, at a minimum, provide an opportunity for high school students to access an elective computer science course that is aligned to the state learning standards for computer science or mathematics. These school districts are encouraged to consider community-based or public-private partnerships in establishing and administering the elective computer science course.

Graduation Requirements. Among other requirements to qualify for graduation from a public high school, students must complete 24 credits, including three in mathematics, three in science, and four electives. Under certain conditions, a student may substitute one computer science course aligned to state computer science learning standards as an alternative to a third year mathematics or third year science course. To qualify for graduation, students must also complete at least one of eight graduation pathway options. One of these options allows students to meet pathway options for mathematics by earning a grade of C+ or better in computer science or computer science principles.

Reporting. Annually by June 30, school districts must submit to the OSPI, and the OSPI must post on its website, a report for the preceding academic year that includes:
1. the total number of computer science courses offered in each school and whether these courses are AP classes;
2. the number and percentage of students who enrolled in a computer science program, disaggregated by gender, race and ethnicity, special education status, English learner status, eligibility for the free and reduced-price lunch program, and grade level; and
3. the number of computer science instructors at each school, disaggregated by certification, if applicable, gender, and highest academic degree.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Subject to the availability and sufficiency of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose in addition to the amounts appropriated through the institutional education funding formulas specified in the operating budget, and subject to staffing availability, each school district operating an institutional education program for youth in state long-term juvenile institutions must provide an opportunity to access an elective computer science course that is aligned to state learning standards for computer science or mathematics. If, due to facility or technology security limitations, a school district operating an institutional education program cannot provide a computer science course that is fully aligned with all state computer science learning standards, the school district must adapt the course curriculum and instructional activities to align with as many state computer science learning standards as possible.

Each school district operating an institutional education program for youth in state long-term juvenile institutions must annually report the following information to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction:
1. data indicating the number of students who enrolled in a computer science course in the prior school year, disaggregated by gender, race, ethnicity, and age;
2. a brief description of each computer science course and whether the course is fully aligned to state computer science learning standards; and
3. a brief description of any facility or technology security limitations that prevent the school district from offering a course fully aligned with state computer science

learning standards, and the actions the district is taking to address those limitations.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The amended bill makes the requirement for school districts operating an institutional education program for youth in state long-term juvenile institutions to provide an opportunity to access an elective computer science course subject to the availability and sufficiency of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose in addition to the amounts appropriated through the institutional education funding formulas specified in the omnibus appropriations act, and subject to staffing availability, rather than only subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose. It also narrows the requirement that the elective computer science course be provided in accordance with other statutory computer science provisions to provisions that: (a) specify that the elective computer science course must be aligned to the state learning standards for computer science or mathematics; and (b) encourage consideration of community-based or public-private partnerships in establishing and administering the elective computer science course.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill will give youth in the state long-term juvenile institutions an opportunity to take a computer science course. Many people do not see themselves in technology careers like computer science until they try it. Computer science should be available in every school, so that all students attain digital literacy. Students in institutional education programs may have opportunity to learn about carpentry or the automotive trades, but do not have the opportunity to learn computer science.

The world is changing and the economy is becoming more digital. Technology and computer science are being incorporated into agriculture, automobiles, and other sectors.

Learning to code gives people the opportunity to have a successful career. When incarcerated individuals know that there is a job available to them when they are released gives them hope and may stop them from reoffending, giving up on their mental health care, or using drugs. Providing an opportunity to have a good career is antirecidivism strategy.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Lisa Wellman, prime sponsor; and Cher Scarlett.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.