SENATE BILL REPORT
SB 5327

As of January 28, 2025

Title: An act relating to learning standards and graduation requirements.

Brief Description: Concerning learning standards and graduation requirements.

Sponsors: Senators Wellman, Nobles and Wilson, C..

Brief History:
　　Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/28/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the State Board of Education to develop recommendations to ensure students have adequate opportunity to demonstrate competency of the high school computer science state learning standards, and consider how to incorporate the competencies into the framework of graduation requirements.

- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to review and update the state computer science learning standards, and to inform that review with best practices from other states and consultation with experienced nonprofits.

- Directs OSPI to integrate the third goal of basic education into the state learning standards to the maximum extent possible.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Elena Becker (786-7493)

Background: <u>Learning Standards.</u> The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is required to develop state learning standards based on the statutory goals of basic education. The third goal of basic education directs that students shall "think analytically,

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logically, and creatively, and … integrate technology literacy and fluency as well as different experiences and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems."

Pursuant to this goal, in 2015, the Legislature directed OSPI to adopt computer science learning standards. The resulting learning standards include five core concepts:
- computing systems;
- networks and the Internet;
- data and analysis;
- algorithms and programming; and
- impacts of computing

Graduation Requirements. The State Board of Education (SBE) is statutorily directed to establish, enforce, and periodically reevaluate minimum high school graduation requirements. To graduate from high school, Washington students must complete 24 credits in various subject areas, meet the requirements of at least one graduation pathway, complete a High School and Beyond Plan, and satisfy any local requirements.

Summary of Bill: Review of Graduation Requirements. The SBE is directed to review graduation requirements and recommend adjustments to ensure students have adequate opportunity to demonstrate competency of the high school computer science learning standards. When developing the recommendations, the state board must consult with specific stakeholders and consider both credit and competency-based options. The SBE must provide a report with these recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature by December 31, 2026.

Review of Learning Standards. OSPI is directed to initiate a review and update of the computer science learning standards, and to inform that review with practices from other states and consultation with experienced nonprofits. When developing the standards for high school students, OSPI must identify any standards considered to be foundational for graduation purposes. During this review, OSPI is directed to integrate the third goal of basic education into the state learning standards to the maximum extent possible.

The SBE is directed to collect information from school districts, including:
- current courses and learning opportunities offered in computer science;
- how the district currently assesses or plans to assess competency of the computer science state learning standards; and
- what the district may need to implement the SBE's recommended adjustments to graduation requirements.

The SBE is directed to submit a summary of this information to the Legislature by December 31, 2025, including recommendations on actions the Legislature could take to assist school districts in meeting their identified needs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2025.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Every person doesn't need to be a programmer, but everyone does need to have digital fluency. This bill makes sure those necessary skills are embedded throughout our graduation requirement framework.

Making computer science a graduation requirement is the only policy recommendation from Code.org that Washington hasn't yet adopted. The Legislature has made it easier over the years for teachers to get the computer science endorsement, but we still don't have enough teachers with the endorsement. We need to keep scaling up computer science teachers, too.

The timeline in this bill aligns with the State Board of Education's Future Ready Graduation Requirement review. The data collection requirements will ensure high quality implementation.

CON: Washington students already struggle to meet existing standards and when additional graduation requirements are imposed students give up elective coursework in the arts and extracurriculars like sports.

Computer science uses a very different form of math than the calculus-based math that students currently learn. Learning to use technology comes from exposure to different operating systems, learning to identify online misinformation, and developing computer hardware repair skills, not from coding.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Lisa Wellman, Prime Sponsor; Lawrence Tanimoto, CSTA Washington; Chad Magendanz; Yazmin Carretero, State Board of Education.

CON: Steven Bock; Joy Gjersvold, Conservative Ladies of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.