

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 264

BY REPRESENTATIVE HUGHES

CURRICULA: Adds computer science as a high school graduation requirement and requires teacher preparation programs to include computer science education

1 AN ACT

2

3 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:183.3(B)(2)(b), (c), and (f), 5025(2)(b), (3)(c),(5), and (8),
4 and 5026(A)(2)(c), (3)(b), and (5) and to enact R.S. 17:7.2(A)(9), 280.3,
5 3996(B)(82), 5025(9), 5025.7, and 5026(F), relative to curricula; to revise the
6 courses required in the high school career major program; to add Computer Science
7 as a required high school course; to require teacher education programs include
8 computer science education; to provide for alignment with the core curriculum
9 required for qualification for TOPS awards; to provide relative to the powers and
10 duties of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education; to provide for
11 applicability; to provide for effectiveness; and to provide for related matters.

12 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

13 Section 1. This Act may be known and shall be cited as the "Computer Science
14 Education Advancement Act".

15 Section 2. R.S. 17:183.3(B)(2)(b), (c), and (f), 5025(2)(b), (3)(c),(5), and (8), and
16 5026(A)(2)(c), (3)(b), and (5) are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 17:3996(B)(82),
17 5025(9), 5025.7, and 5026(F) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

18 §183.3. Career major; description; curriculum and graduation requirements

19 * * *

1 B.

2 * * *

3 (2) The course requirements for the career major shall consist of the
4 following:

5 * * *

6 (b) At least four mathematics credits, including Algebra I, Algebra I Part
7 One and Algebra I Part Two, or an applied or hybrid Algebra course; Geometry or
8 an applied Geometry course; Financial Literacy as provided for in R.S. 17:270; and
9 one additional mathematics course from among the following: Math Essentials,
10 Business Math, Algebra II, Algebra III, Advanced Math - Functions and Statistics,
11 Advanced Math - Pre-Calculus, Pre-Calculus, Computer Science, or comparable
12 Louisiana Technical College courses offered by Jump Start regional teams as
13 approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Integrated
14 Mathematics I, II, and III may be substituted for Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra
15 II and shall equal three mathematics credits.

16 (c) At least two science credits, including one credit of Biology and one
17 additional course from among the following: Chemistry I, Earth Science,
18 Environmental Science, Physical Science, Agriscience I and Agriscience II (one
19 credit combined), Physics, Computer Science, or AP or IB Science courses.

20 * * *

21 (f) At least nine credits in Jump Start course sequences, workplace
22 experiences, and credentials. A student shall complete a regionally designed series
23 of Career and Technical Education Jump Start coursework and workplace-based
24 learning experiences leading to a statewide or regional Jump Start credential. This
25 shall include courses and workplace experiences specific to the credential, courses
26 related to foundational career skills requirements in Jump Start, and other courses,
27 including career electives, that the Jump Start regional team determines are
28 appropriate for the career major. One of these credits shall be Computer Science,

1 unless Computer Science is taken to fulfill one credit as provided in Subparagraph
2 (b) or (c) of this Paragraph.

3 * * *

4 §3996. Charter schools; exemptions; requirements

5 * * *

6 B. Notwithstanding any state law, rule, or regulation to the contrary and
7 except as may be otherwise specifically provided for in an approved charter, a
8 charter school established and operated in accordance with the provisions of this
9 Chapter and its approved charter and the school's officers and employees shall be
10 exempt from all statutory mandates or other statutory requirements that are
11 applicable to public schools and to public school officers and employees except for
12 the following laws otherwise applicable to public schools with the same grades:

13 * * *

14 (82) Computer Science; required instruction, R.S. 17:280.3.

15 * * *

16 §5025. High school core curriculum requirements; Opportunity, Performance,
17 Honors Awards

18 To be eligible for an Opportunity, Performance, or Honors Award pursuant
19 to this Chapter, a student shall have successfully completed a core curriculum which
20 consists of twenty units of high school course work as follows:

21 * * *

22 (2) Mathematics - Four Units

23 * * *

24 (b) One unit chosen from the following: Algebra III; Advanced Math
25 Functions and Statistics, Advanced Math-Pre-Calculus, Pre-Calculus, or Math
26 Methods I IB (Mathematical Studies SL); Calculus, AP Calculus AB, or Math
27 Methods II IB (Mathematics SL); AP Calculus BC; Probability and Statistics or AP
28 Statistics; IB Further Mathematics HL; ~~IB Mathematics HL.~~ IB Mathematics HL;
29 Computer Science.

1 (3) Science - Four Units

2 * * *

3 (c) Two units chosen from the following: Earth Science; Environmental
4 Science; Physical Science; Agriscience I and Agriscience II (one unit combined);
5 Chemistry II, AP Chemistry, or IB Chemistry II; AP Environmental Science, or IB
6 Environmental Systems; Physics I, AP Physics I, AP Physics B, or IB Physics I; AP
7 Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, AP Physics C: Mechanics, IB Physics II, or
8 AP Physics II; Biology II, AP Biology, or ~~IB Biology II~~; IB Biology II; Computer
9 Science.

10 * * *

11 (5) Foreign Language or Computer Science - two units

12 ~~(a) Foreign Language - the two units shall be in the same language, which~~
13 ~~may include~~ chosen from the following: AP Chinese Language and Culture, AP
14 French Language and Culture, AP German Language and Culture, AP Italian
15 Language and Culture, AP Japanese Language and Culture, AP Latin, AP Spanish
16 Language and Culture, French IV IB, French V IB, Spanish IV IB, ~~and Spanish V~~
17 ~~IB~~; Spanish V IB, and Computer Science.

18 ~~(b) Computer Science - the two units shall be in principles, coding, and~~
19 ~~programming, which may include the following: Computer Science I, Computer~~
20 ~~Science II, Fundamentals of HTML, CSS, and JavaScript (Level 1), Advanced~~
21 ~~JavaScript, Functional Programming, and Web Development (Level 2), AP~~
22 ~~Computer Science A, AP Computer Science Principles, Computer Science Year One~~
23 ~~IB, and Computer Science Year Two IB.~~

24 * * *

25 (8) Computer Science - one unit. This requirement shall be satisfied as
26 provided in Paragraph (2), (3), or (5) of this Section.

27 (9) For the purposes of this Section, any core curriculum course that is taken
28 by a student who has been identified as gifted pursuant to State Board of Elementary
29 and Secondary Education policy and that is taken in fulfillment of the student's

1 Individualized Education Program shall be considered a gifted course and shall fulfill
2 the core curriculum requirement in its given subject area.

3 * * *

4 §5025.7. High school core curriculum requirements; Opportunity, Performance, and
5 Honors Awards; students graduating in the 2027-2028 school year
6 To be eligible for an Opportunity, Performance, or Honors Award pursuant
7 to this Chapter, a student shall have successfully completed a core curriculum which
8 consists of twenty units of high school course work as follows:

9 (1) English - Four Units

10 (a) English I.

11 (b) English II.

12 (c) One unit chosen from the following: English III, AP English Language
13 Arts and Composition, or English III IB (Language A or Literature and
14 Performance).

15 (d) One unit chosen from the following: English IV, AP English Literature
16 and Composition, or English IV IB (Language A or Literature and Performance).

17 (2) Mathematics - Four Units

18 (a) Algebra I (one unit), Geometry (one unit), and Algebra II (one unit).
19 Integrated Mathematics I, Integrated Mathematics II, and Integrated Mathematics III
20 may be substituted for the Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II sequence.

21 (b) One unit chosen from the following: Algebra III; Advanced Math
22 Functions and Statistics, Advanced Math-Pre-Calculus, Pre-Calculus, or Math
23 Methods I IB (Mathematical Studies SL); Calculus, AP Calculus AB, or Math
24 Methods II IB (Mathematics SL); AP Calculus BC; Probability and Statistics or AP
25 Statistics; IB Further Mathematics HL; IB Mathematics HL.

26 (3) Science - Four Units

27 (a) Biology I.

28 (b) Chemistry I.

1 (c) Two units chosen from the following: Earth Science; Environmental
2 Science; Physical Science; Agriscience I and Agriscience II (one unit combined);
3 Chemistry II, AP Chemistry, or IB Chemistry II; AP Environmental Science, or IB
4 Environmental Systems; Physics I, AP Physics I, AP Physics B, or IB Physics I; AP
5 Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, AP Physics C: Mechanics, IB Physics II, or
6 AP Physics II; Biology II, AP Biology, or IB Biology II.

7 (4) Social Studies - Four Units

8 (a) One unit chosen from the following: U.S. History, AP US History, or IB
9 US History.

10 (b) One unit chosen from the following: Civics, Government, AP US
11 Government and Politics: Comparative, AP US Government and Politics: United
12 States.

13 (c) Two units chosen from the following: Western Civilization, European
14 History, or AP European History; World Geography, AP Human Geography, or IB
15 Geography; World History, AP World History, or World History IB; History of
16 Religion; IB Economics, Economics, AP Macroeconomics, or AP Microeconomics;
17 African American History.

18 (5) Foreign Language or Computer Science - Two Units

19 (a) Foreign Language - the two units shall be in the same language, which
20 may include the following: AP Chinese Language and Culture, AP French Language
21 and Culture, AP German Language and Culture, AP Italian Language and Culture,
22 AP Japanese Language and Culture, AP Latin, AP Spanish Language and Culture,
23 French IV IB, French V IB, Spanish IV IB, and Spanish V IB.

24 (b) Computer Science - the two units shall be in principles, coding, and
25 programming, which may include the following: Computer Science I; Computer
26 Science II; Fundamentals of HTML, CSS, and JavaScript (Level 1); Advanced
27 JavaScript, Functional Programming, and Web Development (Level 2); AP
28 Computer Science A; AP Computer Science Principles; Computer Science Year One
29 IB; and Computer Science Year Two IB.

1 (6) Art - one unit chosen from the following: Performance course in Music,
2 Dance, or Theatre; Fine Arts Survey; Art I, II, III, and IV; Talented Art I, II, III, and
3 IV; Talented Music I, II, III, and IV; Talented Theater Arts I, II, III, and IV; Speech
4 III and Speech IV (one unit combined); AP Art History; AP Studio Art: 2-D Design;
5 AP Studio Art: 3-D Design; AP Studio Art: Drawing; AP Music Theory; Film
6 Study I IB; Film Study II IB; Music I IB; Music II IB; Art Design III IB; Art Design
7 IV IB; Theatre I IB; or Drafting.

8 (7) Financial Literacy - one unit.

9 (8) For the purposes of this Section, any core curriculum course that is taken
10 by a student who has been identified as gifted pursuant to State Board of Elementary
11 and Secondary Education policy and that is taken in fulfillment of the student's
12 Individualized Education Program shall be considered a gifted course and shall fulfill
13 the core curriculum requirement in its given subject area.

14 §5026. High school core curriculum requirements; TOPS-Tech

15 A. To be eligible for a TOPS-Tech Award pursuant to this Chapter, the
16 student shall have successfully completed the core curriculum requirements of R.S.
17 17:5025 or the core curriculum defined as follows:

18 * * *

19 (2) Math - Four Units

20 * * *

21 (c) One or more units from the following: Algebra II, Math Essentials,
22 Business Math, Algebra III, Advanced Math - Functions and Statistics, Advanced
23 Math - Pre-Calculus, Pre-Calculus, Computer Science, or comparable Louisiana
24 Technical College courses offered by Jump Start regional teams as approved by the
25 State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Integrated Mathematics I, II,
26 and III may be substituted for Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II, and shall equal
27 three mathematics credits.

28 (3) Science - Two Units

29 * * *

1 (b) One unit from the following: Chemistry I, Earth Science, Environmental
2 Science, Agriscience I and Agriscience II (both for one unit), Physical Science,
3 Physics, Computer Science, or AP or IB science courses.

4 * * *

5 (5) At least nine credits in Jump Start course sequences, workplace
6 experiences, and credentials. A student shall complete a regionally designed series
7 of Career and Technical Education Jump Start coursework and workplace-based
8 learning experiences leading to a statewide or regional Jump Start credential. This
9 shall include courses and workplace experiences specific to the credential, courses
10 related to foundational career skills requirements in Jump Start, and other courses,
11 including career electives, that the Jump Start regional team determines are
12 appropriate for the career major. One of these credits shall be Computer Science,
13 unless Computer Science is taken to fulfill one credit as provided in Paragraph (2)
14 or (3) of this Subsection.

15 * * *

16 F. For a student graduating during the 2027-2028 school year to be eligible
17 for a TOPS-Tech Award pursuant to this Chapter, the student shall have successfully
18 completed the core curriculum requirements of R.S. 17:5025 or the core curriculum
19 defined as follows:

20 (1) English - Four Units

21 (a) English I.

22 (b) English II.

23 (c) Two or more units from the following: English III, English IV, AP or IB
24 English courses, Business English, Technical Writing, or comparable Louisiana
25 Technical College courses offered by Jump Start regional teams as approved by the
26 State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

27 (2) Math - Four Units

1 (a) Algebra I, Algebra I Part One and Algebra I Part Two, or an applied or
2 hybrid algebra course (one unit), and Geometry or an applied Geometry course (one
3 unit).

4 (b) Financial Literacy (one unit).

5 (c) One or more units from the following: Algebra II, Math Essentials,
6 Business Math, Algebra III, Advanced Math - Functions and Statistics, Advanced
7 Math - Pre-Calculus, Pre-Calculus, or comparable Louisiana Technical College
8 courses offered by Jump Start regional teams as approved by the State Board of
9 Elementary and Secondary Education. Integrated Mathematics I, II, and III may be
10 substituted for Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II, and shall equal three
11 mathematics credits.

12 (3) Science - Two Units

13 (a) Biology.

14 (b) One unit from the following: Chemistry I, Earth Science, Environmental
15 Science, Agriscience I and Agriscience II (both for one unit), Physical Science,
16 Physics, or AP or IB science courses.

17 (4) Social Studies - Two Units

18 (a) One unit from the following: U.S. History, AP U.S. History, or IB U.S.
19 History.

20 (b) One unit from the following: Civics, Government, AP U.S. Government
21 and Politics: Comparative, or AP U.S. Government and Politics: United States.

22 (5) At least nine credits in Jump Start course sequences, workplace
23 experiences, and credentials. A student shall complete a regionally designed series
24 of Career and Technical Education Jump Start coursework and workplace-based
25 learning experiences leading to a statewide or regional Jump Start credential. This
26 shall include courses and workplace experiences specific to the credential, courses
27 related to foundational career skills requirements in Jump Start, and other courses,
28 including career electives, that the Jump Start regional team determines are
29 appropriate for the career major.

1 Section 3. R.S. 17:7.2(A)(9) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

2 §7.2. Approved teacher education programs

3 A. In carrying out its responsibility to prescribe the qualifications and
4 provide for the certification of teachers under authority of R.S. 17:7(6), the State
5 Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, subject to the constitutional power
6 and authority of the Board of Regents, the Board of Supervisors for the University
7 of Louisiana System, the Board of Supervisors of Louisiana State University and
8 Agricultural and Mechanical College, and the Board of Supervisors of Southern
9 University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, shall establish qualifications
10 and requirements for the approval of teacher education programs from which
11 graduates may be certified. The qualifications and requirements established by the
12 State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for an approved teacher
13 education program shall include but not be limited to the following:

14 * * *

15 (9) That the program include instruction on teaching students computer
16 science, which may be incorporated into an existing course of study.

17 * * *

18 Section 4. R.S. 17:280.3 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

19 §280.3. Computer science; required instruction

20 A.(1) Each public high school shall provide computer science instruction to
21 its students. Each public high school student shall successfully complete a one credit
22 Computer Science course as a requirement for high school graduation.

23 (2) Each public school with students in grades six through eight shall provide
24 instruction in exploratory computer science to its students.

25 (3) Each public elementary school shall provide instruction in the basics of
26 computer science and computational thinking.

27 B. The state Department of Education shall approve the computer science
28 courses required by this Section.

1 C. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall
2 promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Section.

3 Section 5. By June 30, 2024, the state Department of Education shall publish on its
4 website and enact a plan to ensure sufficient computer science teacher capacity to carry out
5 the provisions of this Act. The plan shall:

6 (1) Be initially based on the recommendations of the Louisiana Computer Science
7 Education Advisory Commission.

8 (2) Provide options, including but not limited to online options, for alternative
9 endorsement pathways for certificated teachers and teacher preparation program students to
10 demonstrate competency that may result in a certification to teach computer science.

11 (3) Outline scholarship or state-funded training opportunities for teachers to gain
12 certification or endorsement in computer science.

13 (4) Be updated by the state department as necessary.

14 Section 6.(A) The provisions of R.S. 17:183.3(B)(2)(b), (c), and (f) as amended by
15 Section 2 of this Act shall apply to students who enter the ninth grade during the 2025-2026
16 school year and thereafter.

17 (B) R.S. 17:3996(B)(82) as enacted by Section 2 of this Act shall be implemented
18 beginning with the 2026-2027 school year.

19 (C) R.S. 17:7.2(A)(9) as enacted by Section 3 of this Act shall be implemented
20 beginning on June 30, 2026.

21 (D) The provisions of R.S. 17:280.3(A) as enacted by Section 4 of this Act shall be
22 implemented as follows:

23 (1) R.S. 17:280.3(A)(1) and (2) shall be initially implemented prior to the 2026-2027
24 school year and shall apply to students who enter the ninth grade during the 2026-2027
25 school year and thereafter.

26 (2) R.S. 17:280.3(A)(3) shall be initially implemented prior to the 2027-2028 school
27 year.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 264 Engrossed

2024 Regular Session

Hughes

Abstract: Requires students to successfully complete a one unit Computer Science course to grade from high school and to qualify for TOPS.

Proposed law requires completion of a one unit Computer Science course for:

- (1) Graduation from a public high school.
- (2) A high school career diploma. Present law requires a student to complete one mathematics elective course, one science elective course, and nine credits in Jump Start courses to be eligible for a career diploma. Proposed law requires that one of these credits be Computer Science.
- (3) A TOPS award. Present law requires a student to complete one mathematics elective course, two science elective courses, and two units in either Foreign Language or Computer Science to be eligible for a TOPS award.

Proposed law requires that one of these credits be Computer Science for students graduating through the 2027-2028 school year.

Proposed law further changes requirement from two units in either Foreign Language or Computer Science to two units in either subject *or* one unit of each subject for students graduating in the 2028-2029 school year and thereafter.

- (4) A TOPS-Tech award. Present law requires a student to complete one mathematics elective course, one science elective course, and nine credits in Jump Start courses to be eligible for a TOPS-Tech award. Proposed law requires that one of these credits be Computer Science.

Present law and proposed law, relative to students graduating through the 2027-2028 school year, requires successful completion of either.

Proposed law requires the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education to promulgate rules to implement offering Computer Science courses.

Proposed law requires teacher preparation programs to include instruction on teaching students computer science and authorizes such instruction to be incorporated into an existing course of study.

Implementation required in part beginning with the 2026-2027 school year; in part beginning with the 2027-2028 school year.

(Amends R.S. 17:183.3(B)(2)(b), (c), and (f), 5025(2)(b), (3)(c), (5), and (8), and 5026(A)(2)(c), (3)(b), and (5); Adds R.S. 17:7.2(A)(9), 280.3, 3996(B)(82), 5025(9), 5025.7, and 5026(F))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the original bill:

1. Authorize teacher prep instruction on teaching students computer science to be incorporated into an existing course of study.
2. Regarding qualifying for a TOPS Award, add an option for one unit of a foreign language and one unit of computer science, rather than requiring two units of either one.
3. Delay implementation of requirement that public high schools provide computer science instruction until the 2026-2027 school year.
4. Require the state Dept. of Education to approve the computer science courses offered to public school students.