

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 8

Short Title: Computer Sci. Grad. Requirement. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Paré, Torbett, Blackwell, and Hardister (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Education - K-12, if favorable, State Government, if favorable, Rules, Calendar,
and Operations of the House

January 26, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO ALLOW COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSES TO FULFILL ONE SCIENCE
3 ELECTIVE CREDIT AND TO REQUIRE COMPLETION OF COMPUTER SCIENCE
4 COURSES FOR GRADUATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 **SECTION 1.(a)** G.S. 115C-12(9d) reads as rewritten:

7 "(9d) Power to Develop Exit Standards and Graduation Requirements. –

8 ...

9 c. The Board shall require that one full credit of a computer science
10 course, as defined in G.S. 115C-81.90 and approved by a local board
11 of education, shall be used to fulfill one full academic credit in science.
12 However, the computer science course cannot be used to fulfill the
13 requirement for biology or a physical science course. The Board shall
14 set criteria to determine if courses completed in middle school qualify
15 for this credit."

16 **SECTION 1.(b)** The requirements of G.S. 115C-12(9d), as amended by this section,
17 shall apply beginning with students entering grade nine in the 2024-2025 school year.

18 **SECTION 2.(a)** Part 1 of Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is
19 amended by adding a new section to read:

20 "**§ 115C-81.90. Computer science.**

21 (a) The standard course of study shall include the requirement that students complete a
22 high school level computer science course. For purposes of this section, the following definitions
23 apply:

24 (1) Computer science. – The study of computers and algorithmic processes,
25 including their principles, hardware and software designs, implementation,
26 and impact on society, as defined by the North Carolina Computer Science
27 Standards.

28 (2) Computer science course. – A course set in a middle school or high school
29 that teaches computer science as a standalone subject for one semester or
30 full-year course. The content of computer science courses shall focus on
31 teaching students how to create new technologies as well as the use of existing
32 technologies.

33 (3) Exploratory computer science course. – A course set in a middle school that
34 serves as an introduction to computer science and surveys the field of



- 1 computer science. An exploratory computer science course shall not satisfy
2 the computer science graduation requirement.
- 3 (b) Middle schools shall offer an exploratory computer science course.
- 4 (c) The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Public
5 Instruction, shall adopt a list of approved courses that fulfill the exploratory computer science
6 requirement by July 1, 2025. The list of approved courses shall be made publicly available on
7 the Department's website. The courses shall meet or exceed the standards requirements
8 established by the State Board of Education.
- 9 (d) Students shall complete at least one high school level computer science course in
10 order to receive a diploma of graduation from high school.
- 11 (e) The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Public
12 Instruction, shall adopt a list of approved courses that fulfill the computer science requirement
13 by July 1, 2023. The list of approved courses shall be made publicly available on the Department's
14 website. The courses may be taken in middle or high school grades but shall meet or exceed the
15 high school standards requirements established by the State Board of Education.
- 16 (f) Computer science courses and exploratory computer science courses offered by
17 public school units shall be conducted in an in-person setting. A virtual or distance option may
18 only be offered when an in-person setting is not feasible.
- 19 (g) Beginning July 1, 2024, a public school unit may submit a signed notification to the
20 Department certifying that a computer science course was not available for pupils to fulfill the
21 requirements of this section and is waived for those pupils.
- 22 (1) This subsection expires July 1, 2026.
- 23 (2) The Department shall maintain a list of the public school units that submitted
24 signed notification waivers.
- 25 (h) Beginning July 1, 2023, if a student enrolls in a North Carolina public school after
26 completion of grade 11, the student shall be exempt from the computer science graduation
27 requirement.
- 28 (i) Computer science courses may fulfill other graduation requirements adopted by the
29 State Board in accordance with G.S. 115C-12(9d)c."
- 30 **SECTION 2.(b)** Subsection (b) of G.S. 115C-81.90, as enacted by this section,
31 becomes effective July 1, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year. The
32 remainder of this section is effective when it becomes law and applies to students entering grade
33 nine in the 2024-2025 school year.
- 34 **SECTION 3.** Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes
35 law.