

Computer Science Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2021, [Public Act 101-0654](#) was signed into law and included sweeping changes to education. One of the changes includes a focus on computer science and computer literacy. This bill requires the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to develop or adopt computer science learning standards, provides a definition of computer science, and establishes parameters for districts for providing computer literacy and computer science education to students.

Computer Science Components

Below is a listing of the new additions to the Illinois School Code regarding computer science. Please refer to the legislation for specific timelines and components of each element.

- 1. Computer Science Standards** On or before December 1, 2021, the State Board of Education shall develop or adopt learning standards for computer science as well as review and revise course titles related to computer science ([105 ILCS 5/2-3.185](#))
- 2. Elementary Computer Literacy** All school districts shall ensure that students receive developmentally appropriate opportunities to gain computer literacy skills beginning in elementary school. ([105 ILCS 5/10-20.73 new](#))
- 3. High School Computer Literacy** Beginning with the 2022-2023, students entering the 9th grade and each school year after, one year of a course that includes intensive instruction in computer literacy, which may be English, social studies, or any other subject and which may be counted toward the fulfillment of other graduation requirements. ([105 ILCS 5/27-22](#))
- 4. Definition of Computer Science** Sec. 27-23.15 establishes a definition of computer science:
 - a. "In this Section, 'computer science' means the study of computers and algorithms, including their principles, their hardware and software designs, their implementation, and their impact on society. 'Computer science' does not include the study of everyday uses of computers and computer applications, such as keyboarding or accessing the Internet."
([105 ILCS 5/27-23.15](#))
- 5. High School Computer Science Course Offering** Sec. 27-23.15 also establishes that, beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, all high schools must provide students with the opportunity to take a computer science course aligned to the new computer science standards. ([105 ILCS 5/27-23.15](#))