

**SUBJECT:** Establishing a grant for certifying teachers in computer science education

**COMMITTEE:** Public Education — committee substitute recommended

**VOTE:** 13 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Allison, Ashby, Bell, Dutton, M. González, K. King, Meyer, Sanford, Talarico, VanDeaver

0 nays

**WITNESSES:** For — Sandra Geisbush, CS4Texas and UT STEM Center; Ryan Torbey; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Andrea Chevalier, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Chandra Villanueva, Center for Public Policy Priorities; Caroline Joiner, Code.org; Sarah Matz, CompTIA; Priscilla Camacho, Dallas Regional Chamber; Laurie Filipelli, League of Women Voters of Texas; Judea Goins-Andrews, Project Lead The Way; David Edmonson, TechNet; Molly Weiner, Texas Aspires Foundation; Mike Meroney, Texas Association of Manufacturers; Jennifer Bergland, Texas Computer Education Association; Suzi Kennon, Texas Parent Teachers Association; Lisa Dawn-Fisher, Texas State Teachers Association; Drew Scheberle, Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce; Idona Griffith; Vernagene Mott)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Hannah LaPorte, IDEA Public Schools; Pablo Barrera, Texas Charter Schools Association; Eric Marin, Blair Claussen, Chris Jones, Texas Education Agency; Heather Smith)

**BACKGROUND:** Concerned parties have suggested that there is a shortage of teachers qualified to teach computer science at primary schools.

**DIGEST:** CSHB 3069 would require the commissioner of education to establish a professional development grant program to encourage teachers to obtain computer science certification and continue professional development in coding, computational thinking, and computer science education.

The commissioner would use appropriated funds to provide grants to institutions that offered: professional development for elementary, middle, and junior high school teachers to ensure teachers maintained a working knowledge of current computer industry standard tools and resources and offered training for computer science certification in compliance with requirements set by the State Board of Education.

Institutions of higher education, regional education service centers, school districts or partnerships of districts, and certain nonprofits approved by the commissioner would be eligible for grants. Providers would have to meet eligibility standards established by the commissioner.

An institution that received a grant would be required to:

- provide training or professional development and establish professional development hubs in each education service center region;
- serve high-need campuses;
- have established partnerships with institutions of higher education faculty with expertise in computing and computer science education; and
- develop partnerships with computer industry professionals.

The total value of grants awarded in a biennium could not exceed \$4 million.

The commissioner of education would be required to establish the grant program by December 31, 2019, and could adopt necessary rules to implement the bill.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2019.

**NOTES:**

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have a negative impact of \$1.8 million to general revenue related funds through fiscal

2020-21.