

## ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 1251 (Luz Rivas)

As Amended April 18, 2023

Majority vote

**SUMMARY**

Requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), by July 1, 2024, to convene a workgroup on credentialing for computer science education to make recommendations on strategies to meet workforce demands associated with expansion access to computer science instruction, and to report the findings and recommendations of the workgroup to the Legislature.

**Major Provisions**

- 1) Requires the CTC, on or before July 1, 2024, to convene a workgroup on credentialing for instruction in computer science to do all of the following:
  - a) Determine which single subject teaching credentials or designated subjects career technical education teaching credentials, if any, should also authorize teaching computer science;
  - b) Determine whether a single subject teaching credential in computer science should be established; and
  - c) Make recommendations on strategies to meet the workforce demands associated with expanding access to computer science instruction to all pupils.
- 2) Requires that at least one-half of the workgroup be composed of current classroom teachers with experience teaching computer science at the secondary level, and to also include representatives from:
  - a) School administration;
  - b) Institutions of higher education involved in the preparation of teachers to teach computer science; and
  - c) Content experts in the field of computer science education.
- 3) Requires the CTC, on or before July 1, 2025, to provide a report of the workgroup's findings and recommendations to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature.
- 4) States that this section remains in effect only until January 1, 2028, and as of that date is repealed.
- 5) Makes the implementation of these requirements contingent upon an appropriation for its purposes in the annual Budget Act or another statute.

**COMMENTS**

*Who is authorized to teach computer science in California?* California has three single subject teaching credentials (mathematics, business, and industrial and technology education) which authorize teachers to provide instruction in computer science. The CTC also issues

supplementary authorizations in computer science which authorize a teacher holding another credential to teach computer science.

To obtain a supplementary authorization in computer science, teachers must complete 20 semester units or 10 upper division semester units, or the equivalent quarter units, of non-remedial course work in computer science. They may also qualify by holding a collegiate major from a regionally accredited college or university in a subject directly related to the subject to be listed on the credential.

*California Computer Science Strategic Implementation Plan recommends that the state increase the number of teachers authorized to teach computer science.* The California Computer Science Strategic Implementation Plan, adopted by the State Board of Education in 2019, includes the following vision statement: "California's vision is to ensure that all students develop foundational knowledge and skills in computer science to prepare them for college, careers, and civic engagement."

This plan notes that "to grow K–12 computer science education in California, the state will need to increase the number of teachers qualified to teach computer science. Supporting more educators to teach computer science would involve a multi-pronged approach that attends to credentialing, new teacher recruitment, professional learning for teachers, administrators, and counselors regarding the California computer science standards, and institutional and financial support." The plan outlines several strategies for improving the availability of computer science instruction, including establishing a grant program to support teachers to complete coursework for the computer science supplementary authorization, with additional incentives for teachers who work in low-income and underserved school districts and rural and urban school districts.

### **According to the Author**

"California is in the process of potentially losing its position as a global leader in technology if we don't provide our students with computer science instructors to teach them coding, programming, and keyboarding skills. As a result, it will jeopardize thousands of jobs if we continue failing to properly prepare our students for a digital future. AB 1251 will give teachers with a science credential the option to teach computer science in schools."

### **Arguments in Support**

TechNet writes "California ranks 10th lowest in the nation for high school computer science access. Only 40% of its high schools offering computer science courses and just 5% of students take a high school computer science course. California also has the highest number of open computing jobs in the nation: in 2022, California averaged 76,446 open computing jobs each month with an average salary of \$115,754. AB 1251 will enable certain teachers with a single subject credential to increase student access to a computer science education and expand opportunities for a successful career pathway in the field."

### **Arguments in Opposition**

The California Teachers Association writes, "A teaching credential in California gives the public the assurance that a person holding a teaching credential has received the training pertinent to that charge. This proposal confers an assumption of subject matter knowledge and a skill set for instruction based on holding prior authorization in STEM related subjects."

**FISCAL COMMENTS**

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, one-time General Fund cost to CTC of about \$50,000 to convene the workgroup and report the workgroup's findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

**VOTES****ASM EDUCATION: 6-0-1**

**YES:** Muratsuchi, Juan Carrillo, Hoover, Lee, McCarty, Quirk-Silva

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Megan Dahle

**ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-1**

**YES:** Holden, Megan Dahle, Bryan, Calderon, Wendy Carrillo, Dixon, Mike Fong, Hart, Lowenthal, Mathis, Papan, Pellerin, Sanchez, Weber, Ortega

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Robert Rivas

**UPDATED**

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CONSULTANT: Tanya Lieberman / ED. / (916) 319-2087

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