



Office of the Provost

May 16, 2023

Dear Members of the Ohio Senate Finance Committee:

Thank you for your commitment to workforce development, job creation and higher education and for your continued efforts ensure Ohioans have the skills necessary to pursue in-demand jobs. I would also like to extend my appreciation for your work on the current budget bill, specifically the portions of the bill which impact higher education.

I would like to take this opportunity to address the issue of expanding computer science access in our state and the need to restore in the Senate version of the budget the items outlined in the Governor's proposed budget related to computer science education in Ohio.

Cleveland State University has been one of the leaders of a comprehensive program on computer science education, in partnership with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, and with significant funding from the National Science Foundation and the Cleveland Foundation since 2013. In addition, academic leaders at CSU have had the privilege of participating in the development of the Computer Science State Plan for Ohio as a member of the State Committee, made possible by H.B. 110, and helped develop policies that put Ohio on track to becoming a leader in computer science education. The policies recommended by the State Committee were contained in the Governor's proposed budget.

On behalf of Cleveland State University, I would like to urge you to support amendment SC1252 to fund computer science at \$12 million per fiscal year. This funding will help to support the Computer Science Promise, the Teach CS Grants, and Ohio CS Council, which will provide out of school and summer opportunities for all K-12 students in Ohio.

Our work at CSU has focused on training teachers to teach the Advanced Placement Computer Science Principles course, with eventual focus on training teachers in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD), where there were almost no computer science courses being taught in 2017. With continued funding from the NSF and Cleveland Foundation, I'm pleased to inform you that computer science is now being taught in approximately half of the high schools in Cleveland and in several of the K-8 schools. And, expansion and professional development for teachers in planned for next year.

We have now turned our focus to providing direct opportunities for students and during the summer of 2022, we had over 100 students from CMSD participate in summer programs related to computer science, ranging from internships focused on quantum computing with major employers such as the Cleveland Clinic, to basic computer science and web design with Tech Corps and KeyBank. Support for the Ohio CS Council and the Office of Computer Science

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Education and other computer science aspects contained in the Executive Budget, will facilitate these types of opportunities for all students in Ohio, particularly those students in urban and rural areas, where these opportunities are especially lacking.

Students learning computer science skills are crucial to filling Ohio's workforce needs of the future. The surest way to provide broad opportunities to all students is by building robust programs to prepare teachers well. I urge you to provide the necessary funding for all students in Ohio to be exposed to computer science educational opportunities and careers, which will help our students succeed and help our state fill in-demand jobs into the next generation. I thank you for your consideration and would be pleased to serve as a resource as you continue your important work relating to funding computer science education in Ohio.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nigamanth Sridhar", written in a cursive style.

Nigamanth Sridhar, Ph.D.
Provost and Senior VP for Academic Affairs
Cleveland State University