



May 5, 2023

Chairman Cirino and members of the Workforce and Higher Education Committee,

I am writing to urge you to fully fund computer science education and expand access to education broadly in Ohio. Microsoft is encouraged by the commitment and leadership shown to expand access to computer science in Ohio. Thanks to your hard work, the technology-based workforce in the Buckeye State has made significant progress. However, we believe there is still more work to be done, particularly in the computing and technology fields.

Ohio is currently ranked 34th in the percentage of high schools offering computer science courses and 33rd in completion of computer science college degrees. Only 48% of public schools in Ohio offer a computer science course, leaving urban and rural school districts underserved in this area. The policy proposals in Governor DeWine's budget aim to address this issue by bringing computer science education to underserved, low-income, and districts that do not have existing computer science programs. Doing so is essential to growing the tech workforce in the state of Ohio.

The Teach Computer Science Grants, which provide professional development and upskilling opportunities for teachers, are one of the key proposals that would have a direct and immediate impact on teachers and students in Ohio. We support the current proposal of a total of \$8 million over two years to support grants to teachers and school districts. This funding will immediately get more teachers in the field teaching computer science and will prioritize school districts that are underserved or do not have a computer science course.

With your support of the proposed funding for the Teach Computer Science Grants, students across Ohio will have more access to computer sciences courses and instruction, allowing students of all backgrounds to have equal access and opportunity to learn skills that will lead to high paying, rewarding careers.

Microsoft is also contributing to the growth of computer science education in Ohio through the Microsoft Technology Education and Learning Support program (TEALS). Since 2017, Microsoft TEALS has been present in the state of Ohio, serving 39 schools and supporting 126 classes. TEALS partners with high schools to build teacher capacity and student interest in computer science with the goal of enabling schools to sustain equitable CS programs on their own. Over 50 teachers in Ohio have received training and support from Microsoft TEALS volunteers, allowing them to externally pursue their supplemental teaching licensure in computer science.

Microsoft is encouraged by Ohio's commitment to a technology ready workforce. We are available to further discuss best in class policies – of which Ohio can be on the forefront. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions at [ArianaCaplan@Microsoft.com](mailto:ArianaCaplan@Microsoft.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ariana Caplan Marra". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Ariana Caplan Marra  
State Government Affairs