

# Ohio Computer Science Advocacy Coalition

House Education Committee  
February 26, 2025  
Ohio Computer Science Advocacy Coalition  
Interested Party Testimony on HB 96

Chair Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Education Committee:

Thank you for accepting testimony on HB 96 from the Ohio Computer Science Advocacy Coalition, a diverse group of organizations representing industry, K-12 education, higher education, and the nonprofit sector that recognizes the value of computer science both for Ohio students and the state's economy.

**In addition to offering support for the Governor's proposed renewal of the Teach CS program under ODHE for \$8 million, the Ohio Computer Science Advocacy Coalition supports the following amendments to the state budget:**

- 1. Enacting a computer science graduation requirement**
- 2. Funding a CS District Playbook at \$500,000**
- 3. Extending the computer science teacher licensure waiver through 2032**

Computer science has become an essential part of a well-rounded, modern education. In our digital world, understanding concepts like the Internet, algorithms, and debugging is just as important as learning civics or algebra. The prevalence of AI makes computer science even more critical, as computer science concepts are key to AI literacy. Investing in K-12 computer science will help fill in-demand jobs, and help Ohio position itself as a leader on critical technology education.

Even beyond serving a workforce need, computer science offers students concrete benefits. Computer science teaches students computational thinking, problem-solving, and data analysis, skills that are not only relevant for every career, but that show students how to think creatively about any problem. Regardless of the career path a student chooses, computer science can help students thrive in professional life.

Despite the urgent need for digital skills, Ohio has **one of the lowest percentages of high schools offering computer science in the region**. At 61% of high schools offering, its rate is lower than West Virginia (78%), Kentucky (76%), Indiana (91%), and Pennsylvania (75%). Further, the latest data available shows only [3.6% of Ohio students](#) are actually enrolling in computer science in any given year, and access to these courses is not equal among all student groups and schools. While 98% of large high schools offer computer science, only 47% of small schools do. Rural schools are also less likely to offer computer science (56%) than urban (62%) and suburban schools (70%).

In past budgets, the state has made strong, incremental progress in supporting computer science. Now Ohio must continue to build on this momentum in order to close remaining gaps in access and ensure all students can take advantage of the opportunities computer science offers. **The Coalition respectfully requests that the House add following budget amendments to HB 96:**

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## 1. Require All Students Take a Unit of Computer Science To Graduate by 2032

The Coalition requests the Legislature enact Recommendation #3 from the [Report of the State Committee on Computer Science](#). Until Ohio ensures every student in the state learns computer science, workforce needs in Ohio's most in-demand industries will continue to go unmet, and access to 21st century technology education across the state will continue to be uneven. The timeline recommended for implementing the requirement provides ample space for planning and preparation by school districts. Without a computer science graduation requirement, Ohio risks losing ground to surrounding states in the race for an ever-diminishing talent pipeline. ([Link to language](#))

## 2. Fund a "CS District Playbook" at \$500,000 in FY 2026

The Coalition requests the Legislature enact Recommendation #8 from the [Report of the State Committee on Computer Science](#) by funding the creation of comprehensive resources for school districts on implementing computer science. Select school districts representing different populations will receive funding to collaboratively create best practices around progression of courses, staffing and scheduling, curriculum and technical asset management, professional learning and industry-aligned academic pathways. ODEW may competitively select a vendor to create a budget for the project, oversee coordination of participating districts, and ensure the playbook is publicly available by June 30, 2027. Funding the creation of a "Playbook" of CS resources for school districts will provide much-needed direct support to districts who are still struggling to offer this newer subject. The Playbook will ultimately help guide the scaling and implementation of strong computer science programs statewide.

## 3. Extend the Computer Science Teacher Licensure Waiver through 2032

Historically, in each budget, the Legislature has renewed the waiver allowing a teacher who completes professional development for a particular computer science class to teach that class without a full license. The Coalition is requesting that the Legislature again renew this waiver, this time through 2032 so that schools have additional certainty about this alternative endorsement option.

Thank you for your consideration of the Ohio Computer Science Advocacy Coalition's recommendations.

