



**House Committee on Education
Testimony in Support of House Bill 2466
Submitted by J. Kent Eckles**

Tuesday, February 1st, 2022

Mister Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Kent Eckles on behalf of the Kansas Chamber. We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 2466, which seeks to advance computer science education and is an issue of vital importance to the business community.

Computer science and IT is relevant to all employers, no matter what sector of industry. By planting the seeds for computer literacy and computational thinking at an early age, this investment will nurture a pipeline of talent and a wealth of opportunity for individuals and businesses across the state.

A few facts and figures about computer science education in Kansas according to Code.org:

27% of public high schools in Kansas teach a foundational computer science course. Across the nation, 47% of high schools teach a foundational computer science course. Some states like Arkansas at 89%, are much higher.

In June of 2021, there were over 2,700 open computing jobs with an average salary of \$76K. In 2020, fewer than 300 exams were taken in AP computer science by Kansas high school students. Only 35 schools in the state offered an AP computer science course.

According to a representative survey from Google/Gallup, school administrators in Kansas support expanding computer science education opportunities; 62% of principals surveyed think computer science is just as or more important than required core classes.

Kansas has K-12 computer science standards, a dedicated state position at the department, and allows school districts to set policy to allow a computer science course to count towards a graduation credit. Other policies that have a relationship to expanding computer science opportunities are:

1. A state plan to implement computer science education - 18 states have one (computer science is in 57% of schools in states that have a state plan, vs 44% in states without)
2. State funding dedicated to expanding computer science education, including teacher professional development -- 29 states do this (computer science is 52% of schools in states that fund it, vs 40% in states that don't).
3. A requirement for schools to offer at least one course - 23 states have put these into effect, rolling out over 3-5 years (computer science is currently in 55% of schools in states with this requirement, vs 43% in states that don't).

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2466.