October 26, 2016

(X) Action Required
       Due: November 18, 2016
(X) Informational

MEMORANDUM NO. 057-16M LEARNING AND TEACHING

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents
            School District Superintendents
            School Principals
            School Public Relations Professionals

FROM: Randy I. Dorn, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Public Comment for Computer Science Education K–12 Learning Standards

CONTACT: Shannon L. Thissen, Program Specialist, Computer Science
            360-725-6092, shannon.thissen@k12.wa.us

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform teachers, administrators, students, and other stakeholders of the opportunity to provide feedback on the drafts of the 2016 Computer Science K–12 Learning Standards.

Under current Washington law (RCW 28A.655.070), the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has the responsibility to develop and maintain Washington's academic learning standards consistent with the goals outlined in the Basic Education Act, RCW 28A.150.210. This includes periodic review and possible revision of the standards.

Prior to adopting state learning standards in any subject area, OSPI's process includes several key components that include reviewing and vetting the draft standards with key statewide stakeholder groups, conducting comparisons of previous state learning standards with the revised standards, conducting a bias and sensitivity process to gather recommendations for implementing the standards in a culturally sensitive and bias-free manner, and providing an opportunity for the public to provide input on the proposed drafts. These steps are conducted prior to adoption to allow OSPI and other statewide partners involved with developing transition and implementation plans and resources to gather specific recommendations on critical issues related to implementing the new standards.

Computer Science Learning Standards are authorized by RCW 28A.660.045 and 28A.660.050. Beginning in the 2015–16 school year, OSPI engaged educators and stakeholders in a process to review and adopt computer science learning standards developed by a nationally recognized computer science education organization, as per

statute. With input and guidance from stakeholders and teachers in the Computer Science field, OSPI identified the Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA) Learning Standards as the recommended standards to align with state law and teacher practice; these standards are currently under revision. OSPI will convene committees to review drafts as they are made available. As written currently, these standards have four basic purposes:
1. Introduce the fundamental concepts of computer science to all students, beginning at the elementary school level.
2. Present computer science at the secondary school level in a way that can fulfill a computer science, math, or science graduation credit.
3. Encourage schools to offer additional secondary-level computer science courses that will allow interested students to study facets of computer science in more depth and prepare them for entry into the work force or college.
4. Increase the availability of rigorous computer science for all students, especially those who are members of underrepresented groups.

Why Provide Feedback?
The Computer Science K–12 Learning Standards are foundational to the delivery of effective instruction. Computer science education is vital to the health and academic success of students throughout the state. The feedback from this survey will help us to strengthen the content and supporting resources related to the Computer Science K–12 Learning Standards.

No individual responses from the survey will be reported. The data gathered will be used to revise or provide clarification on the standards and grade-level outcomes. This effort is designed to better meet the instructional needs of teachers and learning needs of students.

Survey Availability
The public comment survey will be available through November 18. OSPI invites any interested parties to provide feedback at http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/3113306/CS-Education-Standards-Public.

If you have questions about this memorandum, please contact Shannon Thissen, Computer Science Program Specialist, at 360-725-6092. For additional information on the revision process, please visit the Computer Science website at http://www.k12.wa.us/Computer Science/LearningStandards.aspx.

K–12 EDUCATION   LEARNING AND TEACHING

Gil Mendoza, Ed.D.   Kathe Taylor, Ph.D.
Deputy Superintendent   Assistant Superintendent

RD:st