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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Gov. Little declares Dec. 6-12 CS Ed Week**

BOISE, Idaho (Dec. 6, 2021) — Idaho Gov. Brad Little has proclaimed Dec. 6-12 Computer Science Education Week in Idaho and urges the state’s citizens to participate in the Hour of Code.

“Job opportunities in computer science will continue to grow, and introducing our students to computer science early on will expose them to real-world experiences and strengthen critical thinking skills that will serve them throughout their lives,” Gov. Little said at an event at Syringa Middle School in Caldwell where he coded with some students.

Similar events are happening throughout the state. For example, in Potlatch elementary students will code with engineers from Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories.

The Idaho STEM Action Center has created a certificate of achievement for educators to recognize students who demonstrate exemplary dedication to computer science learning by completing 10 hours of coding activities during CS Ed Week.

The STEM Action Center also invites students in grades 4-12 throughout Idaho to sign up for a Bilingual Hour of Code Dec. 8. Participants will create their own websites during this special workshop, which is offered by Skill Struck in Spanish and English, and they’ll code alongside Micron employees. The webinar is an after-school event and participating with adult family members is encouraged. Parents are encouraged to register for any students who are under 13 years of age.

Visit <http://stem.idaho.gov/computerscience/csedweek> to download the certificate of achievement template and to register for the Bilingual Hour of Code event.

Blocksmith, a Boise-based 3D game design software company, creates coding-themed games each year for Hour of Code. Judges liked this year’s Blocksmith submission so much they are featuring it among the top-six recommended games. More than 50,000 students and educators have already played Blocksmith’s Bot is sus?! — a coding game with a friendly nod to the popular party game Among Us — in the three weeks leading up to Hour of Code.

A student enrolled in Boise State University's games, interactive media, and mobile technology program working for the company part time created the game using the Blocksmith system. Visit <https://hourofcode.com/blocksmithbot> to play the game online.

The STEM Action Center encourages participants to use such hashtags as #CodingIdaho, #IdahoSTEMAC, #CSEdWeek, and #HourofCode when posting about Computer Science Education Week and Hour of Code to social media.

Hour of Code is a global movement Code.org founded in 2013 that has reached more than 1.3 billion learners ages 4 to 104 in more than 180 countries. Hour of Code events coincide with international Computer Science Education Week and offer a one-hour introduction to computer science and the basics of coding via fun tutorials in over 45 languages.

CS Ed Week is an annual call to action to inspire K-12 students to learn computer science and celebrate contributions of students, teachers, and partners in the field. It is playing host to more than 84,000 events worldwide this year, including more than 24,000 in the U.S.

The event is held annually in recognition of the birthday of computing pioneer Admiral Grace Murray Hopper (Dec. 9, 1906). Among her many important contributions is Common Business-Oriented Language. COBOL was the first high-level programming language developed with someone other than a mathematician in mind and earned Hopper the title "Queen of Code."

Idaho STEM Action Center executive director Dr. Kaitlin Maguire said organizations statewide are hosting more than 100 Hour of Code events this year — some virtual, some in-person — that are important to Idaho's continued prosperity.

"Educators are increasingly referring to coding as 'the fourth R' — reading, writing, arithmetic, and algorithms — because computers and technology play such an essential role in everyday life," she said. "Computer science is one of the most in-demand college degrees, computing is used in a variety of careers, and strong demand is expected for computer occupations, such as IT security and software development — especially here in Idaho, where our tech sector is one of the fastest growing in the nation."

According to the Idaho Dept. of Labor, 19 of Idaho's top-20 hot jobs through 2026 require STEM skills — with applications software developers and information security analysts among the top-five in-demand fields. It predicts demand for applications software developers and information security analysts will grow by 30 percent annually between 2016-2026.

Code.org reports the average salary for a computing occupation in Idaho is \$71,947, which is significantly higher than the state's overall average salary of \$46,804.

Dr. Maguire said Idaho has made tremendous progress in expanding computer science instruction in the last five years, from creating a state plan to filling instructional gaps in computer science offerings to establishing K-12 standards and requiring that all high schools offer a computer science course.

She said the STEM Action Center continues to work to improve CS education and develop a computer-literate workforce in Idaho, recently partnering with Amazon Web Services to train, upskill, and certify 2,000 Idahoans in cloud computing during the next two years.

Visit [STEM.idaho.gov/computerscience](https://stem.idaho.gov/computerscience), [hourofcode.com](https://hourofcode.com), [code.org](https://code.org), and [csedweek.org](https://csedweek.org) for more information, and visit [csunplugged.org](https://csunplugged.org) for activities that don't involve screen time.

***About the Idaho STEM Action Center***

The Idaho STEM Action Center was created in 2015 because Idaho citizens are not entering the STEM pipeline fast enough to meet current and future Idaho workforce needs. Its goals are to increase equitable access to STEM opportunities, align education and workforce needs, and amplify awareness of STEM throughout Idaho. The organization is working with industry, government, educators, and students to develop new resources and support high-quality professional-development opportunities to foster a STEM-educated workforce that ensures Idaho's continued economic prosperity.

Visit [STEM.idaho.gov](https://stem.idaho.gov) for more information, and visit [https://STEM.idaho.gov/support-us/foundation](https://stem.idaho.gov/support-us/foundation) to make a tax-deductible donation to the Idaho STEM Action Center Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, to enhance the investment the state has made in Idaho's STEM community. Contributions provide greater access to STEM camps for children, student competitions, and many other life-shaping programs.

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**Text of Idaho 2021 CS Ed Week Proclamation**

WHEREAS, computer science literacy is foundational for the digital age and underpins the information technology sector of our economy, which is a significant contributor to Idaho's economic output; and

WHEREAS, computer science is one of the most in-demand college degrees, computing is used throughout many careers, and computer occupations are expected to see fast job growth as strong demand is expected for IT security and software development; and

WHEREAS, computing technology is valued as an integral part of our culture and is changing how people interact with each other and the world around them, transforming industry, creating new fields of commerce, driving innovation in all fields of science, and increasing productivity in many economic sectors; and

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WHEREAS, in education circles, coding is increasingly being referred to as “the fourth R” — reading, writing, arithmetic, and algorithms — because computers and digital literacy are such an integral part of everyday life; and

WHEREAS, Idaho is recognized as a national leader in prioritizing computer science education, becoming the second state in the nation to adopt all nine Code.org Policy recommendations;

WHEREAS, all students deserve a thorough preparation in computer science education, including access to the qualified teachers, technology, and age-appropriate curriculum needed to learn computer science at the elementary and secondary levels of education; and

WHEREAS, providing students the opportunity to participate in high-quality computer science activities exposes them to the real-world experiences and provides critical thinking skills that will serve them throughout their lives; and

WHEREAS, participating in an Hour of Code during Computer Science Education Week can help demystify the field of computer science and encourage more students to continue their computer science studies; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BRAD LITTLE, Governor of the State of Idaho, do hereby proclaim December 6-12, 2021, to be

COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION WEEK

BRAD LITTLE, GOVERNOR

LAWRENCE DENNEY, SECRETARY OF STATE

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