



CONTACT:

Emily Callihan, 208.854.3032, emily.callihan@gov.idaho.gov

Erica Compton, 208.994.2573, erica.compton@stem.idaho.gov

Tony Harrison, 208.880.9814, tony@COMMposition.biz

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gov. Little declares Dec. 9-13 Computer Science Education Week

BOISE, Idaho (Dec. 10, 2019) — Idaho Gov. Brad Little proclaimed Dec. 9-13 Computer Science Education Week in Idaho today at an event at Garfield Elementary School in Boise and urged 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.

The governor coded alongside fifth-graders after delivering the proclamation, designing a basketball game that’s part of a brand-new NBA-WNBA coding challenge on Code.org.

Hour of Code is a global movement Code.org founded in 2013 that reaches tens of millions of students age 4 to 104 in more than 180 countries. Hour of Code events offer a one-hour introduction to computer science and the basics of coding via fun tutorials.

Hour of Code 2019 coincides with international Computer Science Education Week (Dec. 9-15), which is playing host to nearly 120,000 events worldwide this year, including about 38,000 in the U.S. Computer Science Education Week is held annually in recognition of the birthday of computing pioneer Admiral Grace Murray Hopper (Dec. 9, 1906).

Idaho STEM Action Center executive director Dr. Angela Hemingway said organizations statewide are hosting more than 300 Hour of Code events this year and they’re important to the future of Idaho.

“In education circles, coding is increasingly being referred to ‘the fourth r’ — reading, writing, arithmetic, and algorithms — because computers and technology are such an integral part of everyday life,” she said. “Computer science is one of the most in-demand college degrees, computing is used throughout many careers, and CS careers are the number-one source of all new wages in the country. In fact, CS jobs account for more than half of all projected job growth in STEM fields.”

Sonia Galaviz, a fifth-grade teacher at Garfield Elementary and the school’s STEM coordinator, said all 380 students — ranging from three-year-olds in pre-kindergarten to 12-year-olds in sixth grade — participated in its Hour of Code event Gov. Little took part in. She said it’s crucial to engage kids in science, technology, engineering, and math at a young age.

“The research is very clear that between the ages of 10 and 14 is when a child starts to think science is for me, math is for me, this is something I am going to embrace as a part of my identity, and that’s when they start to pursue classes in junior high and high school into those specific disciplines,” Galaviz, winner of the NEA Foundation’s 2017 Excellence in Education Award, said. “So if we spark that passion early, give them access to those opportunities early, we can seriously alter the trajectory of the choices they have in their life. And that’s what it’s about — creating opportunity, giving access to those experiences, providing mentors and people in the community that are doing those things and can inspire students to pursue that in their life. So we’re excited to be able to host Hour of Code every year.”

Dr. Hemingway said there were more than 8,800 unfilled STEM jobs in Idaho in October. In addition, she said all of Idaho’s top-10 hot jobs require STEM skills and at least seven of those careers — software developers, information security analysts, computer support specialists, IT support specialists, network systems managers, computer systems analysts, and Web developers — demand strong computer science skills. (The other three top-10 hot jobs in Idaho are registered nurses, physicians, and industrial engineers.)

According to Code.org, the average salary for a computing occupation in Idaho is \$71,947, which is significantly higher than the state’s overall average salary of \$43,480.

The Education Commission of the States anticipates robust job growth in Idaho STEM careers by 2027: 19 percent in computing, 11 percent in engineering, and 24 percent in advanced manufacturing, including 3D printing and design.

The Idaho Department of Labor predicts upwards of 100,000 STEM jobs will exist in Idaho by 2024. Dr. Hemingway said these jobs will represent \$6.5 billion in personal income and nearly \$350 million in tax revenue if Idaho’s workforce is poised to fill them.

For more information visit [STEM.idaho.gov/computerscience](https://stem.idaho.gov/computerscience), hourofcode.com, code.org, and csedweek.org.

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 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 for more information, and visit <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.

Text of Idaho Computer Science Education Week Proclamation

WHEREAS, computer technology is valued as an integral part of our culture and is creating new fields of commerce, driving innovation in the field of science, and increasing productivity in many economic sectors; and

WHEREAS, computer science is one of the most in-demand college degrees, computer science jobs account for more than half of all projected job growth in STEM fields, and computer occupations are the single largest category of new wages in the United States; and

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

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

WHEREAS, nine out of 10 parents nationwide want their child's school to teach computer science; and

WHEREAS, the Idaho Department of Labor anticipates computing careers in the state to grow 14 percent by 2024; 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; 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;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BRAD LITTLE, Governor of Idaho, do hereby proclaim December 9-13, 2019, to be Computer Science Education Week in Idaho.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Idaho at the Capitol in Boise on this 10th day of December in the year of our Lord two thousand and nineteen and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred forty-fourth and of the Statehood of Idaho the one hundred thirtieth.

BRAD LITTLE, GOVERNOR

LAWRENCE DENNEY, SECRETARY OF STATE