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**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**  
**BILL ANALYSIS**  
**53rd Legislature, 1st Session, 2017**

<b>Bill Number</b>	<u>SB134/SECS</u>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<u>SEC</u>
<b>Tracking Number</b>	<u>.206444.1</u>	<b>Committee Referrals</b>	<u>SEC/SPAC;HLEDC/HEC</u>
<b>Short Title</b>	<u>Computer Science for School Graduation</u>		
<b>Analyst</b>	<u>Herz</u>	<b>Original Date</b>	<u>2/6/17</u>
		<b>Last Updated</b>	<u></u>

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**BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Education Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 134 (SB134/SECS) amends requirements for high school students to graduate and earn the New Mexico diploma of excellence by allowing students to substitute a computer science unit for either a mathematics or a science unit, provided that competence in the subject being substituted is demonstrated. The bill takes effect for students entering ninth grade in the 2017-2018 school year or later.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

SB134/SECS does not appropriate funds.

**SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

SB134/SECS amends high school graduation requirements to allow the substitution of one unit of computer science for one year of either mathematics or science. Currently, New Mexico high school students must complete four units of English, four units of mathematics, three units of science, three and one-half units of social science, one unit of physical education, one unit of a career cluster course, workplace readiness course, or course in a language other than English, and seven and one-half elective units to be eligible to receive a diploma. Of these, at least one unit must be earned as an Advanced Placement or honors course, a dual-credit course, or a distance learning course. This bill would allow one unit from one section (either math or science) to be satisfied by a computer science unit granted the student demonstrates competence in the subject being substituted.

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) specifically authorizes school districts to use federal funds for programs that meet the needs of employers and provides all students with a well-rounded education. ESSA specifically mentions computer science as a subject eligible for federal funds. According to the Education Commission of the States (ECS), 14 states allow students to meet non-elective graduation requirements with computer science courses, and

another five states require computer proficiency without requiring computer science courses as a prerequisite for high school graduation.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

This bill would require the Public Education Department to establish subject area standards for computer science courses.

### **POSSIBLE QUESTIONS**

For the purposes of this bill, how do students demonstrate competency in math and science?  
Which high schools currently offer computer science courses?

### **RELATED BILLS**

Related to HB211/aHF1, School Next Generation Science Standards  
Related to SB31, Remove Certain Graduation Requirements

### **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- LESC Files

**MPH/rab**