

Visiting your local legislator...

Talking points for World Languages in opposition to the coding bills SB 104 and HB 265

Step 1:

Read about the two bills here:

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2017/0104>

<https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=56935>

Step 2:

Read this article:

<http://www.attn.com/stories/12768/former-congressional-staffer-explains-how-to-make-congressman-listen>)

Step 3:

Find the local address and phone number to make an appointment to visit your Senator or House Representative:

www.myfloridahouse.gov and www.flsenate.gov

Step 4:

Print any documents you feel would be helpful to leave behind with the legislator when you visit. Also, leave your business card or contact information.

These key documents that support your talking points can be found at:

<https://ffla.wildapricot.org/advocacy>

*****TALKING POINTS ARE ON THE NEXT 2 PAGES. YOU CAN PRINT THESE AND TAKE WITH YOU DURING YOUR VISIT*****

TALKING POINTS:

(you can print this and take with you along with supporting documentation found at <https://fla.wildapricot.org/advocacy>)

Computer Coding Is Part of Computer Science

- *Computer coding is part of the larger field of computer science, which is a critical 21st century subject and deserves its own graduation requirement. Computer science is much more related to mathematics and science than to languages.*
- *Share quote from Hadi Partovi, CEO of code.org . “We formally oppose the idea of counting computer science as a foreign language. First of all, ‘computer coding’ isn’t what we should teach students. ‘Computer science’ is what we should teach. Just like in English class, we don’t just teach handwriting and grammar, we teach English literature and composition. Learning ‘coding’ is just one part of computer science. Learning algorithm design, computational thinking , how the internet works, data analysis, cybersecurity, these are equally important aspects of computer science, and none of it, not even ‘the coding’ has anything to do with learning a foreign language. The only people who would suggest that computer science is akin to learning a foreign language has never coded before”.*
- *Dictionary definition of language is “the system of words or signs that people use to express thoughts and feelings to each other”. Computer coding does NOT express thoughts or feelings.*

Benefits of World Languages

- *build cognitive, higher order thinking skills that develop learning growth in students*
- *make connections to other disciplines in schools that develop learning growth*
- *build community, tolerance, resilience and human connections as students find their place in the world and humanity*
- *develop intercultural competence, which is a “set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that supports effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” and prepares students to be a global citizen*
- *meet the needs and demands of businesses, especially in a state like Florida that is a key gateway to international trade, to compete and conduct business effectively in a global economy*

- *for more key points, go to <https://www.actfl.org/advocacy/what-the-research-shows>*

Computer Coding as an Unfunded Mandate

- *Ask how districts will pay for this “mandate” if the state is not providing financial support*
- *Florida Virtual School is not a viable option as many schools do not have enough computers available to meet the demand*
- *Currently there are not enough qualified nor certified teachers in Florida available to teach computer coding*

Impact on Colleges and Universities

- *The SUS (State University System) requires that all students meet a two year foreign language credit requirement because research shows that such students entering their institution already are “better students” equipped with the necessary cognitive and affective skills needed to meet the rigor and demand of a post-secondary curriculum.*
- *Many of these same schools in the SUS are using foreign language credits to differentiate those students who will be accepted as freshmen in a very competitive and rigorous entrance selection process*

Impact on Business

- *The economic well-being of our state depends on preparing our students to meet the needs of future job growth and demands. Being multilingual and developing intercultural skills are much needed skills for Florida businesses trying to adapt to a globalized marketplace. The Florida Dept. of Economic Opportunity states in their recent report that by the year 2023, the projected opportunities for jobs in Florida requiring world language fluency will be 1,094,192, whereas, opportunities for jobs requiring computer coding skills will be 203,443. Share the document from the website.*
- *Share the links to the YouTube videos that interview business leaders from Orlando, Miami and the Jacksonville Port Authority. Go here to find these: <https://nble.org/resources/advocacy/>*

If possible, share positive personal stories and anecdotes about the power of languages or better yet, take a student with you who can do this!

Invite the legislator to visit your school and classroom in person.