

Hello! Our names are Sarah and Chase Meusel and we are writing in support of the house bill 759 and senate bill 757 to help expand computer science education in Minnesota. We are parents to a 1st grader and 4th grader who are fortunate to attend an online public school, New Code Academy, that offers computer science classes for all students.

Growing up in a rural town, we did not have access to any computer science education. Although we both have always loved science and technology, computer science itself wasn't a concept we were introduced to until attending college. While we are fortunate to use and enjoy technology today, we were not adequately prepared for a world where so many growing careers leverage foundational computer science skills.

As you know, computer science is part of every industry and is a vital language to know in our ever-changing world of technology that we use daily in our cell phones, cars, computers, smart devices, TVs, medical devices and so much more. Given that our world is built on computer science, many of the careers that our children will have available require them to speak and understand the language of computer science. Not only for our two children, but as we face new challenges it will be future generations that are asked to solve our collective problems.

We are fortunate that our children have had exposure in their younger years to computer science and are interested in continuing to learn more, but unfortunately not many of our surrounding schools offer this as a part of their core classes. This puts families that are unable to coordinate or afford extracurricular activities in computer science at an incredible disadvantage, which denies those children the skills and future opportunities we will all need them to succeed in.

For our two children, their wonderful teachers have fostered an awareness and deep interest for computer science and it is a joy to watch their knowledge of programming grow. The feeling of pride they display as they ask us to watch their robots and code snippets run is no different than when they share a new drawing, play a new song, or build a new fort. When they learn this young, it's just another way to play.

It is critical to set every child up for success, and exposure from a young age to computer science will give more children the opportunity to understand the basics and fundamentals of this field that will help guide our future. These investments in our children spark curiosity in our youngest learners, and span through a lifetime of creators, problem solvers, and world changers. We as Minnesotans don't want children left out of this lifelong skill. We kindly ask that you please consider the impact on so many children when making this important decision, and to stand behind educating and advancing our children and our state. Thank you!

Sarah & Chase Meusel