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REP. SLAP ATTENDS COMPUTER SCIENCE DAY AT CONARD HIGH SCHOOL

Momentum growing for beefing up computer science curriculum in state, Rep. Slap encouraged



State Representative Derek Slap (D-West Hartford) visited Conard High School today to attend the Computer Science Fair in honor of Computer Science Education Week (CSEdWeek.)

CSEdWeek is an annual program dedicated to inspiring K-12 students to take interest in computer science and is supported by 350 partners and 100,000 educators worldwide.

“I am very proud of these students for exploring a challenging field and organizing this computer science fair,” **Rep. Slap** said. “It is crucial that schools promote science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education and I’m glad Conard High School has taken the initiative to include computer science classes in its curriculum. Computer science teaches students about problem solving and opens the doors to new jobs and more opportunities.”

Exploring Computer Science was first offered at Conard in the fall of 2016. Conard has since expanded its program and earlier this year, won a grant from the Foundation for West Hartford Public School (FWHPS) that allowed teachers to train in computer science and buy robot kits to use in the Exploring Computer Science course.

Conard High School will soon attend the CS4CT Summit, which is designed to empower school districts across the state with resources and strategies to bolster CS education across all grade levels. A core focus of the summit is to promote equity in computing, such that all students across our state have access to high-quality CS education.

Rep. Slap continued, “It is important that we encourage all children, especially girls, to become pioneers in computer science. Women are often underrepresented in this field, but students should know that regardless of their gender, they can do anything they put their mind to.”

In 2015, women earned only 18 percent of all computer science degrees in the nation, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

“The more people see computer science, the more they will understand how important it is - everywhere and for everyone,” **Conard Computer Science teacher Jackie Corricelli** said. “This CS Fair was to bring this message to anyone who would be willing to listen - we are very excited and grateful to Rep. Slap for attending. His attendance validates the kid's hard work in advancing access to computer science for all kids.”

What if you could be the perfect person to bring social, economic, and cultural issues to a resolution using a computer as a tool? Imagine if no one ever taught you how to hold a pencil or a paintbrush? Code is our future pencil; the computer is our canvas. You ought to try to make your art appear. Who knows - maybe your program makes the world better too?”

“We should absolutely be looking at strengthening Connecticut's computer science curriculum and ensuring we not only compete with other states but that we are a leader,” **Rep. Slap** said. “Introducing students to computer science gives them a literacy about how the world works – and that's valuable whether they pursue it as a career or not. It's especially important that our daughters have the same encouragement and opportunities as our sons.”

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