S-6240.1

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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6339**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Hunt, Holy, Wellman, Wilson, L., and Mullet)

AN ACT Relating to creating a computer science grant program; adding a new section to chapter 28A.300 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature recognizes the importance and growing demand of computing skills in both the local and national job markets. At the same time, research has shown that women have experienced declining representation in the technology sector. Furthermore, studies have shown that introducing students, and especially female students, to computer science in middle school dramatically increases the students' interest in computer science in later grades.

As such, the legislature intends to create a grant program with the goal of expanding computer science to reach students earlier in their education, in particular female students who are currently underrepresented in computer science courses and opportunities. Doing so will open the door to innovation to a wider group of students and will help cultivate a diverse student population that has the skills to contribute and innovate in our modern economy and society.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.300 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall establish, develop, and administer a grant program to provide assistance to districts for the development and growth of middle school computer science programs and middle school coding programs.

(2) In selecting applicants under this program, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall prioritize:

(a) School districts that have a large percentage of students that qualify for free and reduced-price meals;

(b) School districts that receive funds under Title I, part A of the federal elementary and secondary education act;

(c) Rural school districts;

(d) School districts that do not offer computer science courses; and

(e) School districts that do not offer coding courses.

(3) Grants awarded under this section may be used for programs that occur during and outside of regular school hours.

(4) The office of the superintendent of public instruction may adopt rules for the grant program established under this section.

(5) This section expires July 1, 2022.

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