



**GAVIN NEWSOM**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

December 2, 2015

Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS)  
Academic Senate, University of California  
1111 Franklin St., 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, CA  
94607-5200

cc: University of California Board of Regents

Esteemed members of BOARS,

California's schools are making impressive progress to prepare students for 21st century college and careers, and with your help, they can succeed. While computer science has emerged as a foundational field for all students, most California schools don't yet offer it. California ought to be a leader in computer science, and school districts across the state have launched major initiatives to embrace this vital subject. Their fate rests on your shoulders: BOARS has the power and responsibility to enable these efforts to succeed.

Your committee's requirements for admission to the University of California and California State University mostly categorize computer science as an elective ("G") rather than a core mathematics class ("C"). These A-G requirements drive curriculum adoption by California schools and dramatically influence enrollment by diverse populations of students.

**We respectfully request that BOARS adopt new standards for the mathematics "C" requirement to accommodate academically rigorous computer science courses.** Doing so would acknowledge that computer science is a legitimate field and a valuable foundation for many academic pursuits. It would provide an incentive for schools to offer these classes and for students to take them. It would yield enormous academic and economic benefits and increase equity for students across California.

Governor Brown and the State Legislature have led the way: AB 1764 (Olsen) and SB 1200 (Padilla) provide a path for high school computer science courses to count towards graduation and university admission respectively, provided they meet your



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Category "C" classification. The success of these popular initiatives now hinges on action by your committee.

For a growing number of academic and professional pursuits, computer science provides just as relevant a foundation as algebra. Every student learns about photosynthesis and fractions even if they don't grow up to become botanists or mathematicians. Today, California's children also deserve the option to learn what an algorithm is and how the Internet works. A basic understanding of computing and computer science is foundational to many fields and will prepare students both for college and for the careers of tomorrow.

Last year in San Francisco, fewer than 5% of high school students were enrolled in a computer science course. Furthermore, state and national patterns indicate significant gender and race gaps among students enrolled in computing courses. In 2013, just one fifth of all U.S. students who took the AP Computer Science exam were female, and last year in San Francisco, not a single African American student took the exam.

In an era of widening income inequality and lack of opportunity for low-income and minority communities, it is incumbent upon us to reverse these trends. Please do your part to enable our schools to prepare California's students for the demands of the 21st century.

To respond to this letter, please contact Joey Freeman, Chief Consultant for Education Policy in the Lieutenant Governor's office at [joey.freeman@ltg.ca.gov](mailto:joey.freeman@ltg.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

**Gavin Newsom**, Lieutenant Governor  
**Alex Padilla**, Secretary of State  
**Kristin Olsen**, Assembly Republican Leader

**Kelsey Brewer**, California State University Student Trustee  
**Taylor Herren**, Cal State Student Association President  
**Avi Oved**, University of California Student Regent  
**Kevin Sabo**, University of California Student Association President

**Richard Carranza**, Superintendent, San Francisco Unified School District  
**Matt Haney**, VP, San Francisco School Board & Director of Policy, #YesWeCode



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**Jane Margolis**, Senior Researcher, UCLA and Author, *Stuck in the Shallow End*  
**Eloy Ortiz Oakley**, Superintendent-President, Long Beach City College  
**Allen Smith**, Chief of Schools, Oakland Unified School District  
**Christopher J. Steinhauser**, Superintendent, Long Beach Unified School District  
**Louise Waters**, Superintendent & CEO, Leadership Public Schools  
**Antwan Wilson**, Superintendent, Oakland Unified School District

**Lenny Mendonca**, Co-Chair, Leadership Council, CA FWD  
**Ali and Hadi Partovi**, Co-Founders, code.org  
**Debra Richardson**, Chair, Alliance for CA Computing Education for Students and Schools  
**Michele Siquieros**, President, Campaign for College Opportunity  
**Ryan J. Smith**, Executive Director, Education Trust-West  
**Paulette Smith**, Director, New Leaders for New Schools  
**Kat Taylor**, TomKat Ranch Educational Foundation

**Sam Altman**, President, Y Combinator  
**Marc Benioff**, CEO, Salesforce.com  
**Ron Conway**, Founder, SV Angel  
**Jack Dorsey**, Founder and CEO, Square & Former Co-Founder and CEO, Twitter  
**Paul Graham**, Co-Founder, Y Combinator  
**Kevin and Julia Hartz**, Co-Founders, CEO and President, Eventbrite  
**Reid Hoffman**, Chairman, LinkedIn  
**Robert Hohman**, Founder & CEO, Glassdoor, Inc.  
**Drew Houston**, CEO, Dropbox  
**Maggie Johnson**, Head of Education Research, Google  
**Vinod Khosla**, Co-Founder, Sun Microsystems & Founder, Khosla Ventures  
**Bobby Kotick**, CEO, Activision  
**Max Levchin**, Co-Founder and Former CTO, Paypal  
**Alison Derbenwick Miller**, Vice President, Oracle Academy, Oracle  
**Linda Moore**, CEO, TechNet  
**Michael Moritz**, Chairman, Sequoia Capital  
**Mark Pincus**, Chairman, Zynga  
**Shervin Pishevar**, Chairman, Hyperloop Technologies  
**Sheryl Sandberg**, COO, Facebook  
**Brad Smith**, President and Chief Legal Officer, Microsoft  
**Jeremy Stoppelman**, CEO, Yelp  
**Evan Williams**, CEO, Medium & Former Chairman and CEO, Twitter  
**Jerry Yang**, Co-Founder and Former CEO, Yahoo!