



Building a skilled workforce by creating alternative pathways
for driven people seeking careers in technology.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 22, 2020

Press Contact:

Leah Freeman

leah@launchcode.org

901-359-1104

LaunchCode Pilot Program Trains St. Louis Teachers in Job-Focused Coding Curriculum

Curriculum deployed in 6 St. Louis high school classrooms

ST. LOUIS - This week, workforce development nonprofit [LaunchCode](#), announced their new LCHS Pilot Program has successfully deployed in 6 different St. Louis area schools. The program encompasses the creation, deployment and evaluation of a new computer science curriculum for Missouri high school juniors and seniors based on the new curriculum/training standards set forth through Missouri House Bill 3 (HB3).

LCHS Pilot Program is backed by a gift of over \$200,000 from Bayer Fund, a philanthropic arm of Bayer, with additional support from AT&T.

As of now, 6 teachers from 6 St. Louis area high schools – Vashon, Gateway STEM, Confluence Academy, KIPP, Affton and Rosati-Kain – are participating in the pilot. Over the summer, the teachers participated in training conducted by LaunchCode’s staff in the curriculum, which includes tech skills that mirror what is needed by area companies. At the start of the school year, those teachers began delivering LaunchCode’s curriculum in their 11th and 12th grade classrooms.

LaunchCode developed the program as a result of Missouri HB3, which establishes a statewide STEM career awareness program and creates new provisions of law related to computer science.

“This legislation is an important step in the direction of preparing a workforce with skills that better align with the needs of our increasingly-digital workforce,” said Jeff Mazur, LaunchCode’s Executive Director. “The issue, however, is that there is a lack of

accessible and affordable ways for schools to equip teachers with industry-relevant computer science curriculum. That's where LaunchCode is stepping in."

According to Code.org's 2018 report, only 30% of Missouri high schools offer computer science programs. Universities in Missouri did not graduate a single new teacher prepared to teach computer science in 2017.

"Computer Science wasn't offered at Rosati-Kain when I was a student. Now I am back as a teacher, trying to find the best way to offer it to my students," said Abigail McGillicuddy, Math & Computer Science Instructor at Rosati-Kain High School. "Being a part of the LaunchCode High School community connects me with fellow teachers who are working together to create new opportunities in Computer Science for students."

Although the pilot was launched pre-pandemic, the crisis has exacerbated the need to equip the next generation with the digital skills required by companies.

"More than ever, as we continue to live through a pandemic induced normal, our reliance on technology has grown and proven that we need a future workforce that is trained in all areas of computer science," said Al Mitchell, Bayer Fund President. "Bayer Fund is proud to partner and support LaunchCode's efforts to prepare students for STEM based technical careers."

"AT&T has a history of supporting initiatives that are education focused," said Craig Unruh, President of AT&T Missouri. "We're proud to further our commitment to Launchcode's LCHS Pilot Program by contributing towards the launch of their coding curriculum in high school classrooms."

School administrators interested in learning more about bringing LCHS to 11th & 12th Grade students in 2021 can visit launchcode.org/lchs or email LCHS@launchcode.org for more information.

###

Media is invited to cover this announcement and interviews can be arranged.