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January 17, 2023

The Honorable Cleo Fields
Chairman, Senate Education Committee
2147 Government Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Dear Senator Fields:

In Louisiana's 2022 Regular Legislative Session, two items were presented regarding the addition of computer science as an option for satisfying requirements relative to qualification for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) scholarships, high school graduation and Board of Regents core.

Senate Resolution 196 presented a study resolution requesting the Board of Regents (BoR) and the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to:

collaboratively investigate the feasibility of allowing computer coding and American Sign Language to substitute for Foreign Language in the TOPS core, high school graduation and BoR core.

Further, Act 502, signed by the Governor in June 2022, required the addition of:

Computer Science (two units in principles, coding, and programming) to the list of approved courses for the completion of the Foreign Language Requirement in the TOPS core, high school graduation and BoR core.

Since Act 502 adds Computer Science, which includes coding, to the TOPS core, high school graduation and BoR core, it was determined that this element of Senate Resolution 196 had been fully enacted and therefore its feasibility did not require further study.

In addition, upon reviewing the [TOPS University course requirements grid](#), it was confirmed that American Sign Language had previously been approved as an option to satisfy TOPS foreign language requirements, high school graduation and BoR core. Thus, the two items addressed in SR 196 are resolved and do not require further study.

To ensure all rulemaking was in place, Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) staff presented the item required by Act 502 to BESE at its December 13, 2022 meeting. At this meeting, BESE authorized the following additions (new course titles are underlined):

A. The foreign language course offerings shall be as follows.

Course Title(s)	Units
Cambridge AICE—AS (Honors): Japanese	1
<u>AP Computer Science A</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Computer Science</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Computer Coding as a Foreign Language I, II</u>	<u>1 each</u>
<u>Indigenous Languages I, II</u>	<u>1 each</u>

To ensure rulemaking for TOPS core was in place, at its meeting on January 9, 2023 the BoR approved the publication of rulemaking related to Act 502, adding computer science courses to the TOPS core curriculum beginning with the 2027 high school graduating class. We believe this action, combined with the appropriate BESE rulemaking, fully addresses the charge of Senate Resolution 196.

Do not hesitate to reach out to us at Kim.Reed@laregents.edu and Cade.Brumley@la.gov if you have any questions. We look forward to collaborating with you during the 2023 Regular Legislative Session.

Sincerely,



Kim Hunter Reed, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Higher Education



Cade Brumley, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education