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February 13, 2019

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Gov. Bill Lee Announces the Future Workforce Initiative
Legislative agenda increases science, technology, engineering and mathematics in K-12 schools to court jobs of the future

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Today, Tennessee Governor Bill Lee announced the Future Workforce Initiative to increase science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) training in K-12 schools as part of his first-year legislative agenda for education.

“Our agenda advocates for increased access to career and technical education for K-12 students and a key part of this includes prioritizing STEM training,” said Lee. “The Future Workforce Initiative is a direct response to the emerging technology industry and making sure our students are first in line to be qualified for technology jobs.”

This investment in STEM-focused early college and career experiences supports the Tennessee Department of Education’s [“Tennessee Pathways” Certification process](#), as well as the [STEM School Designation](#) partnership with groups like Tennessee STEM Innovation Network and Code.org.

The Future Workforce Initiative aims to put Tennessee in the top 25 states for job creation in the technology sector by 2022 through three areas of emphasis including:

1. Launching new CTE programs focused in STEM fields with **100 new middle school programs and tripling the number of STEM-designated public schools by 2022.**
2. **Growing the number of teachers qualified to teach work-based learning and advanced computer science courses** through STEM teacher training and implementation of K-8 computer science standards.

3. Expanding postsecondary STEM opportunities in high school through **increased access to dual credit, AP courses and dual-enrollment.**

“58 percent of all STEM jobs created in the country are in computing but only 8 percent of graduates study computer science in college,” said Lee. “By exposing Tennessee students to computer science in their K-12 careers we are ensuring our kids have every chance to land a high-quality job.”

In his presentation to the legislature, the Governor will recommend a \$4 million investment to implement the Future Workforce Initiative.

“I look forward to working closely with the legislature to ensure every student has access to a high-quality career, and to get there we’ll need to make STEM education a reality for students across Tennessee,” said Lee.

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