

Meanwhile, computer science studies in schools are becoming a top priority in education sectors around the world. In England, for example, a new computing curriculum will go into effect next month wherein starting at age five all students will learn the basics of coding and beginning at age 11 they will be instructed in the use of at least two programming languages. In Estonia, first graders are being taught how to create their own computer games and scholarships are being offered to entice more college undergraduates into technology-driven disciplines.

This year Code.org will once again promote Hour of Code between December 8-14 and will include new levels of elementary courses (K-1, 2-3, 4-5), one-day curriculum workshops for elementary teachers beginning this month and middle school programming activities for math and science classes.

But merely telling our students and teachers about this opportunity is not enough. As a District, we need to expose our students to the individuals in our community who are making South Florida a tech hub, the programmers and entrepreneurs that are committed to job creation in the field of computer science. To this end, this item has the support of the Knight Foundation, Emerge Americas, Refresh Miami, LAB Miami, The Idea Center at Miami Dade College, MIA Made, Wyncode, and Code Fever, who have committed to working with the district so that mentors from our growing tech industry will visit our schools during December 8-14 and speak to our students about the real life applications of coding and the employment opportunities available in the field of computer science.

With the aid of these individuals, who will motivate our teachers and students to participate in Hour of Code, we can send a clear message to the State of Florida about Miami-Dade County students' interest in coding and hopefully surpass the participation of every other school district in the United States. In so doing, we will not only expose our students to coding but also set the stage for greater interest from national organizations who are seeking regions in which to promote and fund computer science education at the K-12 level.

PROPOSED BY
MS. RAQUEL REGALADO:

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, through the Superintendent, partner with local tech groups and startups to promote the participation by our teachers and students in the Hour of Code from December 8-14, 2014.