



# Arkansas Department of Education

Johnny Key, Commissioner

*Transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education*

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## **Approximately 900 Public School Libraries to Receive Computer Coding Devices, Books**

**LITTLE ROCK** — Gov. Asa Hutchinson and the Arkansas Department of Education Office of Computer Science are pleased to announce a cross initiative promotion that will provide approximately 900 public school libraries with coding devices and coding-related books. This promotion combines the efforts of the Arkansas Computer Science Initiative with R.I.S.E. Arkansas' mission of building a culture of reading in Arkansas.

"Once again, the educators in our state are expanding the boundaries in order to ensure that our students have the opportunity to achieve everything they can in life," Gov. Asa Hutchinson said. "This is a great investment in our young people that complements all the other computer science initiatives we are undertaking to keep Arkansas ahead of the technology curve."

Public school libraries that serve students in any combination of grades K-8 are eligible to receive a Micro:Bit, which are small programmable computers, and a copy of *Code Your Own Games!: 20 Games to Create with Scratch* by Max Wainwright. Public school libraries that serve students in any combination of grades K-5 also will be eligible to receive a copy of *Sasha Savvy Loves to Code* by Sasha A. Alston.

"I am honored that my book *Sasha Savvy Loves to Code* was chosen to be a part of the computer science and reading initiatives," Sasha A. Alston, the author of *Sasha Savvy Loves to Code*, said. "Just like reading and math, coding is a literacy we must have to thrive in the workforce and to address many of the global challenges we are facing. This is why it was important for me to write this book, especially for girls, because we don't want anyone to be left out. We want everyone to gain the necessary skills and to dream big!"

"For centuries libraries have been the hub for intellectual curiosity and discovery, and now Arkansas school libraries lead the transformation into the digital age as a hub for learning computer science with the Micro:Bit pocket-sized computer," said Hal Speed, head of North America for the Micro:Bit Educational Foundation. "The Micro:Bit device and online programming editors provide creative, easy-to-use learning tools for students, teachers and librarians to support Arkansas's K-8 Computer Science Standards implementation."

To be eligible to receive the books and devices, public school library media specialists must attend a free ADE Office of Computer Science-approved training on the Micro:Bit that will be provided at every

education service cooperative in Arkansas. A list of approved sessions provided by Arkansas computer science specialists with registration links will be posted at the following link as they are scheduled: <https://goo.gl/Lp9A87>. For library media specialists who cannot attend one of the co-op trainings, ADE is working with AETN to create an online training through the ArkansasIDEAS Learning Management System that should be launched by May 2018.

Follow the Arkansas Computer Science Initiative on social media at #ARKidsCanCode and #CSforAR and R.I.S.E. Arkansas at #RISEArkansas. For more information about the Micro:Bit, please visit <http://microbit.org/>.

## Computer Science Education Week

December 4-10, 2017, is Computer Science Education Week. Arkansas will release a new computer science-related announcement each day. For a full listing of announcements as they are made, please visit the newly-redesigned ADE Computer Science webpages at <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/special-projects/arkansas-computer-science-initiative>.

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