



# ELEVATING K12 COMPUTER SCIENCE

## 2024 Golden Achievement Award

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District Type: Urban  
District Enrollment: 10,000  
Communications Staff: 4

Collaborator Information  
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**BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**COMPUTER SCIENCE**



**BLOOMINGTON**  
Public Schools

Bloomington Public Schools (BPS) prides itself on its excellence in computer science education and has driven state-level change, elevating the importance of computer science for all students (CS in BPS). In 2022, the school district faced a troubling trend: a decline in student enrollment in computer science education courses and a lack of awareness about the district's commitment and capabilities in computer science education. To address these issues, BPS developed a strategic communications/marketing plan with four clear goals:

- ★ Establish a reputation as the state's leader in K-12 Computer Science Education (increase awareness of the high-quality educational experience for students)
- ★ Reposition computer science as an essential skill across all industries
- ★ Leverage computer science for all in marketing open enrollment into Bloomington Public Schools
- ★ Support equity initiatives and the district's vision of diversifying the computer science pipeline (longitudinal goal)

Research revealed that families were unaware of and may not value the importance of computer science education. Minnesota ranks last in the nation in terms of states offering fundamental computer science education in public high schools, further compounded by the absence of a statewide mandate for such education.

By engaging educators, students, families, experts and local STEM/ CS non-profits from the University of Minnesota, and technology partners, as well as studying the strategies of other districts, BPS established a brand to become Minnesota's Leader in K-12 Computer Science Education. The strategic communications plan, focused on partnerships, education/information, and tailored communication efforts to reach various stakeholders. Through events, opinion-leader engagement, storytelling, digital marketing, and community engagement initiatives, BPS aimed to increase awareness of the benefits of computer science education. Seeking endorsements further bolstered their credibility and visibility in the field.

This communications plan's success was grounded in research, repositioning, partnerships, and responsiveness to feedback from students, partners, and the community. The plan's results include thought-leadership opportunities at the state and national levels, fully enrolled computer science immersion schools (with wait lists), and a measurable impact toward diversifying the computer science pipeline.



Both primary and secondary research efforts informed planning and provided baseline data for audience targets, message development, key activities, communication channels and evaluation. Bloomington Public Schools engaged with CEL Marketing PR Design to conduct the research and planning phases of this plan, as well as ongoing consultation, monitoring, adaptation and implementation over the last two years.

## Primary Research:

- ★ Engaged in focused discussions with educators directly involved in computer science education through **staff focus groups**.
- ★ Conducted **interviews with students** to delve into their firsthand experiences and perceptions regarding computer science offerings.
- ★ Conducted interviews with **computer science and technology professionals** to inform messaging and communication channels within the industry.
- ★ Leveraged the **expertise of Dr. Lana Peterson, Director of Community Engagement at the Learning and Technologies Collaborative, University of Minnesota**. Presentations and **data provided by the UMN Learning & Technologies Collaborative** (a partner since 2019) offered crucial insights into the effectiveness of the existing computer science education programs and informed strategic decision-making and positioning.
- ★ Conducted a thorough **analysis of the competitive landscape** by evaluating computer science programs offered by other districts and select competitors.
- ★ Conducted a mini-audit of the Bloomington Public Schools' websites, Board meetings, and Strategic plan to obtain baseline data on mentions of computer science education.
- ★ Evaluated the efficacy of current enrollment marketing materials and website content through **comprehensive assessments**. This analysis aimed to identify strengths and weaknesses in communication strategies and digital presence.
- ★ Established process for baseline measurement and tracking of enrollment in computer science education programs, including demographic data to support diversity and equity goals.



## Secondary Research:

- ★ Analyzed secondary research from **partner organizations** including MNTech, Code.org, **the Code Advocacy Coalition**, ISTE, ASCD,
- ★ Utilized **Google Analytics and Keyword SEO data** to gain deeper insights into web traffic patterns, search rankings, and user behavior related to computer science education. These analytics provided quantitative data to supplement qualitative findings, offering a holistic understanding of audience engagement.
- ★ Compiled a **comprehensive list of tech nonprofits** actively working to diversify the industry. This initiative aimed to understand the broader ecosystem and identify potential partnership opportunities for enriching computer science education and fostering inclusivity within the field.

By integrating these research methodologies, Bloomington Public Schools gained invaluable insights into the multifaceted dynamics of computer science education across Minnesota.



Drawing from the insights gleaned during the research phase, Bloomington Public Schools (BPS) developed a multifaceted strategic plan aimed at advancing five overarching goals and objectives:

- ★ Establish a brand and reputation for BPS as the state's leader in K-12 Computer Science Education and **increase awareness of the high-quality educational experience for students.**
- ★ **Reposition computer science as an essential skill** across all industries to attract a broader audience.
- ★ Increase enrollment in Bloomington Public Schools computer science education classes.
- ★ Support equity initiatives and the district's vision of **diversifying the computer science pipeline.**
- ★ In year two of the plan, a new goal embraced a leadership position for using artificial intelligence (AI) in education.

## Read the Marketing Communication Plan

### Primary audiences:

- ★ BPS staff, educators and administrators
- ★ K-12 families in Bloomington Public Schools (translate to Spanish & Somali)
- ★ Families with children 0-18 within a 10-mile radius of BPS
- ★ Business partners and technology industry stakeholders
- ★ High school students interested in Computer Science, Engineering, Biotech, Entrepreneurship
- ★ All Minnesota families with children 0-18 interested in computer science and open to virtual learning

**Secondary audiences** included tech pipeline influencers (including legislators, elected officials, universities and colleges) and state/w technology organizations and partners.

### Strategies

To achieve the goals, the communications plan outlined six strategies and tactics:

- ★ **Strategy #1: Branding & Messaging:** As a signature program within Bloomington Public Schools, Computer Science needed to be co-branded with District brand and work for every school. Messaging need to be simple, memorable and easily translated.
- ★ **Strategy #2: Storytelling:** Crafting compelling narratives through website content, blog posts, social media stories, and videos to showcase the impact and benefits of computer science education.
- ★ **Strategy #3: Events & Engagement:** Hosting events, academic competitions, guest speaker sessions, and participating in community initiatives to foster engagement and awareness.
- ★ **Strategy #4: Communications:** Securing parent and business leader partnerships to reinforce the district's leadership position beyond the educational community.
- ★ **Strategy #5: Third-Party Partnerships, Endorsements & Celebrations:** To bolster credibility and visibility, seek endorsements, awards, and recognitions from reputable organizations.
- ★ **Strategy #6 Internal Engagement: AI for Educators** (Added in fall 2023): Embrace leadership role for AI in K12 education and leverage the computer science leadership position to drive district policy and practices.
- ★ **Strategy #7 Digital Marketing:** Social media and targeted Google display ad campaign to support awareness goals and increase reach beyond the school district.



The plan included provisions for **ongoing monitoring, adaptation, and evaluation** to assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies:

- ★ Quarterly strategy meetings allowed for feedback on implementation, updates to the event schedule, and adjusting timelines. Each meeting provided new stories or advances that could be leveraged across district communication channels.
- ★ Tracking website traffic, enrollment metrics, and media mentions to measure progress toward objectives.
- ★ Analyzing feedback from stakeholders, including students, families, and community members, to gauge perception and engagement.

**Specific, measurable objectives** included:

- ★ Increased the number of students enrolled in computer science programming.
- ★ Increased traffic to the computer science section of the district website.
- ★ Increased mentions and reputation for BPS staff in computer science through media coverage and recognition.
- ★ Increase partner engagement within the Minnesota computer science and tech sectors.
- ★ Inspire action at the state level for addressing Minnesota's lagging support for K12 computer education.

## Implementation

### Strategy #1: Branding and Messaging

Despite evidence that Bloomington Public Schools has “the best-resourced computer science education program in the state,” according to partners at the University of Minnesota, it was challenging to inspire “humble” educators, and especially computer science educators, to embrace their leadership position. Providing evidence-based messaging, collateral materials and sample use cases helped educators and communicators embrace their role as Minnesota’s Leader in K12 Computer Science Education. Speaking points, a logo, stickers, presentation templates, and print collateral helped reinforce the leadership positioning. Supporting internal champions in adopting the messaging included writing bios, event scripts, and partner outreach emails that led with the campaign’s key messages. In addition, closely related subbrands were updated to coordinate with the variety of programs engaged in computer science education across the district (K-12).

- ★ CS in BPS (subbrand)
- ★ Computer Science Immersion (at schools)
- ★ Digital Learning



In Bloomington, we pride ourselves on being Minnesota's leader for K12 computer science education.

We start with **computer science immersion** in our elementary and middle schools because the best time to build a computing identity is when you are young. Our computer science schools provide a deep, immersive experience centered on building logic and problem-solving skills through creative exploration and joy.

In addition, our **CS in BPS** pathway provides broad exposure to computer science for all students with integrated learning and classroom activities throughout the year. We also offer both introductory and advanced courses for grades 9-12, including cybersecurity, AP computer science, data science, and robotics. We are one of the few districts in Minnesota offering online AP Computer Science through New Code Academy, which is open to any student in Minnesota.

Our goal is to empower students to joyfully and creatively solve real-world challenges through computer science. Our three pillars:

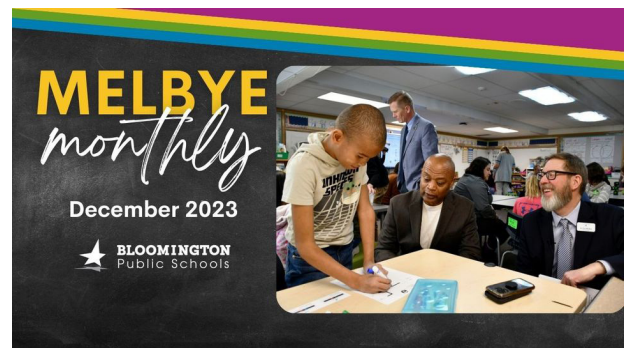
- ★ **SKILLS** - necessary for **success in the future are**: creativity, collaboration, communication, persistence, and confidence in dealing with complex, open-ended problems;
- ★ **EQUITY** - **promotes engagement in science, technology, engineering, and math fields** for young women, lower-income students, and students of color; and
- ★ **JOY** - empowers all students as creators and contributors to their communities, inspiring **agency and joy** throughout the learning process.

## Strategy #2: Storytelling & Communications

Through strategic communications efforts, our communications team disseminated key messages and information as evidence of our leadership position. Feature articles in district publications, presentations at school board meetings, and endorsements from parent and community partners helped raise awareness and generate interest in computer science education.

Website stories, newsletter articles, and social media content highlighted computer science achievements, innovative programs, and success stories. By repeatedly engaging with stakeholders and sharing success stories, we built trust and credibility while promoting the value of computer science for all students.

- ★ [Board Meeting Presentation](#)
- ★ [Sample News Item](#)
- ★ [Social Media Posts](#)
- ★ [District Newsletter Sample](#)



## Strategy #3: Events & Engagement

Actively engaging with the community through events and initiatives fosters interest in computer science. By hosting academic events, guest speaker events, and career panels, BPS provided students, parents, and community members with opportunities to learn about the benefits of computer science education. Signature events include:

- ★ [Coding at the Capitol](#) (January 2023) ([photos](#))
- ★ Computer Science Education Week (Annually in December)
- ★ Think Like A Computer Scientist (ThinkCS!) (Annually in April)
- ★ Tech Careers Panel for High School (Fall preceding course registration)



## Strategy #4: Partnerships

Bloomington is an economic center in Minnesota (home to Mall of America, Best Buy, and many smaller technology companies). Securing parent and business leader partnerships and endorsements reinforced the district's leadership position beyond the educational community and showcased the district's commitment to excellence and innovation in computer science.

- ★ [CodeSavvy](#)
- ★ [Girls Who Code](#)
- ★ [Genesys Works](#)
- ★ [University of Minnesota L+T Learning Collaborative](#)
- ★ [MN Computer Science Teachers of America](#)
- ★ [The Works Museum](#)
- ★ [BootUp](#)
- ★ [CreateMPLS](#)

## Strategy #5: Third-party Endorsements/Awards/Recognitions & Celebrations

The team pursued third-party endorsements and recognition within the tech industry and educational community to bolster its reputation and visibility. In seeking endorsements from tech nonprofits, applying to serve on advisory boards, and promoting student competitions, the District has inspired achievement, extended learning and networking opportunities, and earned a seat at the table to influence public policy. The vision, clear goals and messaging have also supported district grant applications.

- ★ [Grant Received from Amazon's Future Engineers Program](#)
- ★ Computer Science Coordinator Named to [MDE Computer Science Working Group](#)
- ★ [Featured Speaker for Computer Science Teachers of America](#)
- ★ [MDE Commissioner of Education Visits Bloomington](#)
- ★ [CS Coordinator Invited to the White House During Computer Science Week](#)

## Strategy #6 Internal Engagement: AI for Educators (Added in fall 2023)

Early in 2023, the computer science and digital learning teams embraced AI in K12 education and leveraged their computer science leadership position to drive the district's policy and practice decisions. A position statement laid the groundwork for professional development and a clear district position for all staff.

*"Bloomington Public Schools acknowledges the transformative power of Artificial Intelligence in education. We are committed to guiding responsible, safe and ethical use through the development of clear A.I. guidelines and frameworks that empower both teachers and students to engage with, innovate, and make informed decisions while using artificial intelligence."*

- ★ [Position Statement & Staff Communication & Staff Newsletter & School Pages](#)
- ★ [Teacher AI Presentation](#)
- ★ [Leveraging AI in Education](#)
- ★ [AMSD Presentation](#)
- ★ [CSTA Presentations](#)
- ★ [UDL](#)
- ★ [District Newsletter Article](#)

## Strategy #7 Digital Marketing

A digital marketing pilot, including Google Ads, social media advertising, and geofencing Mall of America STEM events, increased awareness and interest in computer science programs beyond the district borders. The team targeted key demographics, including K-12 families, businesses, and tech enthusiasts. The pilot successfully drove traffic to the website but was discontinued due to budget constraints.



Bloomington Public Schools is recognized as the State's Leader in Computer Science Education as evidenced by the number of students enrolled in computer science education programs, partnerships with computer science advocacy organizations, and influence at the state and national levels. The leadership position has helped the district secure grant funding to innovate teaching and learning and inspire statewide investment in computer science education.

### Enrollment Goals:

- ★ Both Elementary Computer Science Immersion Schools are fully enrolled.
- ★ Both Computer Science Immersion Middle Schools are at capacity and have waiting lists.
- ★ Approximately 150 students are enrolled in Advanced Placement Principles of Computer Science this school year, tripling enrollment over two years, in addition to enrollment a robust selection of CS electives.
- ★ Middle school computer science enrollment is **more than 51% female**, supporting the goals of diversifying the pipeline for the profession.

### Partnerships and Endorsements:

- ★ Secured national [Grant Received from Amazon's Future Engineers Program](#)
- ★ Successful partnerships with local employers have provided dozens of guest speakers and panelists for high school events.
- ★ Events to spotlight Computer Science Education continue to attract the attention of policymakers, including Coding at the Capitol at the start of the 2023 session.
- ★ The City of Bloomington issued a proclamation for Computer Science Education Week.
- ★ Members of the Computer Science Team have shared the Bloomington program at more than ten state and national conferences and events, including twice for the state Superintendent's Association (MASA).

### Policy Advocacy:

- ★ The district has eliminated pre-requisites for entry-level computer science courses, except where supported by data, with a goal of eliminating barriers to entry.
- ★ The 2023 Legislative Session included \$1 million in funding for a state workgroup for Computer Science and the addition of a Computer Science Education coordinator at the Department of Education (the first ever), providing an advocate and strategic plan that will bring more future funding.
- ★ Bloomington's Computer Science Coordinator was invited to serve on the state workgroup, which resulted in Minnesota's first [Computer Science Education State Strategic Plan](#). Dr. Holter was also invited to the White House in December 2023 to represent the Computer Science Teachers of Association in federal policy discussions during Computer Science Week; she serves as the chair of the CSTA Policy Committee.
- ★ Additional thought leadership opportunities include [eschoolnews](#), [CSTA Editorial Board](#)
- ★ Although an invitation to the Governor has yet to garner a visit, the [Commissioner of Education selected a Bloomington Middle School to visit during Computer Science Education Week](#), gaining additional credibility and publicity for the program.

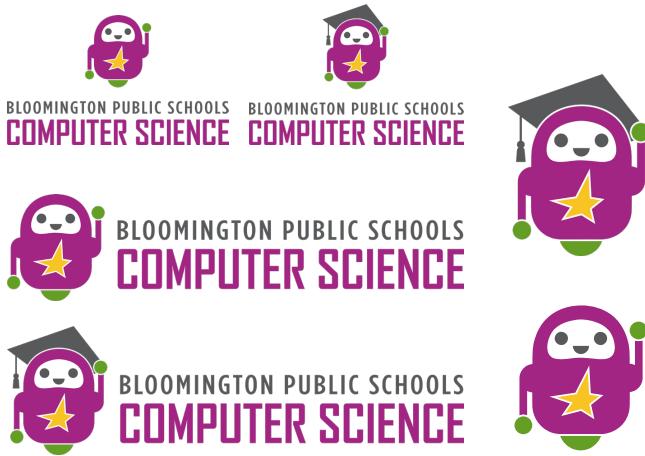




## BRAND

### BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS COMPUTER SCIENCE IMMERSION BRAND GUIDELINES

#### LOGOS



#### BADGES



#### COLOR PALETTE



| GREY                | PURPLE             | BLUE               | GREEN               | YELLOW            | WHITE             |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| HEX #58595B         | HEX #A22583        | HEX #006394        | HEX #649E25         | HEX #F8C423       | HEX #FFFFFF       |
| RGB 88, 89, 91      | RGB 162, 37, 131   | RGB 0, 99, 148     | RGB 100, 158, 37    | RGB 248, 196, 35  | RGB 255, 255, 255 |
| CMYK 64, 56, 53, 28 | CMYK 41, 99, 10, 0 | CMYK 94, 60, 20, 3 | CMYK 67, 17, 100, 3 | CMYK 3, 23, 96, 0 | CMYK 0, 0, 0, 0   |
| PMS COOL GRAY 11 C  | PMS 248 C          | PMS 7691 C         | PMS 7737 C          | PMS 123 C         | PMS 100% WHITE    |

#### TYPOGRAPHY

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| <p>ABCDEFGHIJKLMN<br/>OPQRSTUVWXYZ<br/>abcdefghijklmn<br/>opqrstuvwxyz</p> <p>AgencyFB Bold<br/>Stylized headlines</p> | <p>ABCDEFGHIJKLMN<br/>OPQRSTUVWXYZ<br/>abcdefghijklmn<br/>opqrstuvwxyz</p> <p>Century Gothic Bold<br/>Headlines &amp; subheads</p> | <p>ABCDEFGHIJKLMN<br/>OPQRSTUVWXYZ<br/>abcdefghijklmn<br/>opqrstuvwxyz</p> <p>Century Gothic Regular<br/>Body Copy</p> |
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## DIGITAL ADS



Minnesota's Leader In K-12  
Computer Science Education

# COMPUTER SCIENCE FOR ALL

*In Bloomington Public Schools*



BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
COMPUTER SCIENCE

[LEARN MORE](#)

BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# MINNESOTA'S LEADER

COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION



BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
COMPUTER SCIENCE

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Minnesota's Leader  
In K-12 Computer  
Science Education

# COMPUTER SCIENCE FOR ALL

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# COMPUTER SCIENCE IS

joyful



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COMPUTER SCIENCE

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## HIGH SCHOOL REGISTRATION MATERIALS PROMOTING COMPUTER SCIENCE

**BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
COMPUTER SCIENCE**

What careers don't use technology? It's a short list. Every field depends on solutions created with computer science. Think robotics, applications, websites, data analysis, sound engineering, augmented reality or artificial intelligence.

We want all students to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to thrive in a connected digital world. As Minnesota's leader in K12 computer science, Bloomington Public Schools continues to expand its computer science education pathways for all.

**BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
COMPUTER SCIENCE**

**K12 COMPUTER SCIENCE WAA**

AMINIGA • SECURITY • CLOUD TECHNOLOGIES • TAMARTA/ENERGY • BILIDIBIL HADDA WAA LAALU HADA WAAAN • DAWLADA CAASIMADA • TECHNOLOGY IN THE REAL WORLD • SUURTO WACAN

DHIIRRO GALINTA ARDAYA • KOSCIUSKA FIKIRKA • KA DAWR DAAWADADA KHIBRADADA

Somali

**COMPUTER SCIENCE**

ART & DESIGN • ENERGY

SECURITY • HEALTHCARE

EMPOWERING STUDENTS

**BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
COMPUTER SCIENCE**

Alexandra Holter, PhD. | she/her/hers  
Bloomington Public Schools  
Computer Science Coordinator  
aholter@isd271.org

**MINNESOTA'S LEADER**  
COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION

**High School Computer Sciences (CS):**

- Offer introductory and AP courses at all schools.
- Broaden participation to represent the student population.
- Strengthen skills to engineer solutions for real-world problems.

**BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
COMPUTER SCIENCE**

**CIENCIAS DE LA COMPUTACIÓN ES**

SEGURIDAD • SECURITY • TECNOLOGÍA EN LA VIDA • ENERGÍA • LIBERTAD EN LAS CIENCIAS • INTELIGENCIA • SALUD • TECNOLOGÍA INTELIGENTES • CARRERAS INTELIGENTES

EMPODERAR A LOS ESTUDIANTES • DESARROLLAR PENSADORES • EXPERIENCIAS ATRACTIVAS

Spanish

### COURSE PATHWAYS

What's your interest?

| What's your interest?  | 9th Grade                             | 10th Grade                                | 11th Grade                               | 12th Grade                                  |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| I am interested in CS, especially coding language.                     | AP Computer Science Principles        | AP Computer Science A                     | *Genius Bar Independent Study            | Internship or PSEO                          |
| I am interested in a wide variety of CS fields and career exploration. | Exploring CS and/or Cybersecurity     | Robotics and/or Artificial Intelligence   | Digital Electronics and/or Intro to IT   | Java & Python (Access Point Apprenticeship) |
| I am interested in art and design.                                     | Exploring CS and/or Mobile App Design | Web Design and/or Artificial Intelligence | Digital Imaging and/or Video Game Design | Graphic Arts and/or Video Game Prog.        |
| I am interested in CS careers and/or a four year CS degree.            | AP Computer Science Principles        | Cybersecurity Robotics & AI               | AP Computer Science A                    | Internship or PSEO                          |

\*\*Not all pathways are listed, please connect with school counselor to imagine your future.

English



## COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION WEEK PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS



**BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**COMPUTER SCIENCE**

**MINNESOTA'S LEADER**  
COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION

COMMUNITY PARTNERS  
Code Savvy | **the Works** | **M**

| COMPUTER SCIENCE OPPORTUNITIES  | ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  |
|---|--|
| <b>Computer Science Immersion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deep, immersive computer science experiences centered on computer science skill building through creative exploration and joy.</li> </ul> <b>Computer Science for All</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broad computer science exposure for all students through standalone and integrated computer science experiences.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Computer Science experiences per year led by each school's Technology Integrationist</li> <li>Teaching computational thinking skills</li> <li>Include concepts such as problem decomposition and algorithm design</li> <li>Study practices such as collaboration and debugging</li> </ul> |
| MIDDLE SCHOOL   | HIGH SCHOOL  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 quarters of the exploratory course "Computer Science and Engineering"</li> <li>Access to after-school computer science extra curricular opportunities</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 AP Computer Science offerings</li> <li>Interdisciplinary computer science pathway opportunities</li> <li>Including local real-world industry experiences                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genesys Works</li> <li>Access Point</li> </ul> </li> </ul>    |

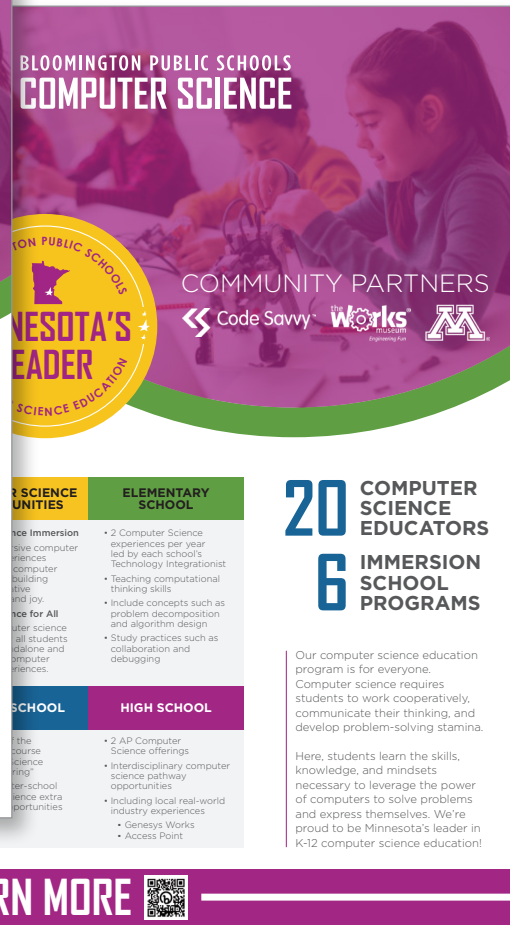
**20** COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATORS  
**6** IMMERSION SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Our computer science education program is for everyone. Computer science requires students to work cooperatively, communicate their thinking, and develop problem-solving stamina.

Here, students learn the skills, knowledge, and mindsets necessary to leverage the power of computers to solve problems and express themselves. We're proud to be Minnesota's leader in K-12 computer science education!



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**BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**COMPUTER SCIENCE**

**MINNESOTA'S LEADER**  
COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION

COMMUNITY PARTNERS  
Code Savvy | **the Works** | **M**


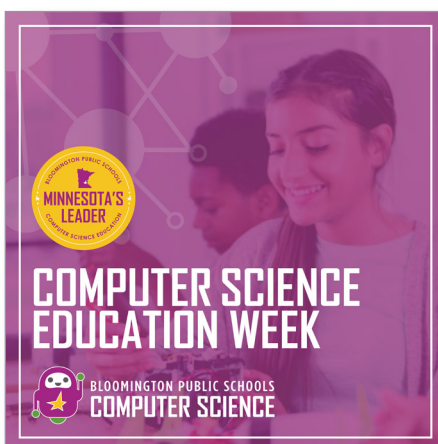
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**MINNESOTA'S LEADER**  
COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION

**COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION WEEK**

**BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**COMPUTER SCIENCE**



**COMPUTER SCIENCE FOR ALL**

In Bloomington Public Schools

Computer Science Education Week included activities at every school, a Principal Toolkit (Computer Science flyer, school newsletter article & social media graphics).



## DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

# School Pages

Winter 2023-24





**A Message from Superintendent Eric Melbye**

### Living the Plan

Bloomington Public Schools is moving into the next phase of its Strategic Planning process, living the plan. Our initial strategic planning work resulted in a new mission and vision, identified five actionable goals and corresponding strategies.

Our five Goal Action Teams have been meeting for the past few months to develop strategies for implementation, identify success measures and key performance indicators. These are critical pieces for the next important step of preparing first-year action plans for each of the five goals. We are forming Implementation Teams consisting of staff and community stakeholders to create the action plans.

We invite you to follow along with our progress. Coming soon is a data dashboard to track key performance indicators that measure the success of our Strategic Plan. Watch for the dashboard online at [bit.ly/bps-strategicplan](http://bit.ly/bps-strategicplan).

Direct questions related to the strategic planning process to [communications@isd271.org](mailto:communications@isd271.org).



### BPS facing 2024-25 budget shortfall

There is an understanding among school and district leaders, educators and legislators that funding is central to providing a high-quality education and often leads to improved outcomes. By many measures this belief was a factor in the Minnesota Legislature approving historic funding for schools earlier this year.

The funding primarily addresses shortages school districts have endured covering increasing costs for special education and English language learning programming - otherwise referred to as cross-subsidies.

As superintendents, we appreciate the significant investments, but included in the education bill were new mandates, programs and requirements that came with increased costs. Some of the new requirements were funded, others partially or temporarily funded, and several came with no funding.

A confluence of other factors is creating a challenging fiscal environment for the 2024-25 school year.

For starters, our K-12 enrollment this year is down by 122 students to 9,680, the lowest enrollment in more than 40 years, and a loss of revenue of approximately \$1.3 million. In total, our enrollment was nine students short of projections - not bad forecasting from our finance and information services teams. With state funding largely distributed through per student formulas, this decline in student enrollment will

have a significant impact on our revenue. Read the latest enrollment report at [bit.ly/bps-enroll-report-2023](http://bit.ly/bps-enroll-report-2023).

For years, we made budget reductions - some large that were felt by staff and families, and many smaller cuts with little noticeable impact - to balance our operating budget. These annual budget adjustments were shelved when the pandemic hit in part because of the one-time federal pandemic relief funds.

A portion of those funds, in combination with our fund balance, allowed us to avoid significant cost containment measures for three years. The COVID-19 relief funds are not an on-going source of revenue. In fact, they are winding down next year.

So what does this mean for Bloomington Public Schools? Simply, a budget shortfall for the 2024-25 school year, and the foreseeable future. We are projecting an initial \$4 million budget adjustment as part of a multi-year right sizing the budget process.

While the specifics of the budget adjustments have not been finalized in order to allow for staff and community feedback, our goal is to minimize the impact on any one school, grade level or department.

We welcome your questions and ideas via Let's Talk, [bit.ly/bps-lets-talk](http://bit.ly/bps-lets-talk).

**The fiscal outlook for 2024-25 school year is challenging.**

Bloomington 150 271 Educational Services Center 1350 West 106th Street Bloomington, MN 55611-4126

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## Calendar

Approved

has approved the 2024-25 dates include:

- T School 6-12
- T School K-5
- JAN 3 Break
- APR 4 Break
- E School


### Minnesota's Computer Science Leader



We celebrated Computer Science Education Week (CSEdWeek) Dec. 4-10, an exciting time for Bloomington Public Schools as Minnesota's leader in K-12 computer science education.

MN Department of Education Commissioner Willie Jett visited Indian Mounds Elementary to see our Computer Science Immersion program in action. The program provides immersive experiences centered on skill-building through creative exploration. Over the past five years, the program has expanded from two to six BPS schools.


Also during CSEdWeek, Dr. Alexandra Holter, computer science coordinator, traveled to Washington, D.C. on behalf of the Computer Science Teachers Association. Holter was one of 10 teachers and the only Minnesota invited to attend an event at the White House discussing inclusive approaches to artificial intelligence (AI) education in computer science.



The City of Bloomington proclaimed December 4-10, 2023, Computer Science Education Week in Bloomington, highlighting the district's focus on increasing access to computer science, and providing students at all levels with computational and critical thinking skills necessary for the modern digital era.


Learn more about our computer science programs at [bit.ly/bps-cs-programs](http://bit.ly/bps-cs-programs).

### Valley View Middle leaders swap roles



Valley View Middle School's principal and assistant principal are flip-flopping roles for the remainder of the school year.

Principal Megan Willrett requested the switch in November to focus on specific areas where she could contribute more effectively to the school's continued success. Willrett said the shift "allows for a more targeted approach to the aspects of school administration that I am most passionate about."



Assistant Principal Anthony Sicoli will serve as the interim principal. Sicoli became assistant principal of Valley View Middle in July 2022. Previously he served as an administrative dean in Chaska, a middle and high school math teacher, and a professional development plan coordinator and equity lead in Minneapolis. Sicoli holds a master's degree in curriculum and instruction - learning technologies and is working toward a Ph.D. in educational policy and leadership.

The district will oversee a principal selection process in the spring to consider internal and external candidates for the role.

### Powered by Solar



Oak Grove Elementary joins four other district schools to generate clean energy through solar panels on its roof. The solar array went live in October.

The panels directly power the school when there is a need. Energy generated when power is not needed offsets the load on the power grid. In return, the district receives credits on its energy bills.

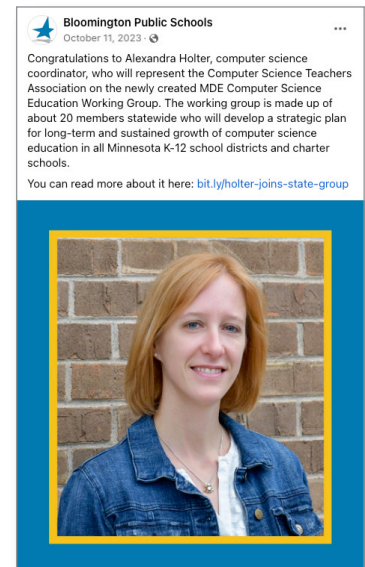
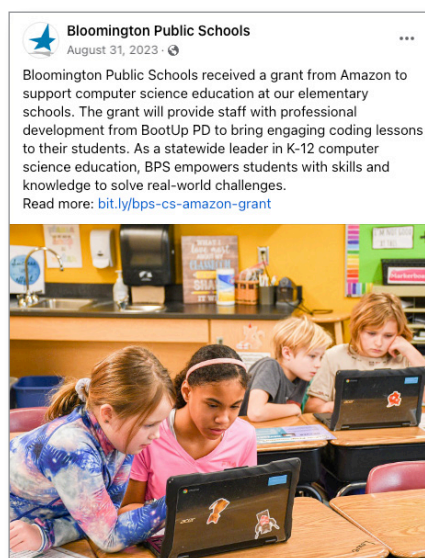
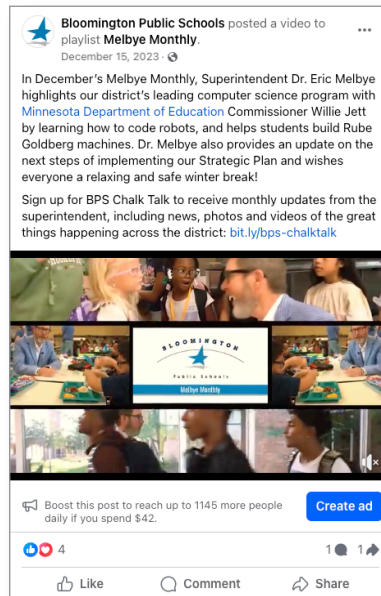
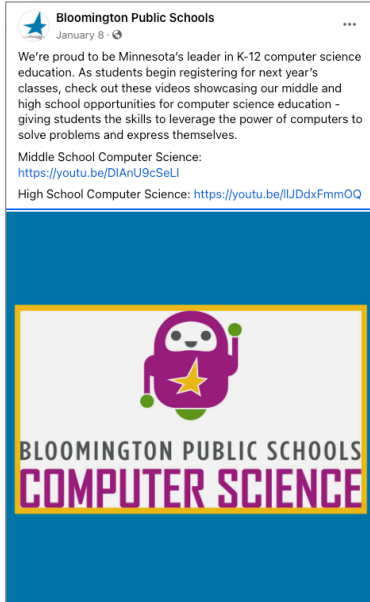
The district is in the early stages of a 25-year solar plan estimated to save \$7 million over that period. Other schools with solar panels include Jefferson, Kennedy, Indian Mounds, and Valley View Middle. Poplar Bridge and Oak Grove Middle School are next in line for solar panels.

In addition to on-site solar, the district participates in solar farms in Dakota County to receive further energy bill credits. Combining the solar energy produced on- and off-site, the district gets about 31 percent of its energy from solar power, a percentage that will increase with further projects.

View the full calendar on our website: [bit.ly/bps-calendar](http://bit.ly/bps-calendar)



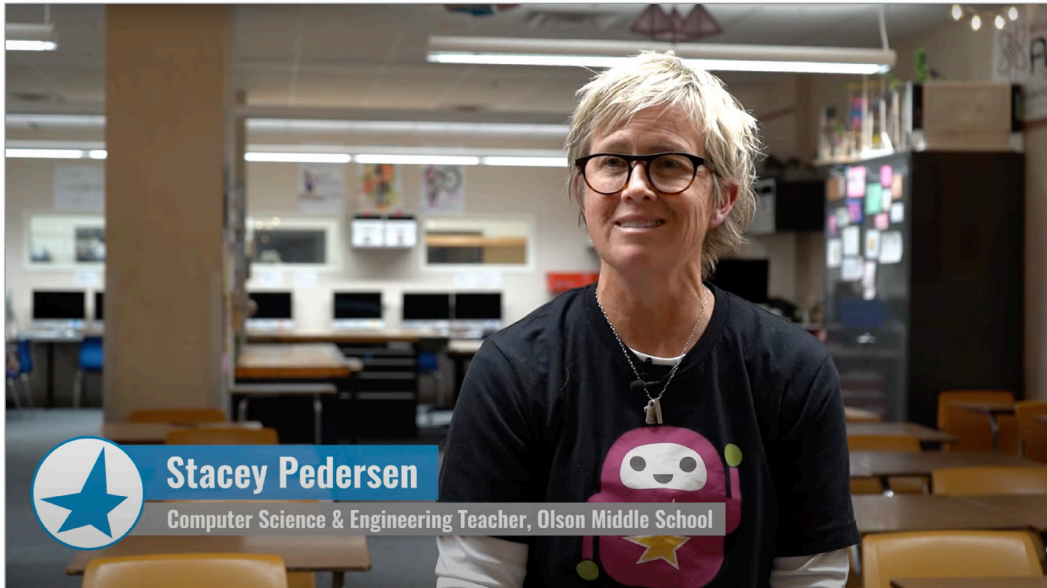
## SOCIAL MEDIA



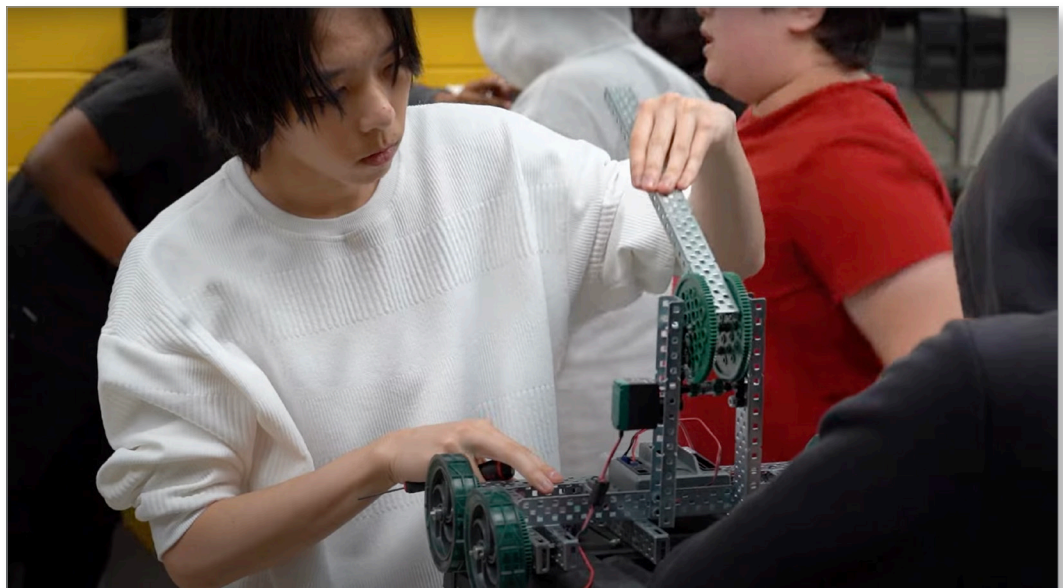
[View more on Facebook](#)



## VIDEOS



*Computer Science in Middle School*



*Computer Science in High School*



## PRESENTATIONS

**CSSTA**

### Social Justice: Making CS Connections Transparent and Tangible

Dr. Alexandra Holter  
Andrea Wilson Vazquez

July 2023

**Dr. Alexandra Holter**  
K-12 Computer Science Coordinator  
Bloomington Public Schools, MN  
@msholter

**Andrea Wilson Vazquez**  
Deputy Director, ECEP Alliance  
UT Austin  
@wilsondrea

Social justice takes equity one step further by offering solutions and action steps that work towards long-term, sustainable, equitable access for generations to come.

[-Strategies for Inclusive & Effective CS Pedagogy course](#)

digital learning  
BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Responsible AI Integration in Education

<https://bit.ly/AMSDai>

November 9, 2023  
Dr. Alexandra Holter, Andrew Rummel, & Holly Stadsen  
Digital Learning, Bloomington Public Schools

**Strategic Plan**  
Referenced language and goals from our strategic plan to stay in alignment with our mission and vision

**Comprehensive Review of Business and Industry**  
How is AI impacting other areas? What are the problems we don't have answers to yet? How is AI impacting K-12 and higher ed?

**Stakeholder Feedback**  
Provided stakeholder groups with a draft framework and guiding principles. Gathered feedback and made changes.

Public Schools acknowledges the **transformative power of Artificial Intelligence** in education.

**High Standards & Expectations**  
Safe and ethical use towards future ready skills

**Future Ready Skills**  
Empowering students and staff with AI skills.

**Cultural Proficiency**  
Using AI to advance equity

**You!**

digital learning  
BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Andrew Rummel**  
Digital Learning Coordinator  
Grade 6 - Adult Education  
arummel@bmsd71.org

**Dr. Alexandra Holter**  
Computer Science Coordinator  
Early Learning - Adult  
aholter@bmsd71.org

5:00


|  |  |   |                                   |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| transportation to Olson                        | places co-teaching                                       | prioritize belonging and joy                      | <b>POWER</b>                      |
| scheduling at elementary non-immersion schools | research study with UMN continuation rate with immersion | windows / mirrors potential for real world impact | voice in the classroom            |
|  |  |   | voice in collaborative activities |
|  |  |   | voice in the curriculum           |
|  |  |   | voice in the ecosystem            |

Thought-leadership presentation on Artificial Intelligence in K12 for the Association of Metropolitan School Districts (MN).






## RACK POSTCARD




BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
**COMPUTER SCIENCE**

### ALEXANDRA HOLTER

Computer Science Coordinator  
aholter@isd271.org | 952-681-6552




**ACCESS**




We believe all K-12 students deserve access to computer science education in preparation for the modern workforce.

**IDENTITY**




We want all students to develop their identities as computational thinkers and computer science creators.

**SUCCESS**




[leave space for a sentence of text here to be filled in later... in preparation for the modern workforce]

**POWER**



With voice and choice in the classroom and in life, we want all students to have opportunities to express themselves creatively and solve problems they care about.


**SKILLS**



Computer science teachers transferable thinking skills like pattern recognition, algorithm design, debugging, and perseverance.

**LEARN MORE**


**EQUITY**



Early access to computer science helps increase participation of underrepresented groups in STEM fields.

**OR CODE**

**JOY**



Computer science helps learners express themselves creatively, solve problems they care about, and create new and fun innovations!

**BLOOMINGTON**  
Public Schools

90% of parents want children to learn computer science.

90%

Currently, only 28% of Minnesota High Schools offer computer science courses.

53%

