



Executive Summary

2026



2026 Participants

Program Overview

Evolution to Meet the Moment

In its fourth year, CS PD Week continued its core mission to equip Illinois K-12 educators with the knowledge, skills, and confidence required to deliver enriching, high-quality computer science (CS) experiences to their students.

Presented in partnership with the Learning Technology Center, CSTA Illinois, CS4IL, and ECEP Illinois, this multi-day immersive professional development experience served as a vital vehicle for districts to grow their CS programming, increase capacity for CS integration in K-8 classrooms, and prepare students for the future workforce.

Recognizing the rapid shift in the technological landscape, this year's event **intentionally evolved its foundational computer science focus to integrate AI literacy** and implementation in its content. This strategic shift ensures that educators leave not just with technical coding skills, but with the specific pedagogical capacity to lead students through the next frontier of the digital age.



2026 Program

June 15-18, 2026

Capital Area Career Center
Springfield, IL

Organizers

Learning
Technology Center,
CS4IL,
Discovery Partners
Institute
CSTA Illinois,
ECEP Illinois

100+

Participants

48

Illinois School Districts
Represented



Quick Facts



4 Years In & Still Going Strong

In its fourth year, this program has become a mainstay in the statewide CS education community.



New Name, Fresh Outlook

As CS + AI PD Week, our content evolved to explore AI - both the technology itself and how it offers a approachable gateway to computer science learning.



On Track for Relevant Discoveries

Across three tracks, participants engaged with 34 sessions focused on AI foundations + strategies for connecting with elementary, middle, and high school learners.



The More, The Merrier

Over 100 participants took part in this year's trainings - a new record.



Key Outcomes

From this professional learning, participants:

- **Gained basic competency** in core CS and AI topics and teaching strategies
- **Engaged with a passionate, statewide K-12 CS community**, providing them with connections and support to implement engaging CS and AI learning experiences back in their home district
- **Were inspired and empowered** to bring CS + AI learning opportunities back to their classrooms

Highlights

Accelerating Teacher Capacity & Program Growth

Thanks to the vital support of the IL CS Equity Grant alongside financial support from CSTA and the National Science Foundation (Grant No. 2607763), year four marked a massive milestone in CS + AI PD Week's regional scale.

While the program reached a combined total of over 200 educators across its first three years, attendance exploded in 2026 alone, from a historical average of 30 participants to over 100 educators from across the state.

To meet this diverse demand and maximize instructional depth, the event expanded the content offerings to meet the diverse needs of the participants across three grade level bands.



Over four days of immersive learning, teachers explored developmentally appropriate instructional methods across multiple domains, including AI literacy, coding, computational thinking, cybersecurity, digital citizenship, robotics, and physical computing.

This variety of content allowed educators to align their training directly with their home district's specific curricular gaps, radically increasing their confidence to deploy these concepts on day one.

Highlights

Increasing Access, with an Added Incentive

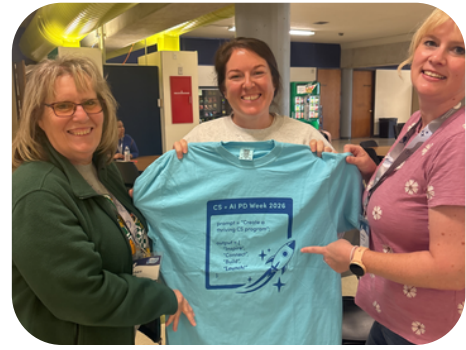


To ensure that professional growth translates directly into increased student access, the grant funding was strategically deployed to eliminate participation barriers for educators.

All participants attended at a significantly reduced registration cost (\$100) and will receive a \$600 stipend upon completion of all pre- and post-event surveys, ensuring equitable access for under-resourced districts.

Increased funding also allowed the conference to provide fully covered hotel accommodations for educators traveling more than 50 miles one-way, ensuring rural and remote Illinois communities were actively represented.

Teachers were awarded 28 professional development hours, validating their intensive commitment to pedagogical growth.



Highlights

Networking for Sustained Success

Building sustainable teacher confidence requires ongoing peer support that goes beyond the summer. To deepen professional connections between new and veteran CS educators, this year's event featured interactive networking initiatives, including lunch time connection exercises and a gamified community experience to connect and engage participants.

These touchpoints successfully facilitated the creation of a robust, statewide CS educators network. To sustain this momentum throughout the academic year, participants will have the opportunity to participate in additional professional learning sessions with stipends available as part of the NSF project. The goal of these events will be to allow participants to collaborate, share resource guides, troubleshoot implementation challenges, and continuously support one another—turning summer professional learning into enduring classroom capacity across Illinois.



A Day in the Life

Daily Agenda

- Participants started with a group meal before going into classrooms to learn about different CS and AI-focused resources.
- During classroom sessions, participants had the opportunity to explore various resources and curricula from leading CS and STEM learning providers.
- Faculty from various universities shared valuable content:
 - **University of Illinois Urbana –Champaign:** Human-Centered Design, Cybersecurity, and Data Science.
 - **Northern Illinois University:** Middle school CS and AI curriculum
 - **University of Alabama in Huntsville:** Cybersecurity, free high school curriculum
- Experienced in-service teachers also shared how they incorporate various CS, AI, digital literacy, and 3-D printing resources into their curriculum and across content areas
- Between sessions, participants built their personal learning network during group lunches with all other event participants
- This year's evening social was cancelled due to severe weather; participants spent their evenings connecting with others informally.



Featured Sessions

- AI Foundations with Code.org
- Computational Thinking (CT) in the Age of AI
- Unlocking CS & AI Brilliance: Cybersecurity
- Small Shifts, Big Thinking: Integrating CT across Content Areas
- Equity in Elementary CS
- Coding Takes Flight: Drones
- UDL for CS Grades K-8
- Inside Machine Learning
- Vibe Coding
- 3D Printing for Makerspace

What are participants saying?

"My students thank you, their families thank you and I thank you! I walking away empowered and inspired to pat it forward. So excited to implement CS & AI with my students, in my classroom, at my school, and across my district! So honored to be part of the CS 4 Illinois movement!"



"Everything was well planned, and I felt valued and supported throughout the event. I am excited to use the knowledge and skills I gained to better serve my students."

"Sessions have been awesome and I have truly learned a lot. These PD sessions have been truly engaging."

"This conference is the best I attend all year! Thank you so much for all the informative sessions and time to network. This was the best experience!"

"I am new to computer science, but I am looking forward to implementing the strategies learned today."

"Great conference! I would definitely be interested in attending next year!"



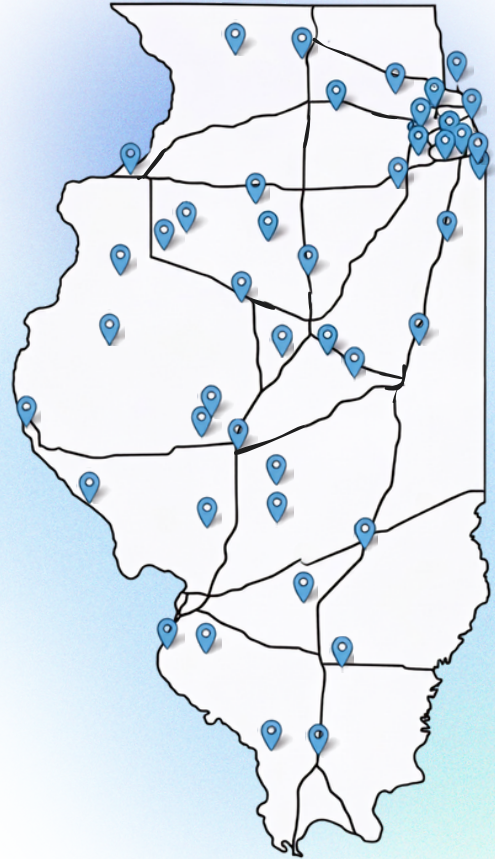
Attendee Feedback

- **92%** reported the training was appropriately leveled to experience
- **98%** reported they can apply the skills they learned from the training to their classrooms
- **98%** reported they were satisfied with the training
- **98%** reported an increase in confidence teaching computer science

Next Steps

Goals for 2027

- Grow the event to 125 K-12 participants
- Continue expanding learning tracks to include more choices for participants, with varying levels of CS and AI teaching experience
- Differentiate tracks by experience level- beginner, intermediate, advanced
- Acquire consistent funding that allows the event to continue covering the cost of travel and accommodations for everyone
- Partner with additional entities to increase stakeholder engagement, such as counselors, instructional coaches, and community college instructors



Districts Served

Amboy CUSD 272 · Ball-Chatam School District · Beach Park CCSD 3 · Bensenville SD 2 · Blue Ridge CUSD 18 · Bluford Unit School District 318 · CCSD 168 · CCSD 89 · CUSD 308 · Calvary Academy · Carlinville CUSD 1 · Centralia SD 135 · Chicago Public Schools, Dist 299 · Columbia CUSD 4 · Dolton SD 149 · East Peoria SD 86 · Effingham CUSD 40 · Fieldcrest CUSD 6 · Freeburg CCSD 70 · Freeport SD 145 · Galva CUSD 224 · Granite City CUSD 9 · Henry-Senachwine CUSD 5 · Indian Springs SD 109 · Jordan Catholic School · Kankakee SD 111 · LASSO-Tioga Elem Sch-Bensenville SD 2 · Marion CUSD 2 · Minooka CCSD 201 · Moline Coal Valley Schools · Northern Illinois University · Orland SD 135 · Patoka CUSD 100 · Paxton-Buckley-Loda CUD 10 · Pleasant Hill CUSD 3 · Pleasant Plains CUSD 8 · Porta CUSD 202 · Princeton HSD 500 · Riverdale CUSD 100 · Rockford SD 205 · SD U-46 · Salem CHSD 600 · Silvis SD 34 · Taylorville CUSD 3 · Tri Valley CUSD 3 · United CUSD 304 · Valley View CUSD 365U · Westville CUSD 2 · Woodstock CUSD 200

Event Organizers

