

LASD Computer Science Highlight

December 7, 2015



This year LAEF is paying to further enhance computer science education in LASD

LASD is Participating in Computer Science Education Week

This week, LASD is joining schools around the country to celebrate [Computer Science Education Week](#). This annual event is dedicated to inspiring K-12 students to take interest in computer science. Our students will be participating in the national [Hour of Code](#) program organized by [Code.org](#). They will try out several new coding tutorials during class times and lunch clubs.

Kids Who Learn Computer Science Learn Skills for Life

Around the world, K-12 computer science education is gaining momentum. Research organizations, universities, industry and governments now acknowledge that every student must have the opportunity to learn computer science. It teaches problem-solving, creativity, logic and other skills that [apply to learning every other subject](#). It also prepares students to be literate in the digital world - to not just consume technology but help create it. Computer science education prepares our students to be successful in any career.

Computer Science Education has Become Essential

In the U.S, many large school districts including [San Francisco Unified](#), [New York City](#) and [Los Angeles Unified](#) have just announced plans to bring computer science to every student. Los Altos School District (LASD) has been leading the way in this movement. We've already been teaching computer science for 6 years!

The computer science program at LASD started in 2009 with the district Digital Design class where sixth graders learned coding to create art and games. In 2011, the sixth [grade LASD CSTEM program](#) was started to give all students a year long study of computer science. Two years later, the elementary school STEM program was created and STEM teachers started teaching computer science to every student in K-5. Last year, the Jr High science teachers piloted a computer science integration unit in their curriculum.

LASD takes Computer Science Education to the Next Level

This school year, with increased funding from LAEF, LASD is enhancing it's computer science education program. Your donations to LAEF this year are providing students with many additional benefits:

Additional computer science teacher: LASD recently hired a new computer science teacher, Ms. Elice Bui, to teach some of the CSTEM classes for the 6th grade and help with the district computer science program.

Enhanced K-8 computer science curriculum, and integration: Ms. Sheena Vaidyanathan (Ms. V), the pioneer of our computer science program, continues to teach some CSTEM classes but now spends some of her time as the Computer Science Integration Specialist for the district further enhancing computer science curriculum, co-teaching K-8 classes when possible, and conducting professional development for the STEM teachers.

Computer science extensions in Junior High: Mrs V. is also working on a new computer science elective in the Jr High as well as further strengthening the computer science integration in the grade 7 and 8 science classrooms.

LASD Computer Science Teachers are on the Cutting Edge

LASD is considered a leader in computer science education. Our talented staff is involved in national boards on computer science education and in advocacy. Our staff has presented at many conferences including the [California STEM conference](#) and the [Computer Science Teachers Association](#) conference. The leading education technology resource edSurge's '[Teaching Kids to code guide](#)' includes several articles by our own LASD teacher, Ms V.

LAEF Pays for Computer Science in all LASD Elementary and Junior High Schools

The LASD Computer Science education has been made possible by your generous donations to the Los Altos Educational Foundation (LAEF). Thank you for your support in making LASD a leader in this space and for giving every student in our district access to computer science education.

Sincerely,

The 29 Members of the [LAEF Board](#)

