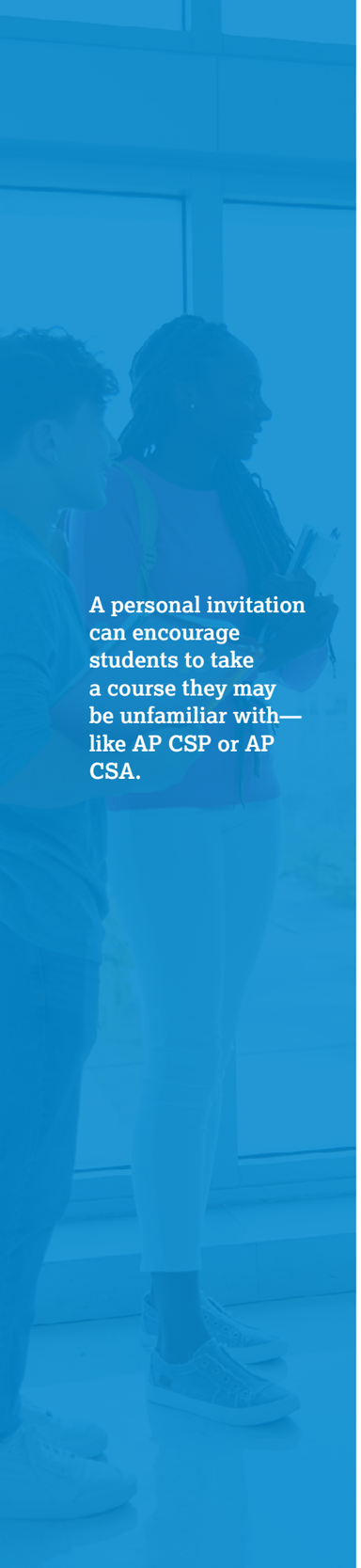
Recruiting Students for **AP®** Computer Science



A personal invitation can encourage students to take a course they may be unfamiliar with—like AP CSP or AP CSA.

As an educator, you play a vital role in your students' decisions to take AP® courses.

Use these evidence-based strategies to give all your students, especially those traditionally underrepresented in computer science, the opportunity to take AP Computer Science Principles (AP CSP) or AP Computer Science A (AP CSA).

Recruit groups

Recruit students from groups that represent your target demographic populations. Look to sports groups, clubs, or other courses to find groups of students who will enroll and provide social support for one another in the classroom (e.g., girls' basketball team, Spanish club, Black Student Union, AVID program).

Invite students personally

High school teachers can visit algebra classes during the course selection process to invite all students to enroll in their classes the following year—these students have already met the recommended prerequisites. In your school's presentation and handouts:

- Describe each course's key topics and computational thinking practices. Order free brochures at: **collegeboard.org/cspresources**
- Show how students in each class collaborate and build creative artifacts such as apps, digital music files, and animation.
- Explain how learning computer science can lead to many majors and career fields (e.g., graphic design, medicine, political science, engineering).
- When possible, let prospective students observe a classroom to learn more about the course and see their peers working on computing assignments.

Encourage students to show their work

Current students can be great peer advocates for AP computer science. For example, during Computer Science Education Week (usually in early December) and spring enrollment weeks, students can showcase their computing projects, such as the open-ended lab activities in CSA or the performance tasks in CSP. They can talk about their experience in the course. It's a good idea to take videos of students' projects for future recruitment. Check out what AP CSP students say about their projects and the course at **collegeboard.org/csp**.

Schedule a middle school demonstration so current or former high school students can present their work and talk about the course they took.

Reach out to parents

During family-oriented school events and in letters home, provide a single-page course information sheet that features:

- Key questions and topics that drive the course being described
- Potential real-world applications of the course
- Information about higher education computing majors
- Industry job information, including salaries

Make sure letters and course information sheets are available in several languages.

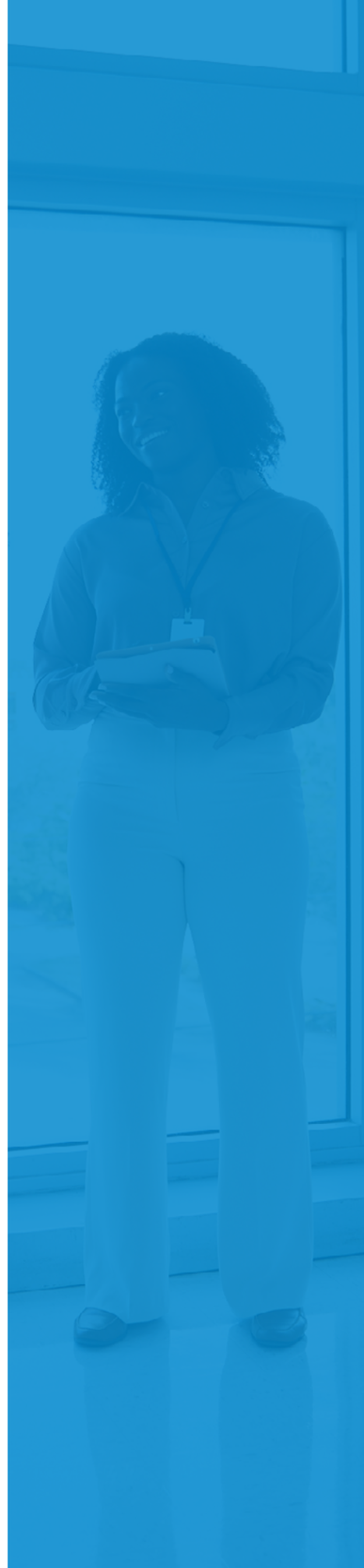
Reach out to counselors

Make sure counselors understand the courses' focus on creativity, communication, and collaboration. Use these talking points to help them think about which students would benefit most from taking AP computer science courses:

- Explain that students don't need previous computer science experience to take AP CSP or AP CSA and that Algebra I is the only recommended prerequisite.
- For AP CSP, explain that the course was designed with the help of the National Science Foundation and the College Board to engage a diverse group of students—like those at your school—in computer science.
- Include information about interdisciplinary computing majors.
- Provide industry job information, including salaries.
- If your school offers AP CSP and AP CSA, help your counselor understand the difference between these two courses and how to guide students into both.

Create enrollment policies for equity and diversity

All students should have equitable access to AP computer science courses, and your classrooms should be demographically representative of the school's population. Create policies that promote diversity in the courses rather than put up barriers that discourage underrepresented groups from participating.



The research-based strategies outlined here were compiled by Joanna Goode of the University of Oregon, coauthor of *Stuck in the Shallow End*.

References

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For more on AP Computer Science Principles, visit: **collegeboard.org/apcsp**

Learn more about AP Computer Science A at: **collegeboard.org/apcsa**