The Challenge

Computer science (CS) has rapidly become one of the fastest-growing subjects in U.S. schools, yet teacher preparation has not kept pace. Thousands of new teachers transition into CS each year—often mid-career—to meet student demand, but about 75% lack a degree in CS or CS education. **Many are the only CS teacher in their school, leaving them without opportunities for collaboration, mentoring, or departmental support.** Existing professional development often focuses on curriculum or content rather than pedagogy, inclusion, or sustained guidance, which contributes to teacher isolation and high attrition.

Even experienced CS teachers have limited access to community and leadership opportunities. **MENTORS in CS** addresses these challenges by connecting teachers across experience levels, building a professional network that strengthens teaching confidence, collaboration, and equity in classrooms serving all students.

> "I know what it's like to start teaching computer science on your own... I want to be that person who can be a springboard for ideas or support so that teachers don't feel so lonely and stay with teaching computer science—because we need them."
>
> — A High School CS Mentor

Our Solution

MENTORS in CS (Matching Experienced and Novice Teachers for Ongoing Rigorous Support in Computer Science) is an **evidence-based program.** Designed to build teacher capacity within **regional, affinity, and interest-based communities** while studying the most effective models for long-term teacher support.

We pair new and experienced CS teachers in year-long, one-on-one mentoring partnerships that promote confidence, reflection, and inclusive pedagogy. Structured mentoring cycles, monthly community of practice meetings, and a digital mentoring toolkit that supports sustained, individualized professional growth that goes beyond traditional short-term workshops. This approach offers **multiple equity supports** for mentors, mentees, and communities, ensuring teachers feel connected and prepared to deliver effective, inclusive CS instruction.

MENTORS in CS

Our Impact

Over five years, we have reached:

150+ TEACHERS

27.5K STUDENTS

18 STATES

Teachers demonstrate measurable growth in **knowledge, teaching confidence, sense of belonging, and use of inclusive pedagogical practices**, with statistically significant increases in teaching confidence.

90% of alumni mentors stay connected with their mentees, forming a lasting network of CS educators who continue to collaborate and lead.

Our program has also strengthened the broader **CSTA chapter network**, which adopted teacher peer mentoring as a formal expectation in 2023. Since sharing structures and lessons learned from **MENTORS in CS**, the percentage of chapters meeting mentoring expectations has grown from **20% in 2020 to 73% in 2025**, a key indicator of sustainable, nationwide capacity.

With sponsor support, **MENTORS in CS** can expand mentorship through **CSTA's 83 chapters** and reach thousands more teachers and students nationwide. Sponsorship directly funds **teacher stipends, mentor training, community facilitation, and evaluation**, ensuring each new CS teacher has access to a skilled mentor.

Your investment advances **equity and sustainability in computing education**, helping retain experienced CS teachers and strengthen program capacity in schools and districts.

Join Us

By sponsoring MENTORS in CS, you invest in a **stronger, more diverse CS teaching workforce**, ensuring that students from every background have access to inclusive, high-quality computer science education. Contact mentors@csteachers.org to learn more.

This project is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grants No. 2031314 and 2318232. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the NSF.