Skill Struck ®

2023

Accountability in Strengthening Communities with Skill Struck

Our mission at Skill Struck is threefold: inspire creators, grow problem solvers, and strengthen communities. We publish this report every year to show accountability in our mission to impact the communities we serve and show how we and our partners are making a difference in the lives of students and teachers using our products.

Note: In years previous, our Impact Reports have focused on demographic data from our district partners and Skill Struck staff. In light of the significant growth we've seen, and school districts' focus on student privacy, we cannot share demographic data that accurately reflects all of our student users. That being said, this year's report will focus on student and teacher stories, showing how computer science and AI have made an impact on their lives.

Strengthening Educators

2023 was a year full of innovation, creation, and growth for our products and our partnerships. We added to our computer science curriculum and activities for a more comprehensive K-12 experience. We also built new products! Including Chat for Schools, a safe ChatGPT replacement, and Learning Studio, the ultimate AI-powered teaching assistant.

These two new AI-powered products have saved educators multiple hours a week on administrative tasks, giving educators more time to focus their energy on their students. Strengthening educators and supporting them in their important roles will always be a top priority for Skill Struck.

"The tutor creator [saved me time] in that it could give students attention in my absence. The lesson plan/ activity generator also helped save me time thinking of new ideas. It assisted me in the simple fact that I had a guide on the side. Teachers value time and Chat for Schools helped with that."

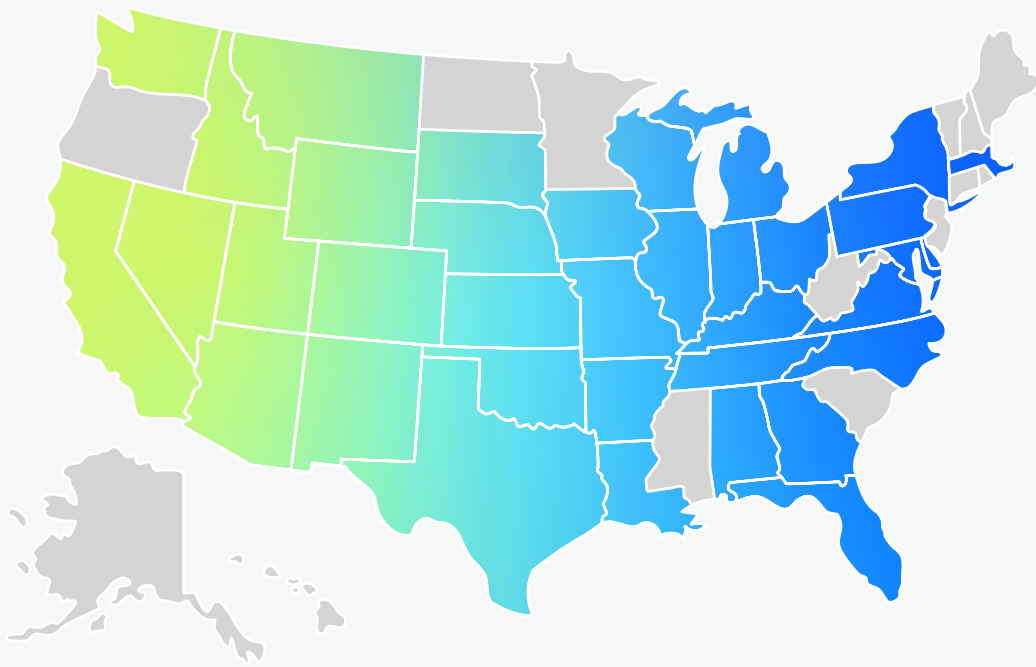**Michael Drezek**, *District Technology Integrator*
Lake Shore CSD

"My EMT teacher has expressed appreciation in having Chat for Schools to create activities - saving her multiple hours a night!"

Jennifer Reiff, *CTE Director*
Whitley County Consolidated Schools

Serving Communities

Our partnerships with K-12 school districts spanned into 36 different states in 2023! We serve school districts in rural, urban, suburban, and underrepresented communities.

1. New York	14. Texas	27. Arkansas
2. Mississippi	15. California	28. Colorado
3. Florida	16. Washington	29. Missouri
4. Indiana	17. Idaho	30. Kansas
5. Wisconsin	18. North Carolina	31. Massachusetts
6. Nevada	19. Louisiana	32. Maryland
7. Utah	20. South Dakota	33. Michigan
8. DC - Virginia	21. Virginia	34. Delaware
9. Illinois	22. Wyoming	35. Ohio
10. Georgia	23. Kentucky	36. Iowa
11. New Mexico	24. Tennessee	37. Pennsylvania
12. Oklahoma	25. Alabama	
13. Arizona	26. Nebraska	

To ensure we are supporting the communities we serve, we strongly encourage all our partners to share feedback as they use our products. In 2023 we received over 1,000 points of product feedback. Listening to and implementing feedback into our products is how we positively impact the variety of schools and students who use or will use our platforms.

Thanks to our partners who help us make our products more equitable for all communities.

Strengthening Students

In 2023, our student users:

Skill Struck had	Completed	Wrote
2,458,961	**3,438,225**	**4,301,710**
Total logins (163% Increase from 2022)	Auto-grated checkpoints, or tests for comprehension	Lines of code (50% Increase from 2022)

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: IZABELLA WINS REGIONAL CODE COMPETITION

Meet Izabella, a 4th grader from Georgia. Last year Izabella, along with a small group of other 3rd graders, was introduced to computer science and Skill Struck. Under the wing of an inspired teacher, Mike Afdahl, she spent 30 minutes a week learning to code. Afdahl was curious to discover if learning to code would improve these students' math scores. And it did!

Now as a fourth grader, Izabella has continued exploring this newfound skill and recently participated in a region-wide coding competition. Izabella was not only a

brave and confident competitor but she also came home that day with a winning trophy!
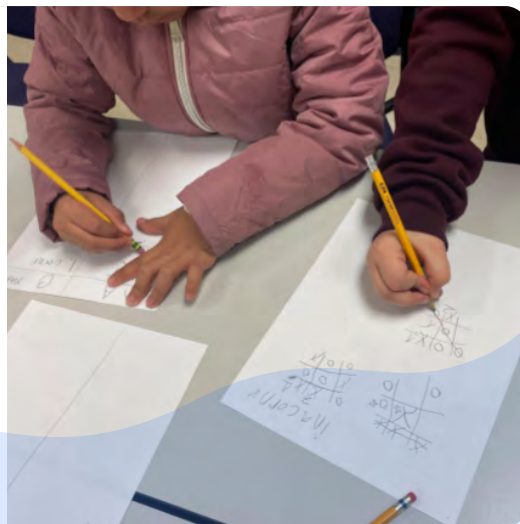
"I am so proud of her - she is growing into an amazing young lady," - Izabella's mom

When we think of strengthening communities Izabella's experience with learning to code is our deepest wish. Computer science has improved her learning experience with Math and her Math scores reflect that. She has also developed a valuable new skill she excels at, her confidence has increased, and she's experiencing a strong sense of belonging in the coding community. Izabella is a perfect example of the possibilities available to students when they are introduced to coding.

Partners Strengthening Communities

We can't share Izabella's success without also highlighting her teacher Mike Afdahl. He is the Coordinator of Technology Services at Northwest Georgia RESA where he supports the instructional and technology goals of 17 districts.

Mike attended our Summer 2022 Skill Summit where he learned that If a student studies computer science (CS) their test scores in other areas will increase by 10%. In the 2022-2023 school year, Mike partnered with Skill Struck to introduce coding to a small group of eight third-grade students struggling in math. Hoping to see their math scores improve, he spent 30 minutes a week teaching them computer science principles using fun and interactive activities on our platform and off.
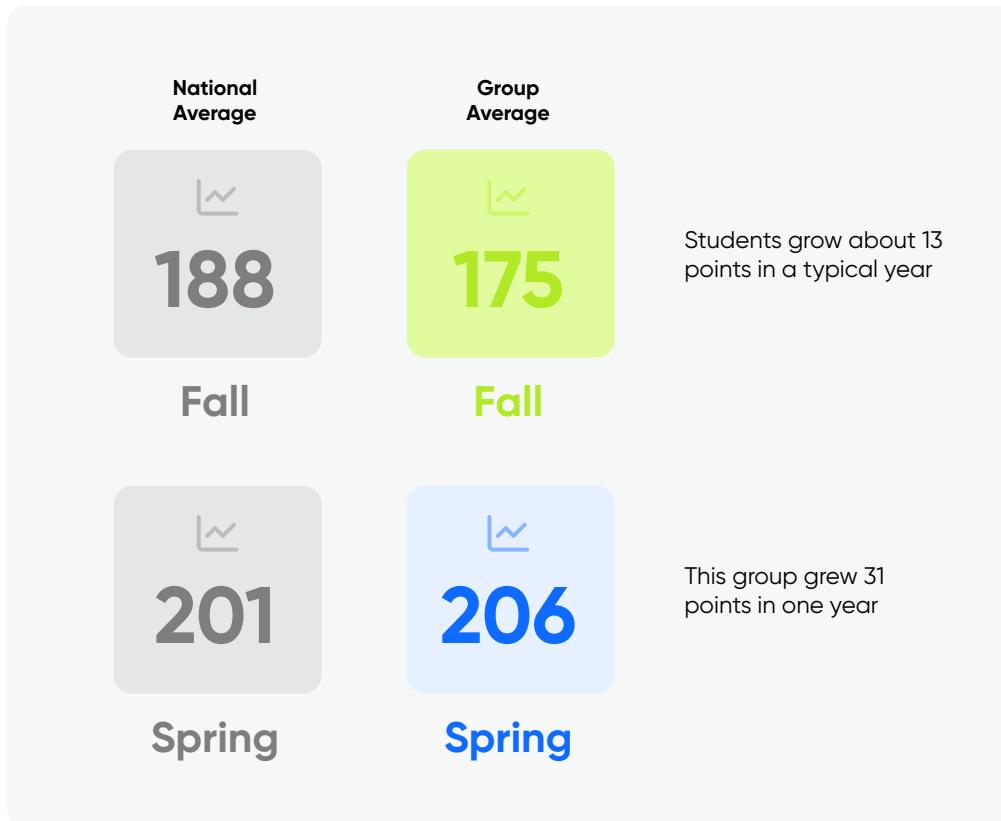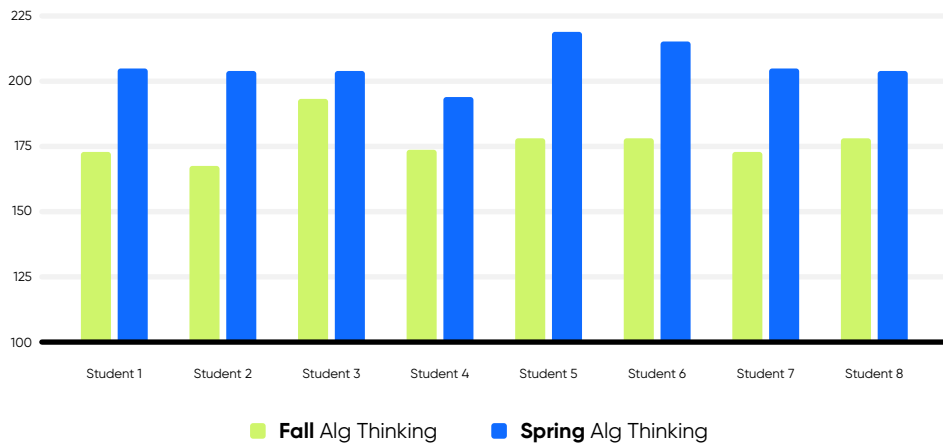
THE RESULTS

Mike compared the student's end-of-year test results with their beginning-of-the-year test results taken in the fall. Mike was mostly interested in looking at these students' Algebraic thinking improvement because Algebraic thinking has a lot of correlation with the computational thinking developed from learning to code. Here are some interesting findings from the study:

+ The national average for third graders in the fall was 188.

+ This group's average in the fall was 175. (This is about one grade level below. Students grow about 13 points in a typical year)

+ The national average in the spring was 201.

This group's average in the spring was 206. (31-point growth in one year!)

National Average

Group Average

188

Fall

175

Fall

Students grow about 13 points in a typical year

201

Spring

206

Spring

This group grew 31 points in one year

| | Student 1 | Student 2 | Student 3 | Student 4 | Student 5 | Student 6 | Student 7 | Student 8 |

Fall Alg Thinking   **Spring** Alg Thinking

Mike said, "Now as they go into 4th grade they are equipped in their math classrooms not just with better math knowledge but they have better math computational skills and better able to receive instruction. Which results in lifelong progress."

Learn more about Mike's process, his incredible students, and their experience takeaways here.

Skill Struck's Internship Program: Enhancing Quality for our Diverse Users

In 2023 we continued our internship program. We worked with 22 high school students from Colorado, Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina, Utah, and Virginia providing them with quality assurance opportunities.

The interns went through our platforms, read the lessons, took quizzes, completed challenges, and reported any bugs they came across. They also provided feedback based on their own learning styles and perspectives.

"Diversity is key in our internship program since these interns are helping us develop a computer science curriculum and platform for all types of learners," explained Ann Gomez, our Customer Support Manager and High School Internship Coordinator.

Intern Spotlight: Josh Officially Joins The Skill Struck Team

Skill Struck's beloved Quality Assurance Analyst, Josh Frandsen first came to Skill Struck as an intern over 3 years ago. Josh, an avid fisherman, is non-verbal autistic and has been testing our product since he's been here. Ann Gomez said:

> "Josh joined our intern team in November 2020, post-high school and after completing an IT Certification. After the internship was over, he asked permission to keep learning and ended up staying with us for three years! He tested as he learned HTML, CSS, Python, all of the elementary curriculum (in Spanish and English), Robotics, and many other courses.
>
> Josh is incredibly reliable, growth-minded, methodical, and has a great eye for detail. We have come to rely on his curriculum suggestions (always spot on) and to find all the bugs and other issues along the way to help improve the platform for all students."

We all were excited to see Josh join our Support Team as a part-time QA tester in September 2023.

> "I enjoy working at Skill Struck because everyone is really nice and willing to jump in and help resolve the bugs. It's been a positive experience and I like working on a team," Josh said.

Because of Josh, more students all over the world can learn how to code. We are lucky to have him sharing his skills and perspective with us!

Preparing Students for a Successful Future

Our Internship program introduces these high school students to the many career possibilities in computer science. Once a week the interns meet virtually and learn from a Skill Struck team member about their job and responsibilities. Caroline, an intern in 2023, said:

"The weekly intern huddles facilitated by the Skill Struck team allowed me to explore different computer science careers. Each week, a member would share about their specific job, opening my eyes to professions I hadn't even known existed. I believe that this is one of the most unique aspects of the teen internship program. I was given a glimpse into each speaker's life, and it even helped me decide what career path I wanted to take."

INTERN SPOTLIGHT: CAROLINE PASSES THE PCEP EXAM

While Caroline participated in our internship program she had the opportunity to take our PCEP certification prep course which prepares students to take The Python Institute's **PCEP, or C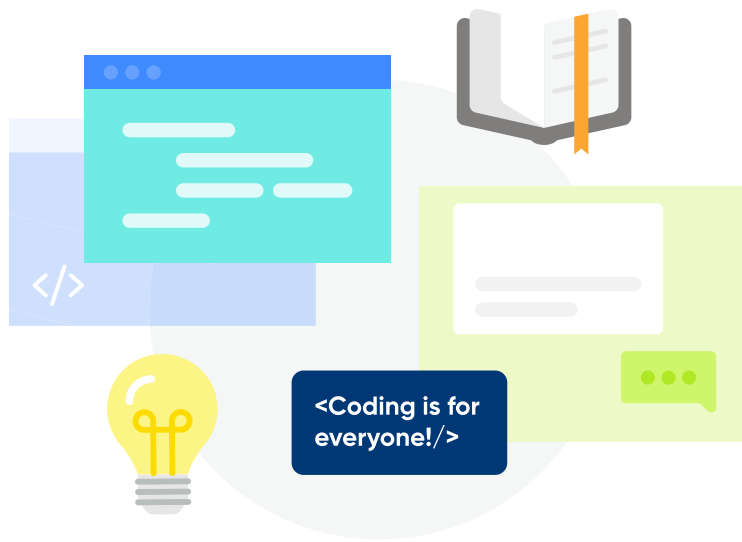ertified Entry-Level Python Programmer, Exam**. Passing this exam proves understanding of the essentials of Python and showcases readiness for an entry-level Python programmer position or readiness to proceed to study intermediate levels of Python.

After completing Skill Strucks PCEP Prep Course Caroline took the exam and passed on her very first try!

> "What amazed me most wasn't just passing the exam on my first try, but achieving that solely through Skill Struck's PCEP prep course, without any prior Python knowledge or using external platforms. The Learning Team at Skill Struck did a phenomenal job of covering everything necessary for the exam within the course, and I wholeheartedly recommend the PCEP prep course to anyone starting their Python journey," Caroline said.

Skill Struck currently offers six certification prep courses for industry exams, preparing students to pass these crucial exams. Our team prioritizes career readiness by providing opportunities like internships and our comprehensive certification prep courses.

Learn more about Caroline and the certification prep courses we offer here.

Looking Forward

In 2024, we will continue listening to the feedback from our district and prospective partners to help us build a product that serves all communities. Our product team will be working on adding more in-depth curriculum to our platforms, and building safe, guided, AI-powered tools that can help transform the classroom experience.

We also plan to work with more teachers and administrators to find more student stories about how CS has impacted their lives.

Until next year!