Dear Parents of [Name],

Your daughter's score on the PSAT shows that she could excel in a Computer Science Advanced Placement course.

Why should she consider a course in computer science? Would she like a job where she can help people? Does she like to solve problems? Would she be interested in a high paying job were she can work part-time and work from home? Would she like a job were she can be creative and work as part of a team? AP Computer Science A also counts as a science for graduation credit from Georgia High Schools and as a science or math for entry into Georgia colleges and universities starting with the class graduating in 2012.

Many people have the misconception that there are no jobs in computing. The United States Department of Labor predicts computing jobs to be among the fastest growing through 2016. In fact, they expect there to be over 1.4 million jobs in the U. S. in this field by 2016, but only expect U. S. colleges and universities to graduate enough people to fill about half of those jobs. Even during these hard economic times companies are still hiring college graduates with computing degrees. Students who graduate with a computer science degree had either the highest starting salary or the second highest starting salary of any field.

Some of the first computers were women. Back then, computer was a job description that meant someone who computes or does calculations. Female computers helped win World War II by computing missile trajectories and became some of the first programmers of the new digital computers. Admiral Grace Hopper was an early programmer and she created the first compiler. There is no Nobel Prize for computing. Instead there is a Turing Award and in 2006 it was won by Frances Allen for her work with IBM in high speed computing. In 2008 it was won by Barbara Liskov for her work in programming languages and systems design.

Computers are crucial to our way of life. They have changed the way we communicate, work, and play. The computer game industry now makes more money than the movie industry. Many of the breakthroughs in medicine are due to computers (like MRIs and CAT scans). Your daughter could be part of an exciting and rewarding field. See <http://dotdiva.org/> for stories from current young women in computing.

Even if your daughter isn't thinking of a career in computing an Advanced Placement Computer Science class can help her. Many fields will require her to take a computer science class in college, especially any science or math fields. Students who have prior experience do much better in these courses, and women with prior programming experience are 4 times more likely to succeed in these classes.

Thank You,

Teacher Name