STARS in Technology
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Introduction
We partnered with Citizen Schools, a non-profit organization that provides an alternative after-school curriculum for middle schools. Our outreach was held at Lowe’s Grove Middle School, designated as a Priority School by the North Carolina Board of Education.

Background
Citizen Schools began in 1995 at a Boston elementary school, and has since grown into a nation-wide network across 37 middle school campuses. Eric Schwarz and Ned Rimer founded Citizen Schools on the principle of learning professional skills from real life adult experts as an extension to current curricula.

Citizen Schools
Apprenticeships
The apprenticeship model pairs experts (Citizen Teachers, or CTs) in skills, fields, or professions with middle school students. The CTs act as mentors guiding the students through real-world projects using authentic hands-on activities.

Apprenticeships are a step in the educational reform movement, which seeks to revitalize the national public education system by engaging students during out-of-school time.

Theory of Student Impact
The Citizen Schools apprenticeship is the first step on a longer road to academic & professional success. Students are ushered into the right direction by focusing on 21st century skills, like Teamwork and Technology. We used paired and group activities to enhance mathematical skills and computational thinking.

Our apprenticeship in computer science provided insight into potential future careers in technology, and access to current computer scientists. During the apprenticeship, we shared our experiences and discussed students’ interests in technology.

Conclusions
- Opened a window into a field of possibility that the students may not otherwise have considered
- Demonstrated the fun side of computer science
- Successfully formed a new partnership with Citizen Schools and Lowe’s Grove Middle School

Future Work
- Structured lesson planning approach may be applicable to other outreach efforts
- Collaborations with industry may enrich the students’ exposure to potential career opportunities

Students attend closely during a lesson
The students were too excited to stand still