Success Story

Philadelphia Learning Academy South

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Takeaway: This blended-learning program gives students autonomy and provides the school with the flexibility to offer a variety of initial credit and credit recovery courses.

Customizable Courseware Provides Flexibility for Students

Philadelphia Learning Academy South (PLAS) uses a blended-learning model for instruction where students use technology for a portion of their learning. Educators use Edgenuity to develop student autonomy and accountability while also creating an individualized path to graduation with credit attainment and credit recovery options. "[Edgenuity] has been a valuable tool, and the best part is that it's customizable for our individual student needs," said Kia Ireland-Hall, Edgenuity Administrator at PLAS.
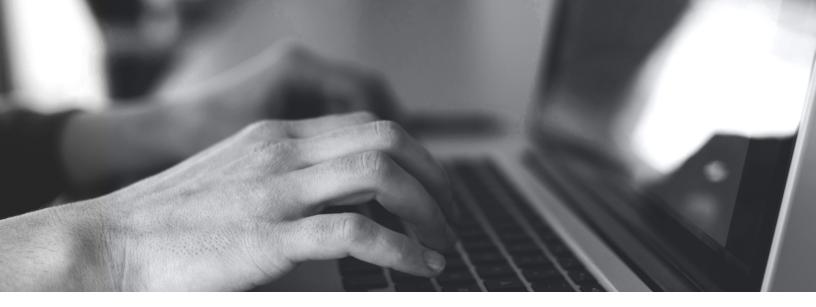
TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATED INTO THE SCHOOL DAY

PLAS utilizes Edgenuity in conjunction with their teachers to offer a learning model that incorporates flexibility. This flexibility became ever-important in 2020 when the pandemic shuttered schools around the country. However, the transition to a fully virtual learning environment went fairly smooth for PLAS, and their classes served as a model for others in The School District of Philadelphia.

Students are assigned courses based on their individual graduation requirements, and they have a period built into their day to work on Edgenuity. If a student has failed a class in the past, they will be assigned Edgenuity Courseware® for credit recovery, but PLAS uses Edgenuity for credit attainment as well.

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Edgenuity®

In classes like Microsoft Office® and Spanish, Edgenuity courses are taught alongside a highly qualified, certified teacher. Teachers assign work in Edgenuity to augment the material covered in class to provide a robust learning experience for students. For other courses, like physical education and art history, PLAS didn't have a teacher certified in those areas, so they used Edgenuity Courseware to support educators who teach subjects outside their area of expertise.

"A lot of teachers are finding that they will continue to use Edgenuity in their classes even after the pandemic," said Ireland-Hall. "It allows them more one-on-one time with their students instead of whole-class instruction."

FLEXIBILITY FOR STUDENTS

Educators throughout PLAS have found that incorporating the self-paced learning offered in Edgenuity Courseware has empowered students with the independence they crave. Teachers monitor progress and step in to assist struggling students, but Ireland-Hall has found that self-motivated students enjoy the program's autonomy. "We've had students graduate early because of the flexibility of Edgenuity," said Ireland-Hall. "The program is very user friendly, customizable, and has a big support base from customer service to onboarding."

But, she was quick to point out the importance of teachers as well. "Teachers play a pivotal role at PLAS because we can meet students at their individual place to offer personalized learning where and when they need it," she said. And, it's a two-way street. "Our students have a great rapport with the teacher and reach out if they have questions or need help," added Ireland-Hall.

ADVICE FOR EDUCATORS

This school year has not been without challenges, but Ireland-Hall said, "You have to be able to communicate well, stay positive, be patient, and ask questions." This mentality served her and PLAS well as they designed and implemented a fully virtual implementation. "We've had a lot of positives: remediation, acceleration, and basic class support," said Ireland-Hall, who added that "it's been a good experience for a lot of students."

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