



Harford County Public Schools

Overview:

- itslearning platform supports district's blended learning model
- District has created a single sign-on environment with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Discovery Education, and other digital resources

Customer:

Harford County Public Schools,
Baltimore, Maryland USA



2014

Year Implemented itslearning

District Profile:

 54 schools

 37,000 students approximately

 8th largest district in Maryland – Suburban area northeast of Baltimore

Demographics:

66% Caucasian

18% Black/African-American

6.3% Hispanic/Latino

3.29% Asian

0.27% American Indian

Moving to a Digital Curriculum to Support Instructional Change and 21st-Century Learning

Since 2010, Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) in Maryland has been transforming its curriculum and instructional practices. Among its new practices are the adoptions of the Common Core standards (which then became the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards), a multi-phase “Bring Your Own Technology” (BYOT) initiative, and moving to a more digitalized curriculum.

Rather than having faculty and students make do with a static curriculum, Susan Brown, Executive Director Of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment wanted content fluid enough to adjust to the needs of teachers, but most especially to those of the students. “Students

are digital natives, but they don't necessarily know how to utilize technology in terms of work efficiency,” she stated. “The teacher's role has to change for that to happen, and I believe the digital curriculum will support how we change as instructional leaders.”

Choosing the Right Platform to Manage Curriculum

However, in order to deliver that digitalized curriculum, the district needed to acquire an LMS. Fortunately, Martha Barwick, the Coordinator of Instructional Technology had attended a 2014 ASCD conference where she'd seen a variety of LMSs, including itslearning.



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Martha Barwick

Coordinator of Instructional Technology

According to Brown and Barwick, what made the itslearning platform stand out from the other systems was its efficiency. Brown said, “It really does allow us to manage curriculum. It’s a great combination: a curriculum management system where teachers are accessing curriculum, seeing learning units and setting the sequence of the learning, but then students can also access it. So we’re not having to use two different platforms to manage our curriculum and have student access; it’s an all-in-one platform.”

Infinite Possibilities

HCPS decided to phase in use of the platform. The district focused on eighth grade social studies, 10th grade English, the high schools’ Geohazard science course and third grade library media as its pilot courses. Curriculum-writing teams created course templates that consisted of a standards-aligned planner plus linked materials, including digital resources and student-centric activities.

“There are great possibilities for bringing textbook materials and digital content from our vendors into the platform so that teachers don’t have to go to a variety of resources to search for content,” Barwick said. “Plus, teachers can go to the itslearning library and search for additional content that’s not already in the curriculum planner.”

All HCPS high schools have now implemented itslearning and Brown and Barwick report that students have responded well to the digital curriculum. “The engagement is strong,” said Brown. “Seeing the students create pages and resources is really exciting.” The district is currently engaging in professional development with various content areas to support the development of digital curriculum.



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