



SAS® Curriculum Pathways® engages students at Centennial Campus Magnet Middle School

Sharon Irby, Project Manager of the 1:1 Laptop Initiative

Industry

Education

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Business Issue

Engage students in core curriculum while giving them 21st-century computing skills.

Solution

SAS® Curriculum Pathways®
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Benefits

- Centennial Middle's passing percentage on the state computing test jumped from 71 percent to 87 percent.
- Students achieved "high growth" on state math test.
- More parents are inquiring about applying to the magnet school.
- Daily access to technology has gotten students more engaged and motivated to learn.
- Students' quality of work has improved.
- Teachers report a positive impact on student behavior and achievement.

The 200 eighth-graders at Centennial Campus Magnet Middle School in Raleigh, NC, don't do much with paper and pencil anymore. They complete lessons, create multimedia projects and take tests on school-issued laptops using SAS® Curriculum Pathways® software. After a year in use, the eighth-graders achieved high growth on their state math tests as calculated by the North Carolina ABCs accountability measures, the school's passing rate on the state-mandated computer test jumped by 16 points and applications to the public magnet school have increased.

A magnet school with just over 600 students in grades six through eight, Centennial works in partnership with North Carolina State University. This partnership allows Centennial access to university resources, including the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation. A partnership between the Friday Institute and SAS helped provide laptop computers for every Centennial eighth-grade student to use at school. SAS also provides the eighth-grade teachers with laptops and SAS Curriculum Pathways software, which integrates laptop technology into the curriculum and classroom instruction.

"Innovative, dedicated teachers and dynamic students have come together to experience learning in a different way at Centennial," says Sharon Irby, Project Manager of the 1:1 Laptop Initiative at Centennial.

"The 1:1 laptop initiative and SAS Curriculum Pathways have provided students at Centennial with easy access to information 'on demand' and made learning exciting."

Sharon Irby
Project Manager of the 1:1 Laptop Initiative at Centennial

Teaching with technology

In a typical day, students might be designing multimedia projects with video enhancement and voice overlays, or conducting science experiments where probes are hooked to the laptop to help the student chart the acidity of various substances. Math teachers create examples on their laptop as students follow along in real time, using shading and other tools to help them understand and visualize concepts. "It's really the 21st century in the classroom," says Irby.

SAS Curriculum Pathways provides the online curriculum resources that drive these projects, including 200 InterActivities and 855 ready-to-use lessons that align with state standards in core subjects. Teachers can easily select and integrate educator-approved resources, Web interactivities and lessons that facilitate differentiated instruction and develop critical thinking skills. In addition, using SAS Curriculum Pathways, teachers can immediately assess student content knowledge and adjust their teaching styles accordingly.



“I’ve seen students become more engaged and more confident in their lessons. It really has allowed me to become more effective as a teacher. I am more effective at diagnosing what my students are learning and what they aren’t. It’s become more of a student-centered classroom.”

George Ward, Lead Teacher

Lessons are saved and stored on the teacher’s Web site where students can access them at home or during a study hall. Teachers can input their own questions for assessments, and as the students complete assessments they get immediate feedback.

“Through collaborative planning and teacher leadership, the 1:1 project has truly had a substantial impact on the quality of instruction and learning,” says Irby. “As educators, we need to make learning as easy as possible – that means easy access to information ‘on demand.’ The 1:1 laptop initiative and SAS Curriculum Pathways have provided students at Centennial Campus this easy-access opportunity and made learning exciting.”

Engaged students, real results

Using SAS Curriculum Pathways, it’s easy for the teachers to individualize their curriculum and instruction to capture students’ attention. “I’ve seen students become more engaged and more confident in their lessons,” says George Ward, a Lead Teacher at Centennial. “I’m able to give immediate feedback so they’re able to see exactly what they’re learning. Students of all ability levels become more engaged – and that helps close the achievement gap.”

“It’s also allowed me to become more effective as a teacher,” Ward adds. “I am more effective at diagnosing what my students are learning and what they aren’t. It’s become more of a student-centered classroom.”

“The laptops are an incredible teaching and learning tool, giving classrooms instant access to the most up-to-date materials,” says another teacher. “We would never want to go back to teaching without laptops. We’ve become too dependent on the vast resources they offer.”

Ward says using SAS Curriculum Pathways is easy. “It is really helpful to me because it’s a complete package. The lessons have a lesson guide with a time frame. Worksheets and answer sheets are included, so I don’t have to spend a lot of time running around and putting things together. And it matches our curriculum,” Ward says.

During the past year the school saw the results. On North Carolina’s End of Grade math tests, Centennial eighth-graders achieved high growth and on the state-required computing test, Centennial’s pass rate jumped from 71 percent to 87 percent.

The program has also helped increase interest in the magnet school. “We presented to the Board of Education and the presentation was recorded for later viewing. When it aired, the Board received hundreds of phone calls from parents interested in having their children attend Centennial,” Ward says.

For Centennial teachers, it’s not just the test results and added interest in the school that prove the value of SAS Curriculum Pathways. It’s the way the students are engaged that impresses them. “I was in a social studies class when the phone rang. It was the front office telling us to send down a student who was checking out early,” Irby recalls. “When I went to tell the student, she was so involved in her project. She looked up and said, ‘Do not log me out, I’ll be right back. I need to go tell my sister that I’ll take the bus home because I can’t leave right now.’ As she walked out of the classroom I said to the teacher, ‘That’s what we call a return on investment.’”



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