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Technology and Incentive-Driven Learning in Pennsylvania in Midland, PA

Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School

**Luke Barry,
Student Assessment
Specialist**

**11,000 students
Grades K to 12**

Study Island

The Challenge:

Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School (PA Cyber) needed a web-based intervention program that could bring struggling students up to speed as well as refresh the state anchors for the students who are on track. The school had 11,000 students, with 5,500 of those students in the testing grades of 3–11 and one-third of the 5,500 new to the cyber education experience.

When the school started using Study Island, student assessment specialist Luke Barry asked teachers to create assignments using Study Island with deadlines to encourage students to complete their work on time.

"Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School only has a few months to assess several thousand new students, find weaknesses, and get students on track before the state test," said Barry. "That is the challenge we take on every year."

Because PA Cyber educates such a transient population of students and so many students come there because they are struggling, the school only made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) sporadically between 2003 and 2007 and needed more consistent scores.

Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School is an online educational provider that offers students and families the opportunity to build their own school.With offices in Midland, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and Philadelphia, as well as four satellite locations across the state, the school is an easily accessible, customizable education resource. The cyber charter school offers a variety of proven curriculum and modes of instruction. With several thousand new students every year, Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School yearned for a web-based

How They Did It:

Barry discovered Study Island, a web-based instruction, practice, and learning program built to Pennsylvania state standards. "Study Island has been very easy to navigate, as the administrator and Study Island's phenomenal customer support staff has always been there to answer any questions we have," says Barry.

For added encouragement, Barry and a few teachers created an interactive competition, using Google Docs which served as a website for the competition, called "Escape the Island."

"We gave the students an extra incentive to complete assignments and answer more questions by creating this game," said Barry.

The competition was based on the story of Addy the Adventurer, who is shipwrecked and lands on Study Island. It contains 10 levels that are unlocked after students answer a certain number of Study Island questions. After unlocking the first nine levels, the students were able to vote on one of three possible endings. This kept the students engaged throughout the entire game and encouraged them to answer more questions. Some students answered over 6,000 questions. The "top 10 survivors," or students, and grade levels, who answered the most questions were recognized on the website.

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>
> Luke Barry,
> Student Assessment Specialist

Success:

PA Cyber's Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) reading scores increased 10 percent, and math scores increased 16 percent after implementing Study Island and introducing the "Escape the Island" game. In addition, the school has met AYP the last three years running. The most significant gains were seen with those students who answered a higher number of Study Island questions. In reading, students who answered less than 100 questions saw an increase of 31 points, while students who answered over 200 questions saw an increase of over 45 points. In math, students answering 100 to 200 questions increased scores by 19 points, while students who answered over 200 questions saw an increase of more than 60 points. Barry credits the school's PSSA scores to Study Island.

"Study Island's educational games and Khan Academy videos, which support core content within Study Island, have helped our students understand the material better," said Barry. "This program has absolutely prepared our students for testing by making their preparation exciting and fun. All in all, Study Island has helped our school improve performance and has been greatly received by teachers, parents, and students."

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The Future:

For more infomation:

Contact 800.447.5286 or visit www.edmentum.com to learn more about Edmentum's online learning solutions.