



CASE STUDY

Albany Achieves Highest Graduation Rate in Ten Years

City School District of Albany, New York

Challenge

City School District of Albany was seeking to expand implementation of Apex Learning Comprehensive Courses from a successful credit recovery program to a complete online solution enabling all students to stay on track to graduate in four years.

Goal

The district's primary goals are to increase graduation rates, support struggling learners before they fall behind, and provide an option for credit recovery that accommodates students' varied schedules and circumstances.

Solution

Apex Learning enabled Albany to implement mastery-based learning in order for students to develop the deep conceptual knowledge needed for college and career success, as well as for course completion regardless of seat time.

Results

- Graduation rate increased 10 percentage points from 52% in 2012 to 62% in 2016
- Over 350 students earned a grade change
- 50% of graduates used Apex Learning

Graduation Rate



District Profile

- 9,688 students
- 545 seniors

Demographics

- Black: 51%
- White: 20%
- Hispanic: 16%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 9%
- Multiracial: 5%
- American Indian/Alaska Native: <1%

Solution

- Comprehensive Courses

Implementation

- Blended Learning
- Virtual Learning



A Six-Year Partnership Began with Credit Recovery

In 2011, Albany teamed with Apex Learning to launch a credit recovery program enabling struggling students to graduate on time. The program started with a Saturday Academy for credit recovery, and over the course of six years expanded to weekdays after school, an online learning lab during the day, AP electives, extended-day school electives, summer school, and homebound instruction. Read more about the [Online Success Program](#).

“It’s inspiring to see students who haven’t done well in a traditional class setting succeed with Apex Learning!”

Thomas Vacanti

Site Coordinator, Albany School District

Expanding Beyond Credit Recovery to Meet Student Needs

Many of Albany’s students face challenges outside of school. Keeping them in school was the initial priority, although the district has since expanded use of Apex Learning to meet a variety of needs. “As teachers saw the success of the credit recovery program, they became enthusiastic about using Apex Learning Courses as part of their regular classroom instruction,” says Tom Vacanti, the program’s Site Coordinator. “They appreciate Apex Learning because it makes differentiated and data-driven instruction easier and better.” Apex Learning is now a big part of the school culture, motivating students to graduate and enabling teachers to support the individual needs of their students.

Mastery-Based Learning Made Possible with High-Quality Digital Curriculum

Mastery-based learning is the foundation of the high-quality digital curriculum and personalized learning experience that Apex Learning provides. Each student progresses at their own pace, and regular assessments identify learning gaps. Students have the freedom to go back and review material as often and for as much time as needed to build a strong foundation of comprehension for the next level of learning.

“The way our building is utilizing Apex Learning Courses has made all of the difference in supporting struggling students,” says Vacanti.

The Goal: More Students Graduate College and Career Ready

The district is currently offering courses for credit recovery by quarter, as well as original credit courses and dual-enrollment electives. Students also enroll in extended-day school electives, homebound instruction, summer school, and Saturday/afterschool courses. These flexible, personalized learning options are all about giving students more opportunities to complete courses and graduate within four years.

“It’s inspiring to see students who haven’t done well in a traditional class setting succeed with the personalized learning that Apex offers,” says Vacanti. “They have more hope about succeeding in college.”

Contact

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