CANVAS
BY INSTRUCTURE

Future-Ready with Canvas LMS

at Virginia Beach City Public Schools

📍 **Virginia** 👤 **65,000 Students** 📅 **Adopted Canvas LMS + Studio: 2020**

For **Virginia Beach City Public Schools** (VBCPS), preparing their diverse 65,000 students for the future starts in kindergarten and is cultivated throughout their educational journey. Sharon Shewbridge, Director of Instructional Technology at VBCPS, shared that their division, based in a military community, has recently been focused on defining what it means for students to be career-ready graduates. Learn how they're empowering students and teachers with the skills they need to succeed today, tomorrow, and beyond with Canvas LMS.

THE CHALLENGE

Change is an often intimidating and necessary part of growth.

When Virginia adopted Canvas LMS as its statewide learning management system, VBCPS followed suit. The desire for consistency paired with grade passback struggles and lack of support for their division assessment platform with their previous vendor paved the way for a new opportunity with a new tool.

"We didn't want to put too much strain on the teachers with learning a new LMS," Chris Bruno, Information Services Coordinator, said.

Leaders at VBCPS knew they would need to collaborate to set teachers up for a successful transition to a new learning management system. According to Nannette M. Keenan, Project Manager of Information Services, they went about implementation intentionally - moving much slower than they had with their previous LMS while giving their teachers the time and resources they needed to acclimate.

Key Insights

- Gradebook passback in Canvas LMS is reliable and keeps student information up-to-date online.

- Canvas Studio increases student engagement and allows teachers to present video content in a fresh way.

- Support from the division leaders and Instructure gave Virginia Beach's team the guidance they needed to roll out Canvas LMS successfully.

- Secondary teachers use SpeedGrader daily to give students feedback efficiently.

THE SOLUTION

Two significant benefits were: a smooth LMS implementation plan, being intentional about getting teachers excited for Canvas, and reliable Gradebook passback.

"The customer support for the product, communication with developers, and customer representation and the constant support at our division and statewide…It was a very positive experience getting the teachers up to speed and the Gradebook passback working so well," Keenan said.

Matthew L. Colohan, Instructional Technology Coordinator, echoed the value of Canvas LMS's efficiency with Gradebook passback, "On average, we now pass approximately 5,000 grades a week back and forth, which is amazing."

> To make a change was a little scary, but we knew that Canvas LMS was the better product.

Sharon Shewbridge, Director of Instructional Technology

A COMMUNITY OF SHARING

When their LMS admin involved in implementation retired, Keenan said it didn't take long to get their new systems administrator, Jennifer Blake, up-to-speed. The easy transition was thanks to all of the resources provided by Instructure - like webinars. Additionally, Colohan said that anytime they've run into questions along the way, support has been there to point them in the right direction.

"Canvas LMS is so user-friendly, you can look at it, and even someone who has never been in before can go in and create a course. Everything is laid out for you," Blake said.

In addition to an easy-to-use interface, connecting with fellow Canvas users is another significant benefit.

"The Community is huge," Jennifer Blake said. "I found that in working with Instructure, they are very big on getting you in contact with other people doing the same thing you are. You don't have to search for information on your own. It's great to reach out to someone doing the same process as you."

Canvas LMS also connects essential tools to streamline access and keep students learning. Districts like Virginia Beach are swimming in edtech tools. Colohan described Canvas LMS's extensive LTI capabilities as a significant selling point for the new learning management system in gaining educator buy-in.

"Each time we can say, 'And remember it's in Canvas LMS,' it's a win for us, Colohan said.

In addition to its connectivity, Colohan and team emphasized the value of flexible, easy-to-access course design in Canvas LMS. Their elementary courses direct students to Modules, and their middle and high schools follow a similar homepage design for consistency.

SAVING TEACHERS TIME

Ultimately, tech tools need to exist to ease teachers' loads. Grading is an important, yet time-consuming piece of the instructional journey that Canvas LMS can expedite. At Virginia Beach, many teachers are taking advantage of SpeedGrader.

"SpeedGrader is a feature our secondary teachers use daily. They appreciate the saved item bank and the ability to give students the feedback they need to succeed quickly," Colohan said.

While Canvas LMS has become a meaningful environment where teachers and students connect, Virginia Beach also uses Canvas Studio to engage students with video content they can actively learn from. **Learn more about the Pillars of Today's K-12 Classroom.**

THE RESULTS

Virginia Beach has used Canvas LMS to support its mission of preparing every student for the future. As for the road ahead, they believe their investment will continue to benefit students and teachers.

"We've seen our colleges - if they weren't already on Canvas LMS - move that way. Our students recognize when they do dual enrollment in high school or as they're preparing for colleges that Canvas LMS is what's being used. That real-world application is the connection. We also have students who return to work for us who already have exposure to Canvas and are seeing it connect... They're saying, 'Oh, this is worth my while," Colohan closed.