

Leyden High School's 1:1 Digital Evolution with Chromebooks for Education



About Leyden High School

- Google Apps for Education user since 2011
- Google Chromebooks for Education user since 2011
- 1:1 Chromebooks for Education program launch 2012-2013 school year with 3,500 devices

Goals

- Bring the Web into the classroom to create a more collaborative learning environment and help students develop the skills necessary to succeed in the 21st Century
- Roll out a 1:1 program with devices that were dependable, low maintenance, cost effective and had a long battery life

Approach

- Implemented Google's Chromebooks for Education 1:1 program so that all 3,500 students would receive a personal device
- Introduced a technology course for tech-savvy students to exercise their skills, earn technical certifications and assist with any Chromebook issues



Institution

Located in the Chicago suburbs of Franklin Park and Northlake, Illinois, East and West Leyden High Schools are committed to preparing more than 3,500 students for the future. At Leyden, faculty and staff believe every student has the right to develop the skills needed to succeed in the 21st Century, including communication, collaboration and critical thinking.

Challenge

Leyden High School was acutely aware of the changing education landscape, and recognized the need for digital evolution. Over the past several years, school officials have explored the idea of bringing the Web into the classroom and providing each student with a personal device. When considering new computers for its students, Leyden High School staff reviewed a number of different options, including Chromebooks, netbooks and iPads. The school district had used netbooks in the past, but they were slow, prone to freezing, and often lost Internet connection. Using iPads would have made writing and creating content more difficult for students, given the form factor, and also would have required the school district to hire more people in its tech department to keep all 3,500 devices updated with the most current software.

Leyden needed a computing solution that was affordable, dependable, low maintenance, and had a long battery life that could last throughout the school day. They also dreamed of creating a more collaborative and personalized learning environment for both students and teachers.

"There's a paradigm shift that has come with the Web. We live in a digital age in which technological advancements occur at an exponential rate. Our goal is to take advantage of them in education."

—Jason Markey, Principal, East Leyden High School

Solution

In 2011, Leyden High School U.S. History Honors classes, Global Stories Honors classes, Political Science classes, Geometry Honors classes, and all Freshman Health classes piloted 300 Google Chromebooks for Education, a web-based operating system and easy-to-manage alternative to traditional PCs. For the 2012–2013 school year, each of the 3,500 students in the school received a new Chromebook as part of the school's Chromebooks for Education 1:1 Initiative. "We experienced firsthand the opportunities our students had with Google technology and the differences it made in the classroom, and then we decided to rollout a full 1:1 initiative for students grades nine through twelve," says Markey.

During the Chromebook pilot, Leyden's students and teachers started to see the benefits of working with the new devices, in conjunction with Google Apps for Education. "When you work with a traditional and specific operating system, you

Chromebooks for Education

- Chromebook devices
- Web-based management console
- 24/7 support from Google
- Limited hardware warranty

Google's Chromebook laptops provide fast, affordable, and easy-to-manage computing that allows students to learn anytime, anywhere by accessing the vast resources of the web.

For more information, visit:
www.chromebooks.com/edu



"Last year, we used Chromebooks in my AP history class. Our teacher would post an essay question on a Google Site, along with any other material we might need to help us answer the question. By using Chromebooks in the classroom, we could easily access all the information and work together in Google Docs to answer the question. Chromebooks made it faster and easier to work on the project with my classmates, and I'm looking forward to seeing how the devices will change the way we learn in other classes."
—Jesse Fuentes, Senior, East Leyden High School

tend to get locked into a suite of apps. It becomes a bit more closed. Moving to a Web-based operating system really matches up with our ideals: being open so that students can share and collaborate," says Markey. "And nothing can beat the 8-hour battery life. The battery of a Chromebook can last the entire school day and then some."

Chromebooks have also proven cost effective. Leyden doesn't have to spend money on software or device maintenance as the Chrome OS software automatically updates by itself, for free. Instead, they are able keep their focus on learning and hire tech instructors who can work with teachers to create new programs. The school has even introduced a for-credit technology course for tech-savvy students to exercise their skills, assist with any technical issues and earn technical certifications of their choosing. School officials think it will be a positive class for students interested in getting a customer service certificate or for those interested in learning more about the technology industry or coding.

Benefits

With Chromebooks enabling a more collaborative and interactive environment, East Leyden students can easily and instantly share their work with their peers and teachers in Google Docs and receive ongoing feedback throughout the project. This makes tasks like writing more personalized and collaborative, which is important to Leyden's school officials. Assignments become a living piece of learning. "With previous paper submissions, students would submit their work and have a feeling that it's done, totally finished," says Markey. "The collaborative nature of using Google Docs, however, enables more effective feedback throughout the writing process. It's really powerful."

Chromebooks are helping Leyden High School push the boundaries of education. With the Web at their fingertips, Leyden's students can also connect to Internet-based collaborative programs and applications (available in the Chrome Web Store), such as WeVideo, a video editing program that's open on the Web; and GeoGebra, a mathematics application, in the classroom or at home. "We're pushing the 'anytime, anywhere' idea of learning and that's important in this digital age," says Markey.

In parallel with this new way of learning, Leyden High School introduced a comprehensive student achievement scale, which measures student achievement on eight different criteria, including a minimum of 24 course credits, a 2.5 GPA, participation in school clubs and activities, and community volunteering. "With personalized devices for each student and our new student achievement scale, we are increasing participation in activities and encouraging students to take more rigorous classes in order to graduate with more credits," says Markey. "As educators, it's our responsibility to prepare our students for their future, and we're on that path with Google Chromebooks for Education."

Results

Adopting Chromebooks and Google Apps for Education has helped Leyden High School create a more collaborative and interactive learning environment for both students and faculty and introduced a more personalized way of measuring student achievement.

