Henry County School District

Education | 6-12, World Language and Blended Learning

Rosetta Stone | Education

Blended learning enhances language instruction

Challenges

Henry County Schools (HCS) integrates technology into classrooms to enhance instruction as part of its multiyear strategic plan. The Georgia district enrolls more than 40,000 students in 47 schools and identifies second language proficiency, personalized learning, college and career readiness, and cultural confidence as key skills students need to learn. HCS wanted to increase language students' communication in their target language. EdTech would enable teachers to mix online language learning with classroom instruction and give students more speaking opportunities. Digital language learning needed to overcome budget constraints and limited access to the technology infrastructure, as well as apprehension about adding a program needing additional training and monitoring to be successful.

Implementation

HCS chose Rosetta Stone® online language learning and gave teachers autonomy on how they leveraged technology to support language classroom instruction in a blended-learning environment. Implementation for Spanish and French took place in eight high schools and two middle schools. German was added in year two. This digital approach:

- Delivered engaging language lessons and activities
- Ensured only the target language was heard and used
- Offered pronunciation feedback to build speaking confidence
- Extended students' learning beyond the classroom
- Supported HCS technology initiatives

Benefits

Adding the Rosetta Stone solution enhanced students' language skills and:

- Increased communication in the target language
- Resulted in Level 2 vocabulary levels for Level 1 students
- Helped students excel on the High School National Spanish Exam
- Enabled Spanish I students to start Spanish 2 with greater conversation skills
- Motivated students to exceed required time for using language program

HENRY COUNTY SCHOOLS

"In our efforts to personalize learning for students, it is essential to give them access to high quality instruction in a tech-enabled world. Rosetta Stone provides Henry County with the right tools to give kids the language skills to be college, career and life ready."

Aaryn Schmuhl,
Assistant Superintendent,
Henry County Schools

Adopting online language learning

From providing a Technology Academy for teachers to creating a Bring Your Own Technology program for students, Henry County Schools is increasing the breadth and depth of interactive learning. HCS also believes that learning a language is increasingly important for students. "Learning a language helps open so many doors it will help students be successful", said Spanish teacher Glenda Torres. "We're in a country where the second most spoken language is Spanish, so when students get ready to go to the workforce they can achieve so many things."

Adding Rosetta Stone® online language learning started first by opening a conversation with HCS principals and department chairs, by email and then most effectively in face-to-face communication. Principal involvement was a good indicator of eventual adoption. By giving teachers autonomy on how to use blended learning in their language classrooms, including learning stations and flipped classrooms, HCS achieved both goals of increasing access to technology solutions and promoting language learning.

Advocating for learning success

Professional development helped teachers connect better with students. At HCS, Rocio Morrison, Teacher on Special Assignment for World Languages, led the effort. Morrison believed that ". . . having a Rosetta Stone advocate kick off implementation and then carry it on throughout the program life . . ." was integral for program, teacher, and student success.

The advocacy effort supported teachers by hosting an implementation kickoff, arranging for training at the beginning of the program and then again two months later, sharing reporting results as part of strong district-wide communication, and refocusing the digital learning effort as needed to ensure it remained a priority. Traveling regularly to individual schools and celebrating successes also brought the language-learning community together. Teacher exit surveys revealed that while adoption was slow at first, teachers came to value the program and wished there was even more time to use it in their classrooms. Teachers also noted increased student communication in the target language after students used the Rosetta Stone program.

Gaining student perspective

Students were required to use the online program for 45 minutes per week. Access to the program from home increased independent study by students, including over summer break. In the Honors Spanish I class, direct teaching occurred three times weekly, and twice a week students used the Rosetta Stone program. One student said, "I like the speaking part. We really don't speak as much in class as we should. Now that we've spoken so much using Rosetta Stone my class speaks with confidence." The student also highlighted activities included in the program. "I like the reading activity. You can record your voice and play it back." Next up for the student is adding French to her class schedule. "I'm excited to learn French and will use Rosetta Stone to help me practice speaking."

> *"I love the way students can work with their vocabulary. They can use the writing, the listening, and mostly the speaking area, working with their pronunciation."*
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> Glenda Torres
> Spanish Teacher, Henry County Schools

About Henry County Schools

Henry County Schools is a public school district in Henry County, based in McDonough, and the seventh largest school district in Georgia. More than 40,000 students attend twenty-nine elementary schools, eleven middle schools, and eleven high schools. A diverse enrollment includes 45% African-American, 40% Caucasian, 5.5% Hispanic, 4% Interracial, 2.5% Asian, Economically Disadvantaged: 43.9%, Early Intervention Program: 25.1%, Gifted Education Program: 8.5%, Special Education Program: 12.2%.

▶ http://schoolwires.henry.k12.ga.us

About Rosetta Stone

Rosetta Stone is a global leader in technology-driven language and learning solutions for individuals, classrooms, and entire organizations.

Our scalable, interactive solutions have been used by over 12,000 businesses, 9,000 public sector organizations, and 22,000 education institutions worldwide, and by millions of learners in over 150 countries.

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