



LAKE HAVASU HIGH SCHOOL

LOCATION:

Lake Havasu, Arizona

PROGRAM ENROLLMENT:

100 students per year

SUCCESS METRICS:

- » Meets state standards for career and technical education
- » Practice test nets 100 percent success rate
- » First step in path to career in technology

Lake Havasu High School Improves CTE Courses with Microsoft Technology Associate Certification and MeasureUp Practice Tests

Success Story

www.measureup.com

www.certipoint.com/mta

"Several students have earned all three MTA certifications and the best part is these students are work-ready."

Shawna Schneikart
CTE Coordinator
Lake Havasu

High School Students Prepare to Join Workforce with Industry Standard Technology Skills

CHALLENGE

Five years ago, residents of Mohave and La Paz County, Arizona, voted to form Western Arizona Vocational Education (WAVE), a joint technical education district with five partner high schools across the two counties. WAVE aims to provide high quality vocational and technical education in the public school system to keep students in school and better prepare them for the workforce.

Lake Havasu High School is one of the WAVE partner high schools, serving

more than 1900 students in grades 9 through 12 in Lake Havasu City, Arizona. As WAVE was tasked with improving career and technical education (CTE) classes at regional high schools, Lake Havasu took on the charge and began to look for ways to expand and improve their CTE programs. Lake Havasu is a regular high school, with 17 CTE programs.

Previously, students who participated in the Technology Program at Lake Havasu took a state exit exam at the end of the courses. Lake Havasu Engineering

Microsoft
Technology Associate

MEASUREUP
Powered by Certipoint

Department Instructor Bob Treichel began to look for a better tool to help his students gain workforce and higher education skills.

"In a small community like Lake Havasu, most of our students leave for college or the workforce since there is not enough opportunity for all of them here," said Treichel. "We want to arm them with a tool beyond state exit exams to differentiate them from any other high school student out there who has taken computer courses."

The Lake Havasu CTE Department specifically wanted to equip students with certificates, credentials, and other opportunities to get them started on their next steps after high school.

Lake Havasu CTE Coordinator Shawna Schneikart said, "Comprehensive high schools often focus on what the future may hold for core academic students who go on immediately to a four year university. However, a large majority of students will not be making that choice, so we want to celebrate what the students have already accomplished during their time with us and validate those skills."

SOLUTION

Lake Havasu learned about the Microsoft Technology Associate through Certiport, a new, industry-recognized certification that helps students take the first step towards a career in technology. Lake Havasu found that MTA could be aligned with the state standards for computer systems and adopted the IT Professional MTA Exams with Networking Fundamentals as a capstone class at the end of the technology program.

As Lake Havasu began to implement the MTA program they were having some success, but the school was not satisfied with the initial pass rate for certification exams. About two-thirds of students were passing the exams, and Lake Havasu wanted to raise the bar quickly.

Certiport recommended they integrate MeasureUp practice tests into their students' coursework. MeasureUp, a brand of Certiport, would help their students prepare for the MTA certification exams by simulating the exam experience and providing study help based on practice results. The Lake Havasu CTE Department readily agreed and shortly thereafter added MeasureUp practice tests to their preparation efforts.

"Even though we had the state exit exams, our students were not used to high stakes testing since they did not see the immediate value of those exams," said Treichel. "The MTA was tied directly to their career and they felt the pressure to pass."

The MeasureUp solution for MTA gave Lake Havasu technology instructors access to reports for each of the five master standards on the certification exam. As a result, instructors could work with individual students on the exact section of the exam they were struggling with and help them to learn those principles.

"With MeasureUp, we found we could pull a few kids out and in just a few days highlight the major areas they needed to review so everyone could succeed," said Treichel.

Lake Havasu found that implementing the MTA exams helped them to build excitement about new technology courses at the school. For instance, a course called Computer Systems was decreasing in popularity. Since there was already an MTA exam for Software Development, the school was able to quickly get rid of the Computer Systems course and add a Software Development course instead.

"I was able to get a new technology course up and running quickly because there was already an independent exit exam ready and waiting for me," said Treichel. "MeasureUp tools provided immediate help with curriculum and practice exams for the new course and it was ready to go in no time."

RESULTS

After implementing MeasureUp, Lake Havasu achieved a 100 percent

success rate for students earning the MTA certification, and the school has continued that pattern of success for two years thus far. "I require that my students pass the MeasureUp practice exam twice before they sit for the MTA certification to ensure success," said Treichel.

Approximately 100 students are taking the MTA certification exams and using MeasureUp preparation tools in the program each year.

"Several students have earned all three MTA certifications and the best part is these students are work-ready," said Schneikart. "Their starting wages surpass others, and sometimes even surpass their instructors! We are proud to support student success in the form of knowledge, financial independence and economic development."

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