



Lee County Schools

Location:

Lee County, North Carolina

Program Enrollment:

50 students per year

Success Metrics:

- Satisfies industry need for graduates with bookkeeping skills
- Hands-on QuickBooks software training
- Industry-recognized certification builds resumes



Success Story

Lee County Schools Works to Fill Industry Need for Graduates with QuickBooks Skills

CHALLENGE

The Career and Technical Education program at Lee County Schools in North Carolina is a highly developed, work-based training program for students. The mission of Career and Technical Education is to empower all students to be successful citizens, workers and leaders in a global economy. Sophisticated equipment and industry-standard software training allow students to learn with hands-on training that will give them marketable job-skills.

Two years ago at a Business Advisory Council meeting, a business owner asked Aaron Fleming, Director of Career and Technical Education, if Lee County Schools had an accounting program. Fleming confirmed they did, with Accounting 1 and 2 courses and many of students ultimately continuing their education to earn a bachelors or masters degree in Accounting.

The business owner said they needed some accountants, but needed bookkeepers more than anything. He suggested that Lee County Schools do something to help students learn bookkeeping skills and get them right into the workforce then they graduate.

SOLUTION

Fleming had used QuickBooks for a nonprofit he worked with, and he knew Certiport had a new certification – the Intuit QuickBooks Certified User (QBCU) program. “When I mentioned QuickBooks to the Business Advisory Council, almost every businessperson in the room said they use QuickBooks and that is exactly what they wanted – kids who know how to use that software program.”



“Everything my students learn and validate with the Quickbooks certification is applied in the real world - they are getting hands on training on the actual software.”

– Tony Bloedorn
Accounting Teacher
Lee County High School

First Lee County Schools bought a single QBCU voucher and had one of their teachers take the certification. Tony Bloedorn, Accounting Teacher at Lee County High School said, “After I took the certification I knew it was what we needed to add to the Accounting program to engage students more than we were in the past.”

Lee County Schools quickly started a pilot group of students in the QBCU program at Lee County High School. They received a waiver from the state of North Carolina to use the Certiport QBCU curriculum instead of the state curriculum. “Once we got the software running it was smooth sailing,” said Bloedorn. “The book is self-explanatory, students do the tutorials and assignments and they get real world experience with QuickBooks.”

In Spring, the pilot class of students ranging from freshman to seniors came together and every student in the class passed the certification exam. Lee County Schools and their Business Advisory Council were pleased with the results, and decided to add QBCU certification to their curriculum permanently.

RESULTS

Lee County Schools is now starting registration and rolling the QBCU certification program out at their two comprehensive high schools – Lee County High School and Southern Lee High School. Enrollment in the Accounting Program had gotten low, but the QBCU certification is rejuvenating the program and increasing enrollment.

“We are just getting started but I think implementing QuickBooks certification will have a direct impact on our students and the jobs they are able to obtain when they enter the workforce,” said Fleming.

Bloedorn has been equally impressed with the value of the QBCU certification for workforce training. “Everything my students learn and validate with the Quickbooks certification is applied in the real world - they are getting hands on training on the actual software,” he said. “I have a lot of students wanting to go into accounting and with the amount of businesses around here that use Quickbooks, certification is a wonderful tool to allow them to go to those businesses and show they know how to use the program.”

One sophomore at Lee County High School, Raj Patel, earned the QBCU certification in the pilot group, and is already reaping the benefits. “I took the Accounting course as an elective thinking it would come in handy due to my interest in business, and earning the QuickBooks certification was an added bonus because it proves I know what I am doing.” Patel put the QBCU certification on his resume and thinks it will help as he applies to participate in a business program during his junior and senior year.

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