

Success Story



SAULT AREA HIGH SCHOOL AND CAREER CENTER

Location: Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan

Program Enrollment: 170 students per year

Success Metrics:

- Simulates the MOS test environment
- Helps students practice exam objectives
- Improves MOS certification pass rate



Michigan High School Career Center Achieves 99% MOS Pass Rate with GMetrix

Practice Tests Help Students Gain Familiarity with MOS Certification Exams

Challenge

The Sault Area Public School District spans 308 square miles and serves the educational needs of Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan and the surrounding area. Sault Area High School is one of the few high schools in the state of Michigan with an attached career center.

Diane Harrington arrived at Sault High Career Center during the 2001-02 school year as a Business Education Teacher. She noticed the Business Education Program was lacking an industry-recognized certification element.

"I had pioneered bringing certification to my previous

district, so I knew how beneficial it could be to validating student skills," says Harrington.

Harrington felt the program would benefit from Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) certification to give students a leg up and prove they knew Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint and other Microsoft Office programs.

Sault High Career Center became a Certiport Authorized Testing Center in 2001 and began offering MOS certification. Harrington also knew the value of good preparation tools in student success, and sought a solution to help her students achieve high pass rates on the MOS exams.

“The GMetrix exams were useful for me – I always used GMetrix before I took the exams and they were great preparation and helped me feel comfortable.”

Andre Jacques

Student
Sault High Career Center

Solution

Harrington championed the purchase of practice exam materials to help students pass the MOS certification. Sault High Career Center has been using GMetrix for several years now, a timed practice test solution for MOS certifications that simulates the test environment and covers the same objectives that are on the actual certification exam.

When students can pass a GMetrix test at a certain level, Harrington knows they are ready for the MOS exam. She hasn't been wrong yet.

“I tell my students – if you don't do GMetrix, the key component, then more than likely you will fail.” Harrington says. “Whether you know the Microsoft product or not, it simulates the test environment and prepares you for the certification exam.”

Students can take as many MOS certifications as they like during the yearlong course. Ninety-nine percent of the students who take the MOS exam at Sault High Career Center pass. Harrington says GMetrix is invaluable and she purchases it from her budget every year.

“I would never consider having any of my students take a MOS exam without using prep software like GMetrix,” says Harrington. “This tool allows students to be fully prepared and is an essential component to student success.”

Sault High Career Center has articulation agreements with the local University and Community College, so students can get three college credits for every certification exam they pass. The school also recently became a Microsoft IT Academy, which will allow

the program to expand and certify more students.

“Someone suggested we use the actual exam as a pretest since we now have unlimited licenses as a Microsoft IT Academy,” says Harrington. “But the exam creates some anxiety, I feel strongly about the need for a true practice exam with nothing at stake.”

One of Harrington's former students has seen the benefits of using GMetrix and earning MOS certification. Andre Jacques earned 17 credits before he graduated due to his MOS certifications and is now a student at Lake Superior State University.

“The GMetrix exams were useful for me – I always used GMetrix before I took the exams and they were great preparation and helped me feel comfortable,” says Jacques. “Once I earned MOS certification it helped me win many scholarships and cut the cost of college almost in half.”



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