



Shaw High School Masters Microsoft Office Certifications

LOCATION:

Georgia

TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT:

Program Enrollment: 300
students per year

SUCCESS METRICS:

- » Improves student productivity and efficiency
- » Helps teachers meet state education standards
- » Validates in-demand technology skills

Georgia High School Achieves 100 Percent Pass Rate and 24 Microsoft Office Specialist Masters

Success Story

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Shaw is the only school in Muscogee County to achieve a 100 percent pass rate for the Business and Technology End of Pathway assessment three years in a row.

Shaw High School Offers Entry-Level Microsoft Certification to High School Students

CHALLENGE

Shaw High School Offers Entry-Level Microsoft Certification to High School Students
Shaw High School in Columbus, Georgia opened in 1978 and has achieved great academic and athletic success in its short history. Shaw serves more than 1100 students and offers a Business and Technology pathway in line with the Georgia Department of Education standards. Within this pathway there are three courses: Intro to Business and Technology, Business and Technology, and Business Communication.

Georgia has a statewide Microsoft Imagine Academy license and all students who take the Business & Technology courses are prepared to earn Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS)

certification. Lakesha Kirkland teaches all courses in the Business & Technology pathway at Shaw and her challenge is to prepare her students to pass a different MOS certification in each course. "I would like my students to earn as many certifications as they can by the completion of the pathway," says Kirkland.

Along with earning different MOS certifications in each course, students must pass an End of Pathway Assessment once all three courses have been completed the MOS PowerPoint core certification.

"The first year we started giving the End of Pathway Assessment, students were not performing well on the MOS exams," says Kirkland. "That was our challenge - to obtain a higher pass rate on the exams."

Microsoft
Office Specialist

“MOS promotes success in the classroom, builds individual distinction and prepares students for an increasingly competitive workforce.”

SOLUTION

The first year, Kirkland checked to make sure students who had previously taken classes in the Business & Technology Career Cluster were enrolled in the last course. About 35 students were enrolled, which allowed Shaw to obtain an MOS site license for unlimited exams.

Students in Kirkland’s classroom have also set records for earning the most MOS Master certifications in the state.

Kirkland then started to learn more about MOS exams since the first year had not gone as well as she would have liked due to lack of knowledge. “Once I started learning the importance of the MOS certifications, I grew excited and I could pass my enthusiasm along to my students,” she says. “I earned certifications and developed additional resources to help students prepare for the exam and then they began having great success.”

In Muscogee County, teachers are not able to proctor MOS exams. They must have their Career, Technical and Agricultural Education Supervisor come in to proctor the exam which occurs about seven times during the school year with some after school opportunities. With these constraints Kirkland’s students try to get as many certifications as possible during the allotted time slots. “Not being able to test the students in class whenever they are ready is difficult. Testing has been a challenge but we have managed to overcome these obstacles with lots of planning and help from our supportive administration.” First MOS was offered to students who completed the pathway, but it was

quickly expanded to all students in the Business and Technology pathway. “We realized all students could benefit from these certifications,” says Kirkland. “After they passed one exam we decided to give them the opportunity to take other exams and earn their Master certifications. By offering rewards, incentives, and recognition, students became more eager to take MOS exams.”

RESULTS

Since 2013 Shaw students have achieved a 100% pass rate for the End of Pathway Assessment with increasing certification numbers each year. This year alone, students have already earned over 560 MOS certifications, placing them as the top school in Georgia. “These certificates are recognized around the world and help our students become college and career ready,” says Kirkland.

Patrick Dooley, a senior, has earned a Shaw record 17 certifications. “I would like to be a programmer and I feel that having these certifications will show that I know how to use computer software,” he says. “Computers have always been my passion so starting with the software aspect will help me tremendously.”

Shaw is the only school in Muscogee County to achieve a 100 percent pass rate for the Business and Technology End of Pathway assessment three years in a row. Students in Kirkland’s classroom have also set records for earning the most MOS Master certifications in the state. Last year there were only 49 Master certifications earned in the entire state of Georgia, and 18 of those came from Shaw.

“MOS promotes success in the classroom, builds individual distinction and prepares students for an increasingly competitive workforce – and I want my students to earn those valuable credentials,” says Kirkland.

The first Shaw students attended the Microsoft Office Specialist U.S. National Championship last year. Certiport runs the competition and invited six Georgia State Champions to attend the U.S. National Championship, with four of them being from Shaw. “The MOS Championships are different from other computing contests for high school students,” says Kirkland. “They get to showcase their Microsoft Office skills, have some fun, gain recognition and increase their study efficiency for the future. When students see this type of reward for their efforts, the process of motivating students to achieve certifications is even easier.”

This year Shaw’s courses are completely full and Kirkland expects to have more students pass the MOS exams with even more Master students than ever before.

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