**GTC** Chesterfield Career and Technical Center
@ Courthouse

## CHESTERFIELD TECHNICAL CENTER

**LOCATION:**
Chesterfield, Virginia

**PROGRAM ENROLLMENT:**
20 students per year

**SUCCESS METRICS:**
» Helps students meet graduation requirements
» Practice test nets 90 percent success rate
» First step in path to career in technology

# Chesterfield Technical Center Improves High School Student IT Certification Success with Microsoft Technology Associate

## Success Story

**www.certiport.com/mta**

*"MTA shows what skill sets our students have, and employers like that."*

**Carol Guerin**
*IT Department Head*
*CTC*

## Microsoft
Technology Associate

## MTA Provides Path from Digital Literacy to More Advanced Technology Certifications

**CHALLENGE**

Chesterfield Technical Center (CTC) offers Virginia students Career and Technical Education (CTE) elective courses as an extension of Chesterfield County's high schools. CTC serves 1,400 students from 11 high schools and aims to equip each of them with valuable technical skills before graduation.

The Virginia Department of Education developed the Path to Industry Certification: High School Industry

Credentialing program to encourage more students to work toward a selected industry credential or state license while pursuing a high school diploma. As a result, each CTC program includes a certification or licensure examination to satisfy graduation requirements. "Our goal is for each student to walk out of CTC with an industry-level certification, which is not the easiest thing to do," said Carol Guerin, IT Department Head at CTC.

Students in the CTC IT program start by earning Certiport's IC3 Digital Literacy

certification. Next, the CTC Information Technology Division was offering students professional-level Oracle and Cisco certification exams but found pass rates to be extremely low. Only a few students per year were earning the certifications.

"The professional-level certifications were too hard for our students, it was a big jump for them," said Guerin. "We needed a more realistic path for high school age kids to earn industry certification."

## SOLUTION
Since the State of Virginia Department of Education already had a relationship with Microsoft, they approached CTC to pilot a new certification program administered by Certiport – the Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA). MTA was designed as an entry-level credential to validate fundamental technology knowledge.

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>
> **Carol Guerin**
> *IT Department Head*
> *CTC*

"We were excited to pilot the MTA program, and hoped it would be more attainable for our students," said Guerin.

CTC piloted several of the MTA exams including Database Fundamentals and provided Microsoft with valuable feedback. They found the certification to be a perfect fit. "MTA fit in well with our curriculum and was challenging, but our students could pass the exams with the right amount of preparation," said Guerin.

CTC started out by implementing MTA with the associated courseware, but pass rates were still lower

than they hoped. They discovered MeasureUp practice tests and adopted them for several reasons. MeasureUp practice tests would allow instructors to make sure students were prepared before they sat for the MTA exam and the practice test reports would give teachers an instant measure of student achievement. They were also attractive because students could access them anywhere, so practice tests could be assigned for homework.

Guerin's students began to use MeasureUp practice tests in three modes. Certification mode mimics the certification exam. Another mode allows Guerin to choose the number of questions and the type of questions in the practice exam so she can cater them to the exact topic the course is covering that day. Last is learning mode, which gives a detailed description of the correct and incorrect answers as students go through the practice exam.

"As my students began to utilize the MeasureUp practice tests, I got detailed reports to see in living color exactly how they were doing," said Guerin. "I was able to wait to let them sit for the MTA exam until they were achieving 85 percent success on the practice exams."

## RESULTS
After implementing MeasureUp, CTC improved the success rate for students earning the MTA certification dramatically. "With MeasureUp I can help all of my students pass," said Guerin. "I love how the system breaks everything down by objectives so you can see your students strengths and weaknesses and address them directly."

For example, Guerin noticed that even though they had already covered normalization in the class, no one could correctly answer the related exam questions as reported by MeasureUp. Guerin then went back and re-taught the lesson and made sure the students all understood the concepts more fully.

215 students have earned MTA certification at CTC, and their confidence is booming. "They are proud," said Guerin. "One of the great things about MTA is when a student

earns it they become a Microsoft Certified Professional, and they love that."

Local employers are taking note, and Guerin has noticed that students who have earned MTA certification are more likely to be chosen for an internship program run by local businesses. "MTA shows what skill sets our students have, and employers like that."



## ABOUT CERTIPORT
Certiport®, a Pearson VUE business, prepares individuals with current and relevant digital skills and credentials for the competitive global workforce. These solutions are delivered by more than 12,000 Certiport Centers worldwide and include the official Microsoft Office certification program, the Microsoft Technology Associate certification program, the Adobe® Certified Associate certification program, the Adobe® Certified Expert program, the HP Accredited Technical Associate, the Autodesk® Certified User certification program, the Intuit® QuickBooks Certified User certification program and the IC3 Digital Literacy Certification.

# Microsoft
Technology Associate