CASE STUDY: CLARKE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Introduction: A Continuing Computer Science Program

Clarke Central High School is a Title I public school located in Athens, GA. The high achieving student body consists of approximately 1,400 students, forming a dynamic mix of wealthier and socio-economically struggling community members. Recognizing the rising need for incorporating computer science education at the high school level, CCHS first began to offer an AP Computer Science A course approximately seven years ago, utilizing an experienced teacher and a textbook. When the teacher retired two years ago, the administration wanted to continue the program, but lacked a seasoned computer science teacher. Engineering, physics, and robotics teacher Scott Swain stepped up to teach the course, immediately beginning to structure a curriculum. “Last year, I made my own curriculum based primarily on a textbook, utilizing videos I created. Halfway through the year, however, the pacing picked up very quickly; it felt like an avalanche caught up to me,” he offered. Swain attempted to supplement the curriculum with CodeHS's program, but found that “I didn’t like it
as a teacher. The kids weren’t getting what they needed. I started searching for online courses. I wanted to give students the education they required from an experienced computer science teacher,” he remarked. Swain soon found Edhesive, finding the approach and technique of the curriculum better suited for CCHS. This year, Swain is teaching both Introduction to Computer Science and AP Computer Science A through Edhesive.

Implementation and Success at Clarke Central High School

When Swain began to teach the Edhesive coursework this year, he found that his familiarity with computers and software made both AP CSA and Intro CS easily accessible. “It’s a testimony of how user friendly the course is that I was able to essentially jump right in and get started. My knowledge from the year before contributed to my ability to promptly figure it out, but I knew I could teach without the course,” he expressed. Swain noted several beneficial aspects of the courses, including Rebecca Dovi’s experience as an educator, the video layout, the coding practice activities, and the students’ enjoyment of the course. “Many of the students have found the program to be a win. They enjoy the platform, and they love the student forum. When they ask me questions, I encourage them to collaborate by using the student forum. Next year, I plan to allow students to answer others’ questions on the student forum for extra credit. A huge part of the course is learning how to find solutions and help each other.”

Swain has integrated both AP CSA and Intro CS into the same classroom, capitalizing on scheduling freedom. “There are a lot of benefits to using Edhesive. Even when students are staying home sick or homebound, they can still remain caught up by using videos and the online course.” Swain mentioned that many CCHS students are considering computer science as a career pathway. “Last year, one of my students received a full ride scholarship to study computer science in college. Many of my students, both in class and in robotics, are interested in computer science as some part of their career. I give the students ideas of what cool STEM jobs are available by bringing professionals and college students into the classroom on occasion. It’s important to show them the potential of what's out there.” Swain believes that giving high school students the opportunity to experience programming can spark interests they may not know they have. “Nobody knows what they’re good at until they practice. Offering students computer science courses allows them to experience the everyday realities of technology on a different level. Without at least an introductory course, there is too much mystery in how things work. Forty or fifty years ago, it may not have mattered so much, but today, everyone needs to have an idea of what's going on behind the screen.”
Reflection

Clarke Central High School is working hard to grow their STEM curriculum, currently offering AP CSA and Intro CS through Edhesive as well as Robotics. “STEM courses are fundamental to the advancement of education today. Regardless of a teacher's experience level, Edhesive means that students can be successful. Many educators teach within their comfort zone, but my lack of knowledge does not impede students from succeeding and learning. Edhesive has many benefits, allowing students the freedom and ability to work at different paces. It does not allow the teacher alone to be the limit of knowledge that students can obtain.”

Outcomes at Clarke Central High School

- CCHS is now offering both AP CSA and Intro CS through Edhesive.
- Students are being given the opportunity to explore their new potential talent in programming.
- Many students from CCHS are considering careers in programming, including a student who received a full ride scholarship to study CS in college.

Highlights for Teachers

- The student forum is an engaging and successful learning tool for students.
- The user-friendly Edhesive interface allows teachers to jump right into the course.
- Teachers with any experience level can create a lucrative learning environment with Edhesive’s programs.

Edhesive makes online learning accessible, personal, and meaningful. We combine online instruction from nationally recognized experts with the personal support of local teachers, who offer students face-to-face guidance and support.

Ready to find out what’s possible for your school? Email us at info@edhesive.com today.