Odysseyware has been supporting schools for nearly 20 years with well-rounded digital curriculum and services to support the needs of all learners in grades 3-12, and adult learners.

While academic success is our shared priority with schools, ensuring that we address students’ social and emotional learning needs is essential. Because, without addressing this critical need, students can find it difficult to focus on academics or in determining their future.

The interviews included in this publication exemplify a small set of the thousands of highly effective ways our school partners use Odysseyware and BASE Education to support students. By giving teachers and schools tools to enable and empower learning, and by giving students a voice in defining their path to success, together we can ultimately enable and empower students to take responsibility for their journey, reach their greatest potential, and discover their contributions to the world.
Like teachers, programs, and districts themselves, students’ educational needs are unique as can be. For that reason, Odysseyware’s customizable features are often appreciated by the educators and administrators who adapt the program to meet their needs. Adam Hartley, superintendent at Fenton Area Public Schools in Michigan, likes to say his district has ‘Fentonized’ its Odysseyware courses. With Fenton’s customized Odysseyware solution, students achieve a well-rounded education.

Though Fenton initially implemented Odysseyware for the purpose of credit recovery, the district’s use has expanded to include blended learning, advanced courses and career technical education, as well.

Adam finds that Odysseyware flips the traditional teaching method on its head, allowing students to take ownership and develop the accountability they’ll need to succeed in pursuing a higher education and in their careers. The ability to create their own learning environment gives students who struggle in traditional classrooms a chance to develop a learning environment that works for them.

Adam says students feel as though their voices are valued, and have a renewed sense of purpose. It’s especially true for three alternative education graduates who faced unthinkable obstacles—homelessness, depression, and extreme anxiety.

“Each of these three students would be the first to tell you they simply wouldn’t have graduated if not for Odysseyware,” says Adam.

With renewed hope and the tools to succeed, the three—and their classmates—are well-prepared for whatever path they choose. Adam’s conversations with local employers reiterate the viability of the skills, and the demand for students who are able to work with technology. Regardless of the field, employers tell him, technological expertise is critical.

“Odysseyware goes far beyond content,” says Adam. “The students are getting experiences they would not get in a traditional classroom, and it’s invaluable.”

Adam appreciates the access to additional support and resources Odysseyware offers, while not replacing the expertise of the district’s own teachers. He, and his Board of Education, appreciate the ability to use their own computers, and their own local talent, to ‘Fentonize’ the Odysseyware experience.

Dr. Lupe Diaz, executive director of the Miami Dade School District, was in search of a program that allowed the district to create a truly customized internship course when she encountered Odysseyware.

Dr. Diaz was thrilled to learn that Odysseyware offered her district the ability to tailor the CTE program to meet the needs of her students. Since implementing Odysseyware, Dr. Diaz finds students’ soft skills that are much needed in the workplace—are improving significantly. Given the prevalence of social media, Dr. Diaz notes the current generation of students is accustomed to being absorbed in their phones and needs to learn how to carry themselves in a business environment.

“Businesses continuously comment on our students’ awareness of appropriate workplace behaviors, and the fact that they have more experience than some of the adults in the workforce,” said Diaz. “Our students have well-developed resumes, based on what they learn in their classes, and they know how to handle themselves in an interview setting.”

The Miami Dade School District has 345,000 students, making it the fourth largest in the United States, and over 115,000 Miami Dade students are enrolled in CTE courses. When Miami Dade’s CTE students begin the internship search process, the district helps connect them with their matching system. Through Odysseyware, students can upload resumes and look at positions that are available. Then, if the location is right they submit their resume and await an interview with their potential future employer.

With workplace demands every changing, Dr. Diaz loves that Odysseyware is always updating to keep up with new technology and trends. Dr. Diaz is confident, in partnership with Odysseyware, her students will continue to emerge from high school ready for the world that awaits.

Ryan Murry, vice principal of a community school in Mojave, California, was seeking added emotional support for his students when he discovered BASE Education.

Murry finds that BASE Education—software designed to address social emotional learning—engages students and allows them to open up about topics they are not comfortable addressing in person.

“BASE Education allows my students to feel like their voices are being heard,” said Murry. “The people behind BASE Education are fantastic—they really care about my students. Teenagers are used to engaging with technology, so we have found that they are often more willing to communicate through BASE Education than through a direct conversation with an adult.”

After students share issues they are struggling with through BASE Education’s online platform, the counseling team is notified and schedules a more detailed follow-up conversation with the student and their parents. The program also provides research-based lessons to help students learn skills to cope with the emotions they are experiencing.
In every state, there are districts that go above and beyond to pioneer the use of technology to inspire transformative educational experiences. Cossatot River School District in Wickes, Arkansas is one of those school districts. As an accredited School of Innovation by the Arkansas State Department of Education, incorporating Odysseyware’s ClassPace blended learning solution made perfect sense to Mickey Ford, assistant principal at Cossatot River High School.

ClassPace offers Cossatot teachers the opportunity to facilitate online lessons into their regular lesson plans to meet a variety of student learning styles. The school uses ClassPace in both math and literacy classes across a variety of grade levels.

“ClassPace is user-friendly for both our teachers and students, and allows real-time customizable feedback that is invaluable,” says Mickey. “We have received positive feedback from many of the students using ClassPace, and plan to expand our use to different courses and grade levels as a result.”

Mickey says each of the 102 students currently using ClassPace at Cossatot are finding success by learning at their own pace. The platform allows teachers to monitor student work in real-time, and analyze questions students get wrong using the data dashboard. Mickey notes it’s clear ClassPace was designed by teachers and for teachers, for optimal student learning. He relishes the ability for students to view their evaluated work in a timely matter, understand where they went wrong, and problem solve to improve before the next lesson.

Shane Colby, math and science teacher at American International School of Utah, UT, wanted to find a program that offered competency-based learning in a user-friendly format. A believer that more options leads to better results, Colby knows students have different needs and skill sets.

In Odysseyware, Colby discovered a way to cater to the wide variety of students that attend his school. In his classes, Colby has every learner imaginable—honors students that use Odysseyware to seek new and challenging content, students with anxiety who often struggle in the traditional classroom environment, English Language Learners that succeed using Odysseyware at their own pace, and students working on credit recovery.

“Odysseyware allows students to put more of a focus on their passions,” said Colby. “I am able to assign certain levels of classes focused on competency learning for subjects that students struggle with the most, or may have less interest in. This way, I’m able to make sure they master the content they need to, before moving on to subjects that they actually want to pursue for a career.”

The blended learning option allows Colby to work one-on-one with students. Whether helping with an assignment or discussing what is going on in their lives, Colby feels that, with Odysseyware, he can better support each student in his class.

A sixth-grade math teacher, Sandra Ledbetter, in Little Rock, AR has long battled with the challenge of getting students to complete their homework on time. Students would often claim they did not have enough time or could not work through the problems on their own.

The principal at her school discovered ClassPace, Odysseyware’s blended learning curriculum. Since Sandra already uses Odysseyware resources—such as rotation station materials—for instruction, she knew ClassPace would be a seamless integration for homework. Students can use computers at school if they don’t have technology or internet at home.

With ClassPace, Sandra is able to focus her attention on areas where students need support, helping them break down their unique barriers to learning and increase student engagement. Sandra finds that ClassPace helps students take ownership of their own success.

“ClassPace gives students the independence to finish assignments at their own pace throughout the week,” said Ledbetter. “When they’re confused, students can participate in tutorials for added support. Since the addition of ClassPace, I have seen an improvement in grades and participation.”

Sandra especially enjoys the ease of use of the review process with ClassPace, which offers a clear overview of where each student—and the class as a whole—is struggling.

Dr. Steve Sandoval, Executive Director of Special Services at Westminster School District in Colorado, integrated BASE Education two years ago to bolster his district’s existing social and emotional learning (SEL) supports. With a primarily at-risk student body of 75% Free/Reduced Lunch population and 40% English-language learners, Westminster needed an SEL tool that not only supported different languages, but offered research-based behavioral and mental health modules.

Having a background in mental health himself, Dr. Sandoval knew there was no shortage of existing programs that offered little more than “fluff” and mental health jargon. He was impressed to learn BASE Education was created and supported by mental health experts, and felt as though the foundation in mental health knowledge shone through in the program itself.

“BASE Education offers deep, serious content that is rooted in mental health expertise,” said Dr. Sandoval. “BASE Education is a genuine product that will benefit students’ abilities to improve social and emotional skills, developed by people with a passion for mental and behavioral health. I look forward to a long-term partnership with the team at BASE Education.”

Dr. Sandoval knows many of his students are more likely to “open up” through technology than they are to an adult. At the same time, Dr. Sandoval says, Westminster doesn’t use BASE Education to replace human intervention, but rather to support the work they’re already doing. Dr. Sandoval finds BASE Education’s integration of Fireword™ technology to be critical. The system gives supervising adults the information they need to intervene quickly with students in need of support.
Learning a new program can be overwhelming, and educators often have tried and true lesson plans they are accustomed to. To overcome the obstacles, Odysseyware's customer success team offers seamless and convenient support to school districts using the program across the United States.

Dr. Steven Dorsey, project director of curriculum, instruction and professional development at the Los Angeles County Office of Education works directly with Odysseyware's customer success team to implement Odysseyware in his district.

"The team I am working with from Odysseyware is great. They work with us to set up professional development time, and are flexible in working with our teachers who need help at any stage in the process," said Dorsey.

Dorsey and the Los Angeles County Office of Education use Odysseyware to offer a customizable curriculum to juvenile court schools and alternative schools in the district. Each student in the district requires a unique, learning experience, which is made possible by the customer success team. In order to ensure a successful launch, the team trained the district’s teachers, and was in the classroom to support the roll out and get students on board.

The Los Angeles County Office of Education will soon be expanding the curriculum to all students in their alternative classroom settings. As they do, the customer success team will be at hand to ensure a successful expansion.

Amy Turgeon, a virtual learning teacher at Sanford High School in Maine, began her career at the school as a Support and Transition teacher. To help students who struggled in the classroom setting, the school sought out an online learning option that would allow students to learn in the way they do best.

After testing the waters with three different online programs to no avail, they discovered Odysseyware. Thrilled with the results she began seeing immediately, Amy has now been using Odysseyware for over five years to help her students with credit recovery. Amy raves about the ease of use and innovative techniques the program provides. She is able to customize courses and search for lessons and quizzes that are best-suited to her students and their unique needs.

"Many of my students, who struggled in a traditional classroom setting, have truly found success through online learning with Odysseyware," said Turgeon. "Odysseyware’s online model for credit recovery allows students to learn at their own pace and set personal goals. Each year, the number of credits my students earn continues to grow."

Seeking to meet the needs of the whole learner, Sanford High School has expanded their use of Odysseyware programs and now utilize Career & Technical Education courses to help prepare students for life after graduation. In tandem, the Odysseyware programs offer students a well-rounded education that focuses on student success—in the classroom and in life.

When Darlene Mellen, a technology implementation specialist at Alamogordo Public Schools in New Mexico, took on her current role in 2010, the district was only using Odysseyware at the district’s alternative school and as a summer school option.

Immediately, Darlene realized the many ways the district could utilize Odysseyware, and she started to help teachers districtwide leverage the program’s blended learning options as a supplement to their curriculum. Darlene also understood the need for offering alternative education and flexible course offerings to students. In addition to helping Alamogordo teachers leverage Odysseyware, she led the charge for Odysseyware virtual instructors to help extend course options and instructional services to students. At the high school level, Odysseyware has enabled the district to expand its course offerings to provide students with access to courses and Highly Qualified teachers that wouldn’t be available otherwise.

"The options that Odysseyware provides our teachers and students are vast," said Mellen. "It’s the perfect pairing for a teacher who is licensed to teach, but who may not have all of the resources he or she needs. Providing these resources for these teachers not only alleviates stress, but ultimately gives the students the upper hand, and the ability to learn more and have access to varied content."

Another huge win for Alamogordo is the support of Odysseyware Academic Services to address teacher shortage needs in Science, Math and some electives.

Darlene relishes the newfound self-confidence she sees in students who struggled to learn before, but finds new hope in blended learning. Darlene notes that many students using the program begin to realize they can accomplish anything if they set their minds to it, and that the most traditional route isn’t the only route when it comes to a quality education.

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