



FAST FACTS

Name: Bryan Miller

Role: Director of Educational Technology

School: Pine Crest School, Fort Lauderdale FL

Challenge: How to incorporate an essential component of literacy into an already full curriculum.

Solution: QwertyTown with school and home access.

Results: Enthusiastic students who have mastered essential keyboarding skills.

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True Engagement

An edtech director at one of the largest private schools in the country discovers a standout keyboarding instructional solution that students love.



Innovative leader. *Bryan Miller likes what QwertyTown has to offer and says his students love it.*

Twitter," he says. "Subscribing to the hashtag #edtech, I learn about tons of small startups and I love to take risks and go for the newest and the best of what is out there."

Why QwertyTown

QwertyTown fit the bill for Pine Crest School because it solved two problems for their school, as Bryan explains it. One, they were looking for something that was hosted in the cloud that students could do from home. Secondly, it provided students with a social feature and gaming component. "I'm big into game-based learning and this had avatars, achievements — and really stood out from others," says Bryan. Despite the fact that they

www.QwertyTown.com

Fluent keyboarding as an essential component of today's literacy.



“The students love it! They honestly cannot get enough. We have students going home and trying to unlock new achievements, just so they can share it with their friends.”

—Bryan Miller, Director of Education Technology, Pine Crest School - Fort Lauderdale, FL



An essential component. *QwertyTown teaches keyboarding, an essential component of literacy for today's students. It also addresses Common Core Literacy Standards and is customizable for learners with different abilities.*

have been with other software titles for many years, Bryan recognized a winner and stands firm in his choice, saying, “QwertyTown was innovative in their design and delivery.”

Bryan has more to say about the value and benefit involved in using this solution. “The students *love* it! They honestly cannot get enough. We have students going home and trying to unlock new achievements, just so they can share it with their friends.” From the technical side, the account management has been “fantastic” according to Bryan, allowing them to break each class up and set different benchmarks for students to achieve bronze, silver, or gold medals. “For us, it is the removal of the stressors of teaching keyboarding, because it truly engages our students and keeps them wanting to achieve more,” he says.

A Benchmark for Success

Further, QwertyTown serves as a benchmark in the Pine Crest School technology continuum. Students have requirements that they must achieve each school year, and QwertyTown makes it easy for their teachers to track their performance. Interestingly enough, the school does not outright teach keyboarding in their daily routine. “With the change of input devices, the question that I have posed is,

do we need to teach formal keyboarding in a curriculum?”

Today, says Bryan, students are using different devices to place the written word on a page, through tablets without keyboards, to phones, to dictation. “We have so many additional skills we want our students to become prepared with, that keyboarding is taught outside of the classroom, at their own pace,” he says. “Yes, it may be used as free time in the classroom, but it has been left up to the parent and the child to decide how much they want to ‘play.’ The students know what they need to achieve and we monitor that – but we only worry about the following benchmarks: speed, and accuracy. How they achieve this task is up to the students.”

Making Learning Fun

The students think they are playing a game, which is the real draw to the students, according to Bryan, and with the addition of speaking instructions to the students, the school can now have the youngest of students practicing their keyboarding. “We need to provide more opportunities for our students and teachers to become risk-takers and solve problems creatively,” says Bryan. Gone are the days of teaching in front of the classroom, he says. “Teachers need to embrace the power of the Internet, and the fact that students will learn with or without us, so we need to become facilitators of learning. We need to teach our students how to effectively and efficiently find answers to their questions, while sitting back and letting them make mistakes; but using those mistakes as the best opportunities to teach.”

Final Thoughts

If you are looking for an innovative way to teach keyboarding through game-based design, then “this cloud-based solution is a great fit for any school!” says Bryan. “Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions. We are doing some amazing things at Pine Crest School!” — including making sure that an innovative keyboarding solution is a key part of their success.

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