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TECHNOLOGY

Five tech tools to make homework easier

By StatePoint

Having the right tech tools can make homework and studying easier. Not only can it reinforce what was learned in the classroom, it can also help your child delve further into the subject. Here are five such tools to consider:

- **Study hour:** While distractions have existed for every generation of students, never have there been so many at their fingertips than today. However, you can help your child carve out uninterrupted, quality study time with an app such as OFF-TIME, which allows users to block their phone for pre-programmed chunks of time.

- **Math tools:** If your child is taking higher-level math courses, the importance of having an intuitive, menu-driven calculator can't be overstated. Knowing instinctively how to locate such functions as finding an intersection, or converting between fractions and decimals, can give your child more confidence while completing homework assignments. It can also improve their speed and accuracy dur-

ing tests. The graphing calculators from Casio allow users to move between menus fluidly for more efficient problem-solving. The brand also offers resources to help familiarize students with their calculator. Its education website features tours, product videos and reference guides, as well as step-by-step guidance through sample functions and activities. To learn more, visit casioeducation.com.

- **College test prep:** Students can substantially boost their college entrance exam scores using free online tools. In addition to its study tools that complement pre-K-12 coursework in nearly every subject, the non-profit Khan Academy also offers test-takers personalized SAT preparation with proven results, including tips, strategies and tailored study plans for their individual needs.

- **Customized music education:** For piano students, the practice time afforded in their music class may not be sufficient. Having a keyboard at home, particularly one designed for learners, can help your student truly master the in-

strument. The LK-S450 Casiotone Keyboard, for example, acts as a personal teacher with its Key Lighting System that guides the player through each piece by illuminating the keys in sequence. Users can practice at their own pace, as the instrument gives musicians the option to slow a song's tempo or break it down by selecting only the left-hand or right-hand part. Built-in scores and MIDI capability open up a world of possibilities. Plus, with the freedom to change the key of a song or even turn favorite music into a backing track with the "cancel melody" or "cancel accompaniments" functions, practice sessions can be creatively customized by learners.

- **Reading inspiration:** Inspire young readers to develop a love of reading with a Goodreads membership. This free site allows readers to connect with friends on a literary level and to track and review the books they've read and would like to read. Delivering personalized book recommendations to its users, it's an excellent place to discover new authors and expand one's horizons.





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EXTRACURRICULARS

There are many benefits to extracurricular activities

By Metro Creative

School offers much more than a top-notch education. Being an engaged student involves learning lessons in the classroom but also participating in the myriad activities that begin once the dismissal bell has rung.

Participation in extracurricular activities should be a consideration for every student because of the vast array of benefits such pursuits provide. Information published in the Brandon University Journal of

Graduate Studies in Education indicates that participation in extracurricular activities positively correlates with students' development both academically and personally.

Research shows being involved in afterschool clubs and sports promotes greater character development, improved academic success, good time-management techniques and leadership skills and greater interest in community involvement.

Every school offers some type of extracurricular ac-

tivity, from school bands to academic clubs to volunteer groups to sports. The National Center for Education Statistics says these activities offer students opportunities to learn many valuable lessons, including group responsibility and the value of competition.

Students who participate in extracurricular activities also can be exposed to a diverse array of people and cultures.

Some activities also help students develop their mental and physical strength. The NCES notes that par-

ticipation in extracurricular activities can foster a strong sense of connection between students and their schools, which can reduce the likelihood of school failures and dropout rates.

Extracurricular activities also are the gifts that keep on giving, particularly as they relate to future academic success.

Crimson, an admissions support company specializing in increasing acceptance to highly regarded institutions, says extracurriculars are a critical part of a student's university ap-

plication. Involvement in clubs and more provides a clearer picture of who a student is outside of the classroom and offers an opportunity to showcase various skills and interests.

Furthermore, diversifying one's interests through extracurricular activities broadens a person's world view and improves self-esteem. These are benefits that can ultimately help students become well-rounded persons and successful professionals.

While people are quick to view extracurriculars

for the academic advantages they provide, one often overlooked benefit is the social benefits of these pursuits. One of the best and easiest ways to make friends is through extracurricular activities. Fellow participants share the same interests and that can lay a solid foundation for lasting friendships.

Students who view extracurriculars as vital components of their school experiences can reap the rewards of being active members of their campus communities.

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COLLEGE PLANNING

Tips to kick-start the financial road to college



STATEPOINT

College costs can surprise many families. Don't get caught off guard. To get financially prepared, use the year ahead to explore all your financing options and formulate a plan.

By StatePoint

If you're like the majority of parents, you both value the importance of a college degree, while harboring anxiety about the price tag.

In a recent College Ave Student Loans parent survey conducted by Barnes & Noble Insights, 85% of parents agree that earning a degree is more important than ever. At the same time, most parents surveyed agree that the cost of college is more of a financial burden than in previous years, that the cost is surprisingly high, and find paying to be stressful.

As you begin making your financial plans, consider these tips:

- Build a smart college list: Encourage your child to apply to a mix of private and public schools

as sometimes merit aid from private universities can make costs comparable to public options. By applying to a variety of schools, you can compare financial aid award packages and identify a school that's not only a good academic and social fit, but a good financial fit as well.

- Apply for financial aid: Create a spreadsheet listing financial aid deadlines and requirements, which vary by school and state. You can check with your school's financial aid office to learn what paperwork is needed.

Oct. 1 marked the day you could begin filing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Complete the FAFSA this fall and every year your child attends college. Doing so is the key to unlocking scholarships, grants, work-study and federal

student loans. This also was the date you could begin filing the CSS Profile, an online application that nearly 400 colleges, universities, professional schools, and scholarship programs use to award more than \$9 billion in financial aid annually.

- Look for scholarships: Have your college-bound student seek out and apply for reputable scholarships. Be sure to read the fine print to understand the terms. One easy one to apply for is the College Ave Student Loans \$1,000 monthly scholarship sweepstakes.

- Review your finances: The overwhelming majority of parents (97%) plan to help pay for their child's college education, according to the College Ave survey. Of those, 62% plan to draw from their income and savings to do so. Make

time this fall to review your financial resources to determine how much you can contribute without sacrificing your retirement goals. You may need to get creative. For example, 1 out of 10 parents surveyed find extra income from a side hustle.

- Prep your student: Many students learn their first money management lessons in college. Give

your child the financial know-how needed to hit the ground running. Discuss how to create and stick to a budget, how to build an emergency savings account, and how to avoid peer pressure when it comes to spending. For example, just because a friend is dining out or traveling frequently, doesn't mean your child has to do the same. Also,

discuss how they can contribute to their education costs. Creating financial goals now will help set your child up for financial success.

- Get savvy: As you navigate the financial road to college, stay savvy by referencing the free tips, resources, guides and financial expert advice available at collegevestudentloans.com/blog.

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2022-2023
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COURTESY OF MEDIA-PROVIDENCE FRIENDS SCHOOL

Preschool 3 and 4 classes at Media-Providence Friends School can't wait to welcome their 2-year-old friends.

MEDIA-PROVIDENCE FRIENDS SCHOOL

Media-Providence Friends School adds preschool program for 2022-23

By Media-Providence Friends School

Media-Providence Friends School in Media, Delaware County, has announced the expansion of its preschool program, opening to students age 2 for the 2022-23 school year.

This inaugural class of preschool 2-year-olds will join the preschool 3 and 4 classes for a whole-child, Quaker-values based Friends education in the heart of downtown Media.

From age 2 through grade 8, MPFS awakens the passion and potential of all individuals within a welcoming, diverse community led by Quaker values.

Preschool: beginning at age 2

Research shows that the younger school years are the most crucial in developing a student's positive attitude towards learning.

Beginning with the 2-year-old program and carrying into the lower- and middle-school grades, MPFS strives to develop an independence, resilience, confidence and curiosity that sets its graduates apart, all while waking up in the morning excited to

go to school.

Within a secure and stimulating learning environment, MPFS preschool and specialist teachers engage children's natural curiosity, helping to build their confidence as they discover the world and find joy in learning.

Association with a larger learning institution not only gives preschoolers access to building facilities such as the library/media center and full gym, but it also affords daily opportunities for them to interact with older students and adults who are role models, mentors and true friends.

Being known and cared for within a strong, supportive community empowers these youngest students to take risks in their learning, to grow in independence and joyfully embrace their own individuality.

MPFS' preschool is a sequential three-year program beginning at age 2 that encompasses social, emotional, physical and cognitive development.

In a school day balanced between free play and learning through thoughtfully struc-

tured multi-sensory lessons, the child-centered curriculum provides a strong foundation in basic skills in literacy, math, science, social studies, art, physical education, Spanish and music.

Particular emphasis is placed on the intentional teaching of self-care, conflict resolution and other social and emotional skills designed to foster community building as well as confidence and happiness in each child.

Learn more about Early Childhood at MPFS at www.mpfs.org/academics/earlychildhood.

For questions about this or any of the school's programming, contact Director of Admissions and Programming Angela DiMaria at 610-565-1960, ext. 104..

The MPFS campus and admissions office remains open during the COVID-19 outbreak and continues to accept applications on a rolling basis.

Prospective families are invited to register for its next live Virtual Open House at mpfs.org/rsvp. To learn more, visit our website, www.mpfs.org.



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EDUCATION

When it's time to call in a tutor

By Metro Creative

Busy schedules, hybrid learning and demanding coursework have affected students' academic performance over the last year-plus. The months since a pandemic was declared in March of 2020 have been unlike any other, and confronting the academic challenges of the pandemic may have adversely affected some students' grades.

A recent report from the Fairfax County Public Schools Office of Research and Strategic Improvement in Virginia found the number of middle and high school students with two or more failing marks increased by 83% percent in the first quarter of the 2020-2021 school year compared to the year prior.

But students' grades may slide or they may find certain school work overly challenging even in normal years. Since many parents have not seen a periodic table or had to solve high school math problems in decades, tutors may be just what students need to regain their academic footing.

Failing grades are not necessarily the most notable indicator that students can benefit from the services of a tutor. The Princeton Review says 25% of high school students say homework is their biggest source of stress, and homework progress can help parents determine if it's time to call in a tutor.

Students who find their homework is taking too long, particularly double or triple the amount of time it once required, may need some extra help. Here are some additional indicators that a tutor may be needed.

▪ **Declining test scores:** Some students are simply poor test takers, but a gradual or sudden decline in test scores may indicate students are having trouble mastering material. Teachers can pinpoint if certain concepts are overly challenging to students and notify parents if there are any problem areas.

▪ **Poor time management or focus:** Students who are struggling may have their attention drift or they put off doing tasks because they don't grasp the assignments.

▪ **Lack of homework help at home:** Parents may have prior commitments during the times of day when their children are doing homework. Even when parents are home, they may discover that the concepts covered in school are not being taught in the ways parents learned them and they may have difficulty assisting their children. Tutors can step in and help students when parents cannot.

▪ **Learning disorder:** Certain students learn differently from others due to a diagnosed or undiagnosed learning disorder. A child who is struggling with reading, phonics, spelling, and writing may have dyslexia, according to the tutoring experts at Dyslexia Practitioner NJ. Tutors who specialize in learning disorders can assess and address learning conflicts and tailor instructions in ways that can help students overcome those challenges.

▪ **Students shut down or say they hate school:** Disinterest in school or

expressions of hating going to school may be indicative of academic struggles in the classroom, says the Princeton Review. Some students get so frustrated they simply give up. Tutors can solve learning puzzles and help get students back on track and reignite their interest in school.

Tutors can be valuable resources for students who need some one-on-one at-

tention to master general learning concepts or reinforce skills for key tests or projects.

METRO CREATIVE CONTENT

Tutors can be valuable resources for students who need some one-on-one attention to master general learning concepts or reinforce skills for key tests or projects.



Registration for New Kindergarten and First Grade Students at Tredyffrin/Easttown School District

2022-2023

Registration for kindergarten and first grade students new to TESD is now available. Information needed for registration will be collected electronically this year.

We encourage to register all the children who plan to enter the TESD in grades 2nd through 4th in September at this time.

Children are eligible to attend kindergarten if they have reached the age of five years on or before September 1. Children who have reached the age of six years on or before September 1 will normally be enrolled in first grade.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION:

- ⇒ Official birth certificate with raised seal,
- ⇒ Verification of immunizations for diphtheria-tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B and varicella, or verification that the child has had chicken pox,
- ⇒ Two proofs of residency are required in order to complete registration.

For more information visit www.tesd.net/kindergarten

Registration will be held virtually for each elementary school. To register, please email the required documents to your child's school at the email address below. If you are not able to send the documents electronically, please contact your child's school to schedule a time for the office staff to copy the documents for you.

Beaumont Elementary School (610-240-1400): BESRegistration@tesd.net

Devon Elementary School (610-240-1450): DESRegistration@tesd.net

Hillside Elementary School (610-240-1500): HESRegistration@tesd.net

New Eagle Elementary School (610-240-1550): NESRegistration@tesd.net

Valley Forge Elementary School (610-240-1600): VFERegistration@tesd.net

Tredyffrin/Easttown School District 940 West Valley Road, Suite 1700, Wayne, PA 19087



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EDUCATION

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COURTESY OF THE ACADEMY OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR

Dr. Laura Hotchkiss, center, head of school at the Academy of Notre Dame de Namur, pictured with students.

By Courtney Diener-Stokes
For MediaNews Group

Two of our region's independent schools are unique because of their approaches to education that take much more than the mind into consideration.

While each of them has its own unique philosophy steeped in history, they also share an underlying foundation that's rooted in a student's well-being.

While the pandemic has shone a light on the importance of tending to one's overall wellness, the Kimberton Waldorf School in Chester County and the Academy of Notre Dame de

Namur in Delaware County have been way ahead of their time in addressing this.

Coincidentally, both of these private college-preparatory day schools welcomed new leadership at the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

Waldorf education

Dr. Brad Kershner, dean of school at Kimberton Waldorf School, a co-ed school for children in early childhood through high school located in Kimberton, moved his family from Durham, N.C., to take on the position.

He shared his draw to Waldorf education.

"Waldorf education is really special because it is

built upon a really deep and thoughtful understanding of what it means to be a human and a child," Kershner said. "It's so special to have such a comprehensive and thoughtful, broad vision of the whole growth process."

Similarly, Dr. Laura Hotchkiss, head of school at Notre Dame in Villanova, relocated from Los Angeles to oversee all internal and external elements of the all-girls' Catholic school.

Hotchkiss shared aspects of Notre Dame that most attracted her: "The unique positioning of the school through the care and attention. The heart, mind and body education."

Give girls a space

Hotchkiss said the Academy was founded to give girls a space where their voices could be heard and where they could be given an opportunity to lead. They persist in preserving their mission that was established when the school was founded in 1856.

Catering to young women in grades 6 through 12, the overarching goal beyond academics is to lift up all women so that they can then lift up their communities.

"Girls are the voice here and they lead everything we do," Hotchkiss said. "More competence leads to more confidence."

The social, emotional and mental well-being of the Academy's students is prioritized in campus ministry, through their mental health program and advisory.

"We focus on heart, mind and body," Hotchkiss said. "Our students can lead and have a voice when they are well."

ABOUT KIMBERTON WALDORF SCHOOL

Kimberton is a co-educational independent private school for early childhood through 12th grade located in Kimberton, Chester County. It's a place where academics, nature and the arts converge to form a holistic curriculum that represents a 100-year heritage of Waldorf education. Graduates of Kimberton are encouraged to respond to the needs of the world around them and are accomplished in the fields of medicine, law, social justice, environmental science, business and the arts, among others. There are 1,000 Waldorf schools in 64 countries around the globe.

For more information:
www.kimberton.org

ABOUT ACADEMY OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR

Notre Dame is an independent all-girls Catholic college-preparatory school in Villanova, Delaware County. Since 1856, the school has educated, empowered and inspired young women for a lifetime of leadership and service guided by their Catholic faith and an abiding trust in God. Their graduates are leading and contributing to medicine, art, law, science, education and business throughout the world setting the standard for social responsibility through their lives and actions.

For more information:
www.ndapa.org

facets is also what grounds the curriculum of Kimberton Waldorf School at its 400-plus-acre campus. In their case, it

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7th Grade Visitation Day | March 24th

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shanahan.org | admissions@shanahan.org

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Three Reasons to Visit Bishop Shanahan this Spring

Bishop Shanahan High School (BSHS) is more than just a high school. It is an experience that offers young men and women an educational journey of academic excellence, rich extracurricular opportunities, and a community that radiates the Christ-centered values of love, respect, and responsibility. Now is the time to start your admissions journey to become a Shanahan Eagle. There are many opportunities to visit in the months ahead.

After an exciting fall sports season, upcoming winter and spring sports games are a must-see. Winter sports include boys' and girls' basketball, boys' and girls' ice hockey club, swimming/diving, and boys' and girls' indoor track club. Spring sports feature baseball, boys' and girls' lacrosse, boys' rugby 15s, girls' rugby 7s, softball, boys' tennis, and boys' and girls' track and field. Last season, the girls' lacrosse team claimed the Ches-Mont League title as well as its first ever PIAA District 1 2A Championship, and later competed in the state playoffs. Visit shanahan.org/teams to see all of the BSHS teams' schedules.

BSHS will be hosting its one-day exclusive Practice Scholarship Exam on March 5th from 8:00 AM to 11:30 AM. This is an excellent opportunity for 7th graders to prepare for the 8th Grade Scholarship Exam which will be held in October 2022. Last year, Shanahan offered ten renewable scholarships for the top scorers of the 8th Grade Scholarship Exam. Seventh Grade Visitation Day follows soon after on March 24th. This fun day offers personalized tours of the school, one-on-one time with current students, an activities fair with club and sport leaders, and interactive games for peer-to-peer action.

The last exclusive opportunity to visit Shanahan arrives on April 9, the Spring Personal Tour Day. Attendees experience a first-hand look at BSHS with a Shanahan ambassador accompanying them on a customized tour.

For these opportunities and more, connect with the BSHS Admissions Team at shanahan.org/whybshs or admissions@shanahan.org.



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KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY



COURTESY OF KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY

KU creates scholarships for Pell Grant eligible students

By MediaNews Group

Kutztown University recently established its Pell Promise scholarships to help students in need.

Beginning in the 2022 fall semester for newly accepted students, the KU Pell Promise scholarship covers the entire cost of student tuition and mandatory fees after the student's federal grants (Pell and SEOG) and Pennsylvania state grants, as well as additional institutional scholarships that have been awarded.

The Pell Promise is Kutztown University's commitment to undergraduate students to close the gap between merit and need-based aid received, tuition and fees.

To be eligible for the KU

Pell Promise, students must:

- Be admitted into an undergraduate program for your first bachelor's degree.

- Be classified as a Pennsylvania resident; and qualify for in-state tuition.

- Be eligible for Pell Grant and PA State Grant (state application required).

- Be an incoming freshman with a cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 or above (on a 4.0 scale), or an incoming transfer with a cumulative college GPA of 3.0 or above.

- Be enrolled full-time at the end of the drop/add period each semester.

This award requires that a student maintain full-time enrollment up to 18 credits per semester. To maintain eligibility, students must remain in good standing

and continue to meet the eligibility requirements listed above.

Students can receive the scholarship for eight consecutive semesters for new students (six semesters for transfer students).

At the end of each academic year, students must earn at least 24 new credits with a 2.5 or higher GPA.

Students must file the FAFSA every year and remain Pell and PA State grant eligible to renew the KU Pell Promise. Students are automatically considered when they apply to KU and submit a completed, processed FAFSA to KU. Questions can be directed to KU's Office of Financial Aid at financialaid@kutztown.edu.

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MTC is now accepting applications for the 2022-2023 school year. Parents and guardians will once again have an opportunity to meet admissions officers, administrators, faculty, students and parents and gain insight into programs, environment, and opportunities.

SCHEDULE A VISIT AT MTC.SCHOOL.ORG

Private

FROM PAGE 2

is the head, heart and hands that Kershner referred to with deep reverence. Despite the school's 80-year history grounding the curriculum, Kimberton is continually reflecting on and refining it with what Kershner referred to as "responsible innovation."

"Waldorf curriculum is an evolving lineage of thinking about how to educate and how to teach in a way that is really going to help children grow in a holistic way," he said. "It's about how do we stay grounded in our hands and hearts in addition to our heads."

Honor and nurture

The intentional way the curriculum and experiences progress for each child from early childhood through high school at Kimberton is aimed to honor and nurture the lived experience of children.

"It's a school environment that really allows us to keep the things that should be top priorities to be the top priority," Kershner said. "We don't allow things like the goals of test scores to get in the way of the things that are most important."

Instead, Kershner said that paying close attention to the health of the school's community is of utmost importance. He also discussed how this comes into play with the benefits of being a smaller school.

"It means that everyone is known really well, seen and heard by their teachers," he said.

Hotchkiss shared benefits of individualized attention she sees in having smaller classes, and how this approach builds purpose and a love of learning at Notre Dame.

"Mastery happens in the middle and high school, but it's what they do beyond that builds purpose," Hotchkiss said. "It's a deeper learning experience if we are showing them the real-world application."



COURTESY OF KIMBERTON WALDORF SCHOOL

Gardening is a part of the curriculum at Kimberton Waldorf School, and harvested crops grown on campus are used for their organic lunch program.

Engaged in work

On their 30-plus acre campus, each area of their academic programs has a space and a place. Their interiors are designed to enable students to see fellow students engaged in their coursework.

"In our STEM LEED certified building, girls can see girls doing science, mathematics and computer programming," Hotchkiss said. "Our fine arts building has a dance studio and a choral concert stage."

She added that it's an opportunity for the girls to see each other differently as they evolve at the school.

"When my girls see other girls doing it, they see themselves doing it," she said.

Hotchkiss also strives to lead by example for her students.

"Something I have always elevated in my girls as a working mom is how am I role modeling this life to be a happy, well-balanced person," she said.

Integrating math, art

Kershner and his wife are the parents of a 12-year-old daughter in sixth grade at Kimberton.

"She started the year with a geometry unit, and it's such a great example of the curriculum," he said. "It was deep study, but also a unit of study where they did a lot of art — the integration of math and art was mind-blowing for her."

In addition, Kershner's daughter is learning physics, geometry and the ancient

history of multiple cultures. Regardless of grade, children at Kimberton work with their hands often.

"Our children have gardening, various kinds of art and various kinds of music," Kershner said. "It's a balance in the sense of math, reading and writing and also different kinds of arts."

Over the past few years, Kimberton's high school program has added lots of new courses.

"We have a course of math and social justice where we look at social problems through a quantitative and mathematical lens," Kushner said.

Service to the world

Kimberton sees the education for the child in the context of having a deep understanding as to what is happening in the world.

"They can be of service to the world if they have a healthy self-understanding as to what is the meaning and purpose of their life," he said.

The importance of this particularly comes into play for Kimberton's high school students. Kushner pointed out that Waldorf high school education was way ahead of its time.

"If you look at what's happening in the world today, you will see concerning increases in mental health issues in teens," he said. "What we do is help our teenagers and young adults to be self-actualizing people who stay positive and hopeful and oriented to do well in the world."

PENNSYLVANIA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL

PA Cyber is an alternative school for students in grades K-12

By MediaNews Group

The Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School's (PA Cyber) legacy of nearly 20,000 graduates proves that a unique online education works for many. Over the past two decades, PA Cyber has grown and evolved — right along with its students — becoming one of the largest, most experienced and most innovative online public schools in the nation.

If it becomes necessary to try a “different way to school,” consider enrolling your child at PA Cyber.

Looking for better school/life balance? About 11,500 students have selected PA Cyber for the 2021–2022

school year. They may choose live instruction or a more self-paced format. They can choose a class schedule to best suit their lives outside of school. They can complete their schoolwork at home, at grandma's house, or perhaps even take school on the road to their next tournament.

At PA Cyber, families embrace the flexibility of allowing the school to fit the student — instead of the student having to fit into the school.

Founded in 2000, PA Cyber is headquartered in Midland, Beaver County, and maintains nine regional offices throughout the state that serve as hubs

for enrollment, orientation and year-round social and school-related activities.

PA Cyber students receive one-on-one attention from their teachers and academic advisors, who are readily available to help make each student's learning experience great. Extensive course offerings allow students to grow from a solid foundation in core curriculum while unlocking their own personal interests through electives.

Students may choose from more than 70 clubs and workshops where they are encouraged to interact and explore various skill sets.

PA Cyber is open for

enrollment to any school-age child residing in Pennsylvania and does not charge tuition. Every student receives a laptop, printer and all the necessary textbooks and support materials to enrich the educational process.

“I was completely taken back by how much PA Cyber provided — technology and books — in addition to a significant education,” said Class of 2021 graduate Gabby Appel.

The flexibility of PA Cyber's blended courses “allowed for so many more cool opportunities,” she explained. “I experienced growing up without the weight of an 8-hour school



COURTESY OF PENNSYLVANIA CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL

day.”

Students get to interact with their peers in-person at regional offices, on field trips, in clubs and workshops and at summer camps. They party at prom and celebrate graduation together. The regional offices host enrichment activities, events, and classes.

Through the many Family Link field trips, families can build an important social network. All these events provide students with chances to spend time with

others who share similar interests. Many virtual extracurricular activities are routinely offered as well.

PA Cyber welcomes students of all types to join its community. Just like all public schools in Pennsylvania, PA Cyber meets the curriculum requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education and is accredited by the prestigious Middle States Association. For more information, visit pacyber.org or call 724-643-1180.



The Learning Never Stops

PAcyber.org

The Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School is PA's most experienced K–12 online public school. Call **(724)643-1180** or visit our website to discover new learning opportunities at our Philadelphia regional office.

 **PAcyber**

The Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School

ALBRIGHT COLLEGE

REGIONAL

By MediaNews Group

Albright College is building a new state-of-the-art collegiate esports facility at the corner of 13th and Richmond streets in Reading, in collaboration with Nerd Street Gamers, the national esports infrastructure company, and CSL Esports, a Playfly Sports company.

The new esports venue will make professional-grade gaming equipment available to community members — from casual gamers and those new to the esports scene, to high school teams and esports tournament organizers.

Nerd Street and CSL

Esports are known for launching the largest collegiate esports league in North America — the National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE) Starleague.

“When paired with accessible facilities, collegiate esports programs create new opportunities for prospective students, enhance the school curriculum and serve as a backbone to the surrounding communities,” said John Fazio, CEO of Nerd Street. “We’re excited to continue our national rollout with our second partner school, Albright College, to develop a state-of-the-art esports facility that

will house their school’s team, provide advanced education opportunities to their students, and be a hub for innovation in the surrounding community.”

Totalling approximately 10,000 square feet, the Albright facility will contain technology, equipment and experiences for gamers and esports enthusiasts. In addition to classrooms and private rooms for Albright College’s esports team, the new venue will serve as a fully functioning Nerd Street Localhost.

Nerd Street Localhosts provide the highest quality gaming equipment and peripherals, including

PCs, consoles, keyboards, headphones and more. The Albright College esports hub will also boast a stage for high intensity competitions and a production studio for content creation.

“We are thrilled about this partnership and the expanded athletic and academic opportunities that it brings to our students at Albright College,” said Albright President Dr. Jacquelyn S. Fetrow. “Not only will it be a catalyst for our growing varsity esports team and our Gamers Guild student club, it will inspire synergies with our computer science department, enhance our



COURTESY OF ALBRIGHT COLLEGE

Albright College is building a new collegiate esports facility.

game and simulation major, provide hands-on learning experiences for our Science Research Institute high school students and others interested in the esports industry. This will be a welcoming, exciting new venue for the surrounding community.”

“With these investments, Albright College is firmly establishing itself as

a preeminent esports program in the region,” said CSL Esports Head of Business Development and Berks County native Charles O’Donnell. “The meaningful implementation of the esports curriculum will help create a pipeline for students who are keen on making a career in the burgeoning esports

STEM

Here are some creative ways to encourage STEM learning

By StatePoint

The pandemic has deeply impacted learning experiences for students across America. As educators and students return to school this year, they will continue to navigate these challenges as they look for ways to redefine learning.

The pandemic also put a stark spotlight on inequities in the sciences and science education, especially the lack of equal access. The good thing is that this has sparked an increased awareness and a desire for change to begin addressing these issues.

With new norms of educational learning still being defined, we have a real opportunity to find creative and engaging ways to expose young and diverse thinkers to the vast world of science

around them.

One of the ways to do this is by connecting science to the things kids are already passionate about — sports, music, dance, art, gaming, or anything else they may be interested in.

America’s favorite rapping teacher, Dwayne Reed, shares creative ways educators and parents can help kids find a “way-in” to science that will ignite their passion for STEM learning and make science more approachable:

1. Extend STEM beyond the classroom

Show kids how to apply the scientific method in their day-to-day lives and activities. As individuals, we make observations daily and ask questions — or hypothesize — based on what we observe.

Parents and educators can foster an inquisitive mindset by challenging kids to explore the world around them. This creates fun and relatable learning experiences inside and outside the classroom.

2. Connect personal passions to STEM learning

When students lack confidence in a particular subject, it can feel intimidating. As a result, they can often have a hard time seeing themselves as successful in that subject or can lose interest altogether.

As teachers and educators, we want to encourage our kids and show them they can be anything they want. One of the ways to do this is by connecting what they already love to something they are

not as confident in. STEM is a perfect example of this.

Show students how science can be applied to their other interests, including sports, music, dance, gaming, art or anything else they may be passionate about. By helping connect the dots for students, they can turn their passions into something that can benefit the world around them.

3. Keep a pulse on new educational resources

Stay updated on new resources and information that could positively impact your students. The great thing about this is that teachers and parents can both get involved.

A few ways you can stay up to date are reading blogs, educational articles, and

looking for resources on social media. One learning resource to check out is 3M’s Science at Home video series. This online library of DIY science experiments uses common household items to help make STEM learning fun and accessible while showing kids they can connect science to just about anything.

Teachers will also note that the step-by-step resources include national science teaching standards for easy lesson planning.

4. Challenge kids to try something new

Challenge kids to put themselves into roles they may not naturally see themselves in. Provide encouragement, resources, and confidence to get them

to the next level.

With a bit of creativity, you can open their eyes to a whole world of opportunities they may not be thinking about.

Make STEM learning feel relatable and fun — even if it’s new for them. It’s all about reframing the way students look at the world and giving them assurance and an opportunity to explore what’s around them.

The importance of maintaining a stable and engaging learning experience for students remains a priority. And with just a few creative learning techniques and models, educators and parents can ensure their students are connected, actively learning, and feeling encouraged both in and out of the classroom.



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