Building Accessibility, Community, & Opportunity

with Canvas LMS, Virtual Virginia, & the Amazon Future Engineer Program at Floyd County Public Schools

Virginia   **1,700 Students**   **Adopted Canvas LMS: 2020**

Floyd County Public Schools in Virginia are preparing students for post-secondary success. Their division has built community, accessibility & opportunity with Canvas LMS, Virtual Virginia (VVA), and the Amazon Future Engineer program. Read on to learn how with their Superintendent of Instruction & Innovation, Jessica Cromer, and Computer Science Teacher, Zane Moran.

FROM NICE-TO-HAVE TO NEED-TO-HAVE

"Our culture is very relationship-based," Cromer said about their division.

Strong relationships between teachers, students, and their families last for many years. Cromer described Floyd County's small size as advantageous for fostering these deep connections. As a testament to this community, many former students, like Moran, later return to the division to teach. This commitment to college & career readiness, paired with funds from state grants, has enabled them to build an innovative computer science program.

"We want our students to be prepared for whatever comes after they leave us," Cromer said.

In 2020, Floyd County Public Schools needed to keep these connections strong as they transitioned to fully remote learning. Canvas LMS and Virtual Virginia allowed them to do just that. Virtual Virginia provided digital course resources, training, support, and the statewide LMS.

"Thanks to the flexibility of Canvas LMS, VVA was able to help Floyd County find customized, creative solutions to their needs," said Sarah Warnick, VVA's Director of Products and Services.

"We adopted Canvas LMS out of necessity," Cromer said. "...And what started as a necessity has become something that our teachers depend on for connectivity moving forward."

Key Insights

- The code editor embedded in Canvas LMS allows students in the Amazon Future Engineers program to code without leaving their browsers and delivers real-time feedback.

- Canvas LMS enables students to stay informed regardless of location.

- Allowing teachers the time to experiment and learn together with a new tool like Canvas LMS encourages deeper adoption.

- Virtual Virginia's innovative curriculum connects Floyd County's students with opportunities they wouldn't otherwise have.

CONNECTING TODAY AND TOMORROW WITH CANVAS LMS

Previously, many classrooms relied on Google Classroom to deliver digital learning resources. However, a robust learning management system like Canvas LMS provided new opportunities. Moran started his teaching career with Canvas LMS and said having time to collaborate and learn alongside experienced teachers was valuable.

"Canvas LMS was like Google Classroom on steroids. Teachers could do more with Canvas LMS than Google Classroom, especially when connecting with students...," Cromer said.

> ## "Students have the ability to not fall behind if they're sick or at home. [With Canvas LMS], they can stay caught up and not miss anything. I wish I had access to that when I was in school."

Zane Moran, Secondary Computer Science Teacher at Floyd County High School

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE WITH DIGITAL LITERACY

Virginia is one of the first states in the nation to have Computer Science standards to ensure students are gaining the skills they will need to succeed in tomorrow's job market. With the funds from a state grant, Cromer said they were able to hire Moran to spearhead the program and make updates to their technology building on campus.

"Despite our rural location, by the end of this year, about 97% of our county will be connected to one-gig fiber at their home," Cromer said.

"The spring before I was hired, the school was accepted into the AFE [Amazon Future Engineers] program. They have been building their curriculum as we've been building our program," Moran said.

Moran is the first computer science educator at the division and expresses his excitement at rolling out the content as Amazon develops it. Currently, there are both middle and high school courses, and he looks forward to implementing an AP course in the future.

"The middle school courses are great. They're hands-on...In high school courses, almost all assignments are in Canvas LMS. And the really valuable piece is that through AFE and Project STEM, they have a coding environment embedded into Canvas LMS. Students can code directly in their browsers. They don't have to download anything and can access it at home. And then, they can check their code, as well, for bugs and mistakes, so they get that immediate feedback," Moran said.

He added that "real-time feedback" was also helpful for him to understand where students are in their learning journey.

OPPORTUNITIES & THE ONGOING VIRTUAL VIRGINIA VALUE

"We have a really good working relationship with Virtual Virginia," Cromer said. "The opportunities for our students to access a curriculum [from anywhere] have been invaluable to us over the years."

Their support ensured that all Floyd County's students stayed connected to learning. Cromer said they're grateful for the support and ongoing collaboration with Virtual Virginia.

"From the division's early adoption of the statewide LMS to their innovative programming today, Floyd County is a blended learning leader in the region and throughout the Commonwealth," said Stephanie Shea, VVA's school support coordinator.

> **Floyd County has provided access to the necessities today's students need to succeed. Explore the free ebook, Removing Roadblocks to Teaching with Technology, to learn more about overcoming the challenges of teaching with tech.**

THE BRIGHT ROAD AHEAD

The last few years have provided Floyd County with many opportunities to prepare its students for post-secondary success. As they look ahead, they're excited to continue partnering with Canvas LMS and Virtual Virginia and grow their computer science program with Amazon Future Engineers.

"As we come out of COVID, we can now focus on our job to educate students and prepare them for their next steps. And part of their next steps involve technology," Cromer said.

INSTRUCTURE