ABC-CLIO Online Solutions and Exeter Township Senior High School, PA
Helping meet stringent standards and diverse student needs … one exciting history assignment at a time

SITUATION

The Exeter Township School District is a growing suburban district of 6,000 students. The high school building has the most with 1,400 students. The student body is diverse, with a wide range of academic needs.

CHALLENGE 1

Due to restricted textbook budgets, Exeter Township Senior High School needed to find a cost-effective way to expand available reading materials that enhance social studies education and provide educators and students with the comprehensive and authoritative content called for by state and district standards.

SOLUTION 1

Purchased through Follet, ABC-CLIO's vetted and authoritative databases have given Exeter Township High School's students and educators 24/7 access to a whole new world of engaging digital resources.

"Not having the right resources is a challenge, and because my classroom textbook sets are not large enough, I cannot send them home with students," explains Ashleigh Huffman, a 9th- and 10th-grade history teacher. "Now that ABC-CLIO databases are available, I am able to assign a variety of challenging reading, create rigorous lesson plans, and send students home with engaging and enriching homework assignments based in the comprehensive content of the ABC-CLIO databases."

CHALLENGE 2

With a diverse and large student body, Exeter Township needed a way to meet the rigorous state and district standards for reading materials, while also meeting a wide range of academic skills and needs.

SOLUTION 2

Authoritative, and aligned to Common Core State Standards, ABC-CLIO's history and social studies databases provide Exeter Township's educators with rigorous and accessible content that lives up to Pennsylvania's strict reading material requirements and also meets the varying needs of students.
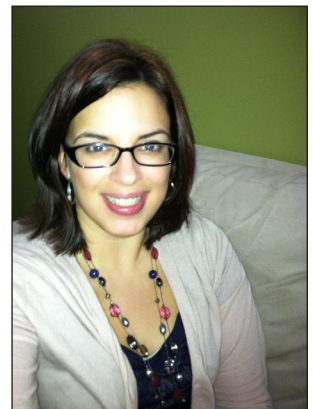
Challenging, but engaging, ABC-CLIO databases offer the high school a wide range of reading and research materials that connect with students and encourage them to learn independently. "The eResources really resonate with all of my students," explains Huffman. "Even when I assign content that is above students' reading levels, I find it is presented in a way that enables students to meet the challenge. This stretches their abilities as well as provides them with confidence to achieve more in the future."

ENHANCING CRITICAL THINKING AND ANALYSIS

ABC-CLIO's online databases are helping Exeter Township emphasize research strategies, foster important 21st-century skills, encourage independent

"I like to give students scholarly articles in the ABC-CLIO databases which are above their reading level, yet are presented in such a way that students find they can meet the challenge to understand much more than they expected. This stretches their abilities as well as provides them with confidence to achieve more in the future."

SCHOOL LEADER

Ashleigh Huffman, 9th and 10th grade history teacher, Exeter Township Senior High School, Reading, PA

learning, and teach students how to use critical thinking and analysis to choose valid sources. "Providing guiding questions and having students use the analyze section within each database has made a positive impact on students' ability to formulate researched opinions on specific issues and topics," says Huffman.

"This is the most beneficial database I've ever come across. You have no idea how much I wish this had been available when I was in college."

"The databases are engaging and easy for students to search. Rather than losing interest while wading through thousands of hits from a search, students want to dig deeper and learn successful ways to weed out the bad information from the good."

EVALUATING SUCCESS

The use of ABC-CLIO's online databases has ignited an interest in history and social studies among students. Providing the backbone for interesting lessons, interactive assignments and challenging curriculum, they are highly regarded by Huffman and her students.

After seeing the student response and reviewing the assignments, lessons, and curriculum

created using the databases, other educators within Exeter Township's history department have begun to use them too. "They are a great resource for myself, my colleagues, and my students. The ABC-CLIO databases are the most beneficial databases I've ever come across. They challenge students, encourage them to do more, and help prepare them for success in college and beyond."

THE FUTURE

ABC-CLIO databases have become a staple in the history and social studies department of Exeter Township Senior High School and are being used in new and exciting ways. As part of a new initiative to increase student interest in history, Huffman is using historical fiction and ABC-CLIO databases to reinforce important concepts, issues, and topics among her students. "As evidenced by this initiative, ABC-CLIO databases have enabled me to take a creative approach to teaching history," explains Huffman. "They are and will continue to be a constant and critical resource for my students, my colleagues and myself."

QUICK FACTS

- The Exeter Township School District is located in Berks County, four miles southeast of Reading, PA

- Exeter is a suburban community with a population of approximately 23,701

- 82% of the population are high school graduates, while another 32% have post high school degrees

- The Exeter community has seen rapid growth in its population during the past 10 years. From 1990 to 2000, it was estimated that the population grew 15.9%, and there is an anticipated population growth of another 10.53% during the next 10 years

- The Exeter Township School District's students score slightly above the state average on the SAT test in both math and verbal

- The graduation rate is 98%, with approximately 75% of students going on to higher education

Primary objectives: To actively integrate all diverse groups within the district and community to provide students with the best resources and opportunities to realize their full potential, both cognitively and affectively, in a safe and positive environment. These resources include personnel, technology, equipment, facilities, and curricula.

Curriculum focus: Exeter Township Senior High School's curriculum is designed to foster student engagement through technology and effective reading strategies.

ABC-CLIO's databases used:

- *American Government*
- *American History*
- *World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras*
- *Issues: Understanding Controversy and Society*
- *World at War: Understanding Conflict and Society*