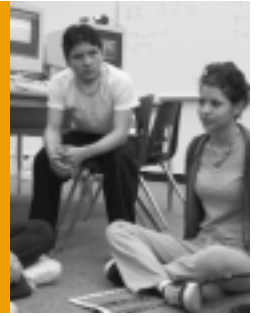


PLATO Learning Helps CA High School with At-Risk Students



Last year, La Costa Canyon High School in Carlsbad, California identified a group of at-risk students who were unable to pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), had low grades in math or English, or had low SAT 9 scores. These students had become disconnected from school, losing interest or motivation because of difficulties they had in class or a lack of participation in school clubs and activities. The San Dieguito Union High School District responded to the needs of students across the district by purchasing PLATO Learning for each of its schools. La Costa Canyon realized that one way to help these students be successful was by providing additional, individual attention and standards-based instruction. As part of their regular schedule, 129 students at La Costa Canyon took part in the PLATO Learning class last year.

La Costa Canyon teachers Sarah McNary and Leo Fletes designed a program using the courseware and state standards-aligned curriculum from PLATO Learning along with other supplemental materials. Their goal was to integrate technology in order to better meet individual students' needs. They implemented a PLATO Learning class to deliver instructional solutions in reading and mathematics, with learning plans for each student that provided individualized support, preparation for the CAHSEE, and teacher instruction along with the computerized one-on-one curriculum.

The school has seen positive results. Sixty-six percent of students who had previously failed passed the CAHSEE in 2002, and 89% of the students in the program made more than a year's worth of growth on one or more parts of the SAT-9. There are several key factors

to this program's success, but the most basic factor is that the PLATO Learning class and teachers have been able to address each student's individual needs and then work one-on-one with that student.

Working with PLATO Learning, the school used the flexibility of the PLATO Instructional Solutions courseware to refigure it to best fit the California and San Dieguito standards. For students in the class working on reading, the PLATO Learning courseware utilizes screen-by-screen reading to navigate the software, as the additional reading time is a key factor in helping students become automatic readers.

The multiple choice format of the courseware gives students the curriculum-imbedded practice they need, stressing the skills of skimming, isolating, and identifying, all of which are important for success on standardized tests. Students who need help in math use the extensive PLATO Instructional Solutions math curriculum, with real world problems, that spans pre-Algebra through Geometry and Algebra II.

In 2002, La Costa Canyon High School was one of only 200 schools across the country to be honored with the Blue Ribbon School Award from the U.S. Department of Education for its innovative programs to help students succeed, including the PLATO Learning class.