

Massapequa's Innovative Use of Britannica's Newest Classroom Curriculum Tool Expedition: Learn!

Berner Middle School's Grades 6-8 Early Success

In the vibrant community of Massapequa, situated in Nassau County, New York, the Massapequa Union Free School District stands out for its commitment to excellence in education. Governed by a five-member Board of Education, the district operates nine schools, serving over 7K students. Renowned for its high standards, the district boasts a graduation rate of 98%, significantly surpassing the state average. Amidst this backdrop of academic achievement, the district embarked on a journey to transform its middle school science curriculum by implementing Britannica's Expedition: Learn! (Science 6-8).

Challenges

Facing the challenge of the New York State P-12 Science Learning Standards, Massapequa Union Free School District took decisive action. These standards required a hands-on, real-world approach to science education, emphasizing practical applications and explorations. Under the guidance of Dan Mezzafonte and in close collaboration with teachers, the district expanded on the comprehensive overhaul of its science curriculum. This involved adopting innovative tools like Expedition: Learn! to deliver instruction through rich multi-modal content while fostering an engaging, phenomena-based learning environment in the classroom.



Snapshot: Massapequa Union Free School District

9 Number of schools

7K Number of students
(Approximately)

98% Graduation Rate

83% Reading/Language Arts
Test Scores (Proficiency)

10:1 Student-Teacher Ratio



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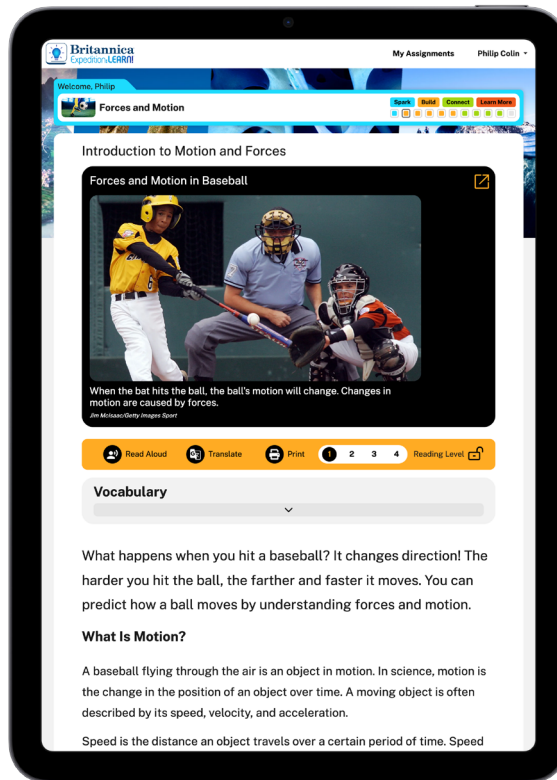


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Implementation

To address these challenges, Massapequa Union Free School District implemented 'Expedition: Learn!' as a key educational tool in their science curriculum. Expedition: Learn! is a standards-aligned, ready-to-implement supplemental resource designed to meet the diverse learning needs of students. It is grounded in extensive research and evidence-based practices in teaching literacy within content areas, providing lessons that cater to whole-class instruction, small-group reteaching, or independent student learning. Each lesson is structured to build students' content knowledge, vocabulary, and critical thinking skills in science and social studies while enhancing their reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge. The program's unique design facilitates an engaging learning experience with rich videos that spark student curiosity and interactive activities for practical skill-building. Massapequa chose this comprehensive tool to align with the hands-on, practical learning approach emphasized by the NYSP 12SLS and its capacity to balance robust content delivery with the required innovative, phenomena-based instruction methods.

The implementation involved strategic curriculum redesign and intensive teacher training, focusing on grades 6-8, each emphasizing a distinct science discipline.



Results

Incorporating Expedition: Learn! marked a significant shift in teaching and learning dynamics within Massapequa's classrooms. Teachers reported that this educational resource profoundly impacted direct instruction, making classroom activities more engaging and streamlined. By providing rich, interactive content that emphasizes literacy and critical thinking in science education, Expedition: Learn! effectively enriched students' learning experiences. This resource also supported teachers in

delivering comprehensive content while adopting new and innovative pedagogical approaches.

"My teachers have found using Britannica Expedition: Learn! in direct instruction has been incredibly powerful as a tool."

— Daniel Mezzafonte, Science Curriculum Supervisor
Massapequa Union Free School District

Future Outlook

Massapequa's initiative to incorporate Expedition: Learn! into its middle school science curriculum exemplifies the district's forward-thinking approach to education. By leveraging innovative educational tools and embracing new teaching methodologies, Massapequa Union Free School District has set a precedent in transforming the landscape of science education, poising its students to become the innovators and problem-solvers of tomorrow.



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