Throughout the Pike County School System in the Appalachian Mountains of rural eastern Kentucky, buses travel 10,000 miles a day to cover the 900-square mile area of the district. The Pike County School System serves 12,000 students, 23 schools, two day-treatment facilities, and two vocational schools. Keeping every student performing well in this large district is certainly a challenge. But, thanks to an approach that blends training, technology, and classroom teaching, Pike County School test scores are rising.

A key component to this success has been the implementation of the A+nyWhere Learning System® (A+LS™) courseware program from American Education Corporation (AEC). “We started using the A+LS courseware at one pilot high school three years ago,” says Maritta Clark, CIO/Director of Technology for the Pike County School System. “All incoming freshmen were tested in reading using A+LS. Based on pre-test results, students were then placed in reading classes that specifically targeted their individual weaknesses. Weaknesses were then addressed using the prescribed activities in the A+LS program. As part of this successful A+LS implementation, a cadre of teachers was trained on how to manage the A+LS courseware program and how to interpret student data in order to drive instruction.”

The A+LS courseware program allows Pike County Schools to create customized educational paths for students. The courseware includes core curriculum content and an instructional management system that is delivered through a wide area network (WAN). The program assigns students specific instructional content, driven by short, frequent assessments of progress, while tracking individual student performance over time.
As well as placement purposes, the same pilot site used A+LS for Excel - a dropout prevention and credit recovery program. Students not mastering certain skills in the classroom used the A+LS courseware program to focus on identified skills. Students starting with failure rates of 50-60% worked online in the A+LS prescribed activities. Those who obtained a mastery of at least 80% were then transitioned back into the classroom. The A+LS program was also helpful in differentiating activities for mainstreamed special education students.

Building on the success of this pilot program, the district expanded A+LS to all of the high schools in Pike County. “We now use A+LS to pretest our students on various curricular areas,” says Clark. “This allows teachers to gather specific data in order to drive instruction to meet the individual needs of the students.”

The Pike County School System implemented wireless laptop classrooms allowing students to complete prescribed A+LS activities in class. In addition, gifted and talented students are challenged with enrichment activities using accelerated content.

“Using the A+LS courseware program is like having an Individual Educational Plan for each student,” says Clark. “The program allows students to remediate, master, or accelerate within the curriculum at their own pace. The students love it.”

Clark cites specifically one example of success – the 2007 Summer School session using the A+LS courseware. “The Summer School planning committee determined that many students are not motivated in the regular classroom,” she says. “When planning for summer school, the committee predicted that it would be a challenge for students to complete five assignments in one week with a mastery of 80%. To our surprise, we found that the majority of the students mastered at least 10-20 assignments during this time. One child finished the chemistry course in two days with 90-100% mastery in most lessons. It was unbelievable the amount of curriculum the students covered and mastered!”

When asked about the recent Department of Education’s report that claims technology does not improve test scores, Clark smiles, “Purchasing good courseware alone will not improve test scores. The key

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“One child finished the chemistry course in two days with 90-100% mastery in most lessons. It was unbelievable the amount of curriculum the students covered and mastered!”

— Maritta Clark, CIO/Director of Technology, Pike County Schools, Kentucky
is providing adequate training in using the technology! A major focus for us is teacher preparation. Adequate training must provide appropriate professional development which includes follow-up support in the classroom.”

“Adequately training teachers to use the formative assessment component of the A+LS courseware is a fundamental part of the program. The A+LS reports provide teachers with the information needed to allow them to strategically plan instruction,” says Clark. “If a teacher only uses the courseware for summative evaluation, they are missing an indispensable function of this program. The power of A+LS is individualized guided learning – having the student go through a skill set, and based upon need, either providing intervention or acceleration.” Clark has been thrilled with the district results of the A+LS program, where children who might otherwise fall through the cracks are achieving real success. How does she feel about their fast mastery of concepts using the A+LS program? She says, “I am just blown away.”

**About American Education Corporation (AEC)**

Early recognition of the national trend in school accountability, combined with an understanding of the impact of the Internet on education, has allowed AEC to become an industry leader in e-learning solutions. Few education companies offer the systemized combination of formative assessment, proven instruction, alignment to standards, and data management and reporting capabilities of AEC’s comprehensive courseware and learning management system.

The A+nyWhere Learning System® (A+LS™) software program is an e-learning solution ideal for schools searching for more efficient ways to improve their instructional processes. The A+LS courseware program consists of an award-winning instructional management system supported by significant core curriculum content for grades K–12 and adult learners delivered through a local area network (LAN), a wide area network (WAN), or the Internet. The research-based curriculum content is in the subject areas of Reading, Mathematics, Language Arts, Science, Writing, and Social Sciences. This curriculum is linked to state standards and combined with valuable formative assessment tests designed to guide instruction throughout the school year — as well as give school administrators the data they need to ensure maximum student performance.

**Would you like to learn more about the A+nyWhere Learning System?**

Give us a call at 800.222.2811 to arrange a custom product demonstration with your local licensed product reseller or check us out on the web at www.amered.com