Capital City is an award-winning public charter school in Washington, D.C., founded by parents in 2000. It serves approximately 1,000 students in grades PreK through 12. All technology throughout the school is implemented and managed through the library program.

“I wanted to have some other metric [besides anecdotal feedback] to prove that what we were doing was valuable.”

Director of Library Services and Innovation
Capital City Public Charter School

Challenge

Initially, Capital City was seeking a way to understand whether the blended learning technology they were purchasing was being used effectively and having an impact on learning for all their students.

At the time they first partnered with LearnPlatform, edtech use and effectiveness were largely measured via satisfaction surveys completed by teachers. They were looking anecdotally at usage to gauge whether they were hitting 50% of recommended usage levels. Discussions of curricular alignment were based on “feel” more than hard statistics, which left them unsure of whether tools were being used at the desired levels and, if they were, whether they were having the desired result. They also lacked a way to ensure that their technology investments were benefiting all Capital City students.
OUTCOMES

To date they have conducted over 25 IMPACT analyses and used the results to evaluate 5 different instructional tools across various groups, such as grade level and special populations. The ability to dive down into special populations in particular gave Capital City insight into whether all students were achieving success with specific tools and provided some urgency to adjust their strategies for how they were using the software in the classrooms.

They also leveraged LearnPlatform to give their teachers and staff a way to share insights and feedback on specific products while balancing their feedback with an objective measurement of effectiveness. According to Chase, being able to demonstrate, via IMPACT reports, that students who used a particular tool more did better allowed them to build buy-in with teachers who had not been enthusiastic about it initially.

His advice to other schools is to “put it in your calendar to do software evaluations regularly, view teacher and student feedback alongside objective measures of effectiveness, and have an idea of what success looks like.”

“IMPACT gave us insight into how different populations of students are performing vis-a-vis the population as a whole. It acted as a ‘call to arms’ of sorts.”

Director of Library Services and Innovation

SOLUTION

Capital City looked at LearnPlatform as a way to improve their instructional, fiscal, and operational decisions by evaluating the impact of their edtech purchases using IMPACT™ Reports. While previously they were looking at actual usage (time on task) compared with recommended dosage (fidelity), IMPACT gave them a way to look beyond usage and correlate student usage data and outcomes. This was a game-changer.

“In the beginning, we were really just trying to get teachers to use the tools we had purchased to fidelity, so we could eventually get to the point of evaluating outcomes. IMPACT tied usage and outcomes together.”

Director of Library Services and Innovation