

CASE STUDY

New Jersey School District Increases Their AP® Scores by 46% With Online Learning Tools

In the Middletown Township Public School District in New Jersey, Dr. John Kerrigan has been excitedly preparing for the upcoming school year. As the new Director of Curriculum and Instruction, John has worked with his fellow administrators on several ambitious missions to strengthen the post-COVID learning landscape for their students. And, John has always held a special place in his heart for initiatives regarding Middletown's AP® program.

With over 16 years of experience in secondary education, John's passion for AP learning has reverberated through his former roles as an AP Calculus teacher, Math Director, and then Middletown's Director of Assessment and Evaluation, as well as his current roles as an AP Calculus reader and President of the Association of Mathematics Teachers of New Jersey (AMTNJ). Drawing on his understanding of the challenges AP teachers face, John has recognized the pressing need for robust resources that empower AP educators and nurture student potential.



The Search for a Flexible and Comprehensive Resource

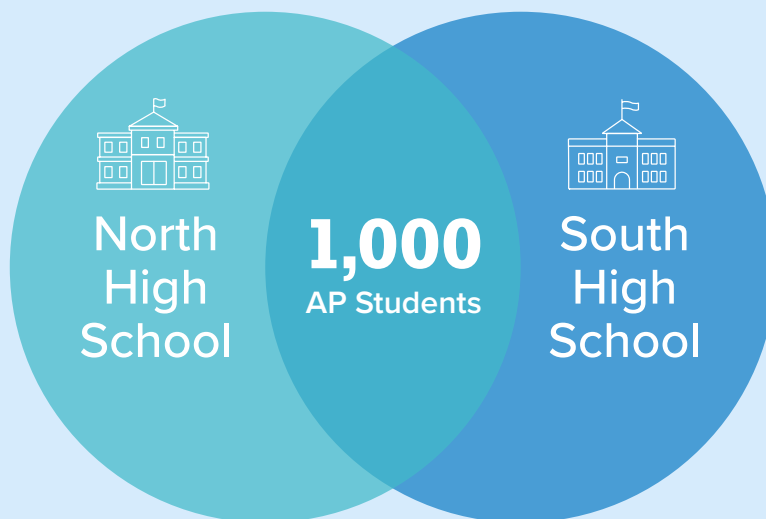
That's why, last year, John recognized the need for a comprehensive and flexible resource that would enable teachers to effectively prepare students for AP exams. Traditional AP resources were often incomplete and did not align well with the rigor of the exams. Teachers had to spend considerable time piecing together AP materials from various sources, attempting to meet their students' needs but instead leading to inefficiency and inconsistent preparation. John sought an all-in-one solution that would cater to the diverse needs of teachers and students across different AP subjects while aligning

closely with AP course and exam content. “I was dealing with two disrupted years [from the pandemic],” explained John, “and I was just meeting with teachers and seeing everyone’s capacity and involvement. I realized that I needed a product that could also work in situations where students might be more on their own to learn the content.”

Additionally, open enrollment—although a wonderful opportunity to expand AP opportunities to more students—did result in some challenges specific to AP Psychology. As an AP course without any prerequisites, many students who had never taken an AP course before decided to “test the waters” with AP Psych. Middletown’s AP Psychology teachers were highly popular as well, which attracted many new AP students to the course. Although the higher interest in AP enrollment was positive, it came with a higher percentage of struggling students who didn’t fully understand how rigorous AP workload expectations are, and that resulted in an opportunity for growth regarding AP Psychology scores.

Middletown Township’s AP Program

(2022–2023)



And so, when John’s then-superintendent reached out to him about a grant opportunity from UWorld, an EdTech company that specializes in helping students learn difficult content and prepares them for the rigors of high-stakes exams, John knew he had to apply for it. The grant would provide UWorld’s [Learning Tools for AP Courses](#) for the 2022–2023 school year for both of Middletown’s high schools and their approximately 1,000 AP students. Much to John and his colleagues’ delight, the grant was awarded to the Middletown Township Public School District, and that’s when the real work began.

A Versatile Solution

Upon learning more about UWorld's [Learning Tools for AP Courses](#), John and his colleagues were impressed by its versatility and alignment with the needs of AP educators. The platform offered a robust collection of expert-curated practice questions, extensive reporting, and in-depth answer explanations that mirrored the complexity and depth of the content on the actual AP exams. UWorld's learning technology provided students with personalized practice, immediate feedback, and comprehensive explanations for both correct and incorrect answers. This feature addressed the limitations of other platforms the district had tried, offering a more tailored and effective learning experience for their students.

After being awarded the grant, a team of UWorld representatives traveled to Middletown and introduced John and his team to UWorld's [Learning Tools for AP Courses](#), demonstrating how to use it for a variety of purposes, including homework, class activities, entrance tickets, and more. John developed a strong connection with the team and felt comfortable reaching out to them with any questions he had.

John elaborated on this, saying, "We had UWorld come as part of our back-to-school professional development in August to meet with our AP teachers, and while there, they launched the UWorld application for us. Then, during the year, I was always in touch with them. They would tell me about new developments or would just ask me, 'Hey, can we just talk about how things are going?'"

Many of Middletown's AP teachers started implementing UWorld into their class routines right away. UWorld easily fit into both high schools' block schedules. John also encouraged teachers to try using the resource as part of a flipped classroom. Teachers who did this would give their students a video on a brand-new concept and a few UWorld questions as a class entrance ticket. Then, they would review the concept and questions together in class. These teachers were able to use UWorld's reporting feature to gauge their students' understanding of a concept before spending a lot of time on it in a whole group lesson, allowing more time for concepts they truly struggled with.

Other teachers used UWorld to create unit exams and take-home tests or as a support for whole-group instruction. The creativity and variety of ways all of the AP teachers used UWorld are what surprised John the most, and even before AP exams, he noticed that the teachers who used UWorld consistently seemed to make a lot of progress with their students. This progress clearly showed in the results Middletown saw once AP scores were released.

"[UWorld] was implemented in so many different and interesting ways, and I almost wish everybody could have heard [about all of] them because it might make them think about how they might use it. I'm going to incorporate UWorld into our start-of-year professional developments."

—Dr. John Kerrigan

Middletown's Noteworthy Success

Middletown's 2022–2023 AP exam scores yielded impressive results for the district. Overall, between the two high schools, AP scores increased by an average of 1.11 points. There was a significant increase in average AP scores across multiple subjects.

One such subject was AP Government, which saw an increase throughout the district. One high school had an AP Gov score increase of 0.52 points, and the other saw an increase of 0.61 points.

As predicted, the teachers who were most consistent with their use of UWorld saw the most progress. A particularly challenging area that saw a significant increase in average AP scores was AP Psychology. In just one year of consistently using UWorld, AP Psych saw a score increase of 45% across the entire district. John was especially proud of this outcome, saying, "I think our biggest victory was probably with AP Psychology."

Overall, Middletown's high school AP students increased their average scores by 46%. In fact, Middletown's North High School actually saw a score increase of 1.55 points.

Middletown AP
teachers increased
their AP scores by
46%

North High School
teachers increased their
average AP score by
**1.55
points**

South High School saw
their average score on the
AP Government exam go
**from 2.25 to
2.86 points**
(an increase of 0.52 points)



Additional (and Innovative) Benefits

In addition to their accomplishments with exam scores, Middletown's teachers discovered some additional benefits by finding even more innovative ways to incorporate UWorld into their AP teaching strategies. Many educators integrated UWorld practice questions into their students' daily station work. Teachers who, in years past, had not been able to implement a flipped classroom were able to successfully do so with UWorld. John, a strong advocate for flipped classroom design, believes UWorld helped these teachers make adequate time for all of their course content while still giving them the freedom to be creative with their lessons:

“I was just impressed about the variety of ways the teachers used UWorld... I just walked away [from each classroom], saying loudly, ‘This was implemented in so many different and interesting ways.’”

North High School saw their average score on the AP Government exam go

from 2 to 2.52 points

(an increase of 0.61 points)

Middletown's AP Psychology teachers saw a combined increase of scores by

45%

North High School saw a

61% increase

in AP Psychology scores.





Spreading the Word

Middletown’s students and teachers had worked hard, and their scores showed it. John’s enthusiasm for UWorld’s impact on Middletown’s AP program extended beyond his own district. Inspired by the creative ways in which teachers utilized UWorld, John plans to share these ideas and best practices with colleagues across the state.

“I’ve been able to connect UWorld with other teachers and supervisors. We’re trying to get information about UWorld out to the math network that we have in New Jersey because I do think it’s good.”

–Dr. John Kerrigan

In the coming school year, John plans to leverage UWorld’s reporting features for goal-setting purposes and accountability measures. He believes this will drive continuous improvement in AP exam scores and enhance the overall educational experience for students.

For more information about UWorld’s Learning Tools for AP Courses, visit:

collegereadiness.uworld.com