



Atlas Case Study: HFM BOCES

Atlas for Career and Technical Education

HFM Career and Technical Education Center, NY

HFM BOCES (Hamilton, Fulton, and Montgomery) is a Career and Technical Education Center boasting 21st century-aligned curriculum that prepares students for the modern workforce.



What was the problem?

The HFM Career and Technical Education Center began using Atlas in earnest in 2007. They initiated a process entitled Atlas 2.0, the purpose for which was to “refine & align” their CTE curriculum maps and instructional units to transform CTE instruction at the school.

How did Atlas help?

HFM CTE Center applied Atlas as a tool to critically review and improve curriculum. For example, they introduced instructional unit level “Essential Questions” to provide a foundation for horizontally aligning and adding rigor and relevance to all categories within a unit of instruction.

By using essential questions to provide a framework for critiquing a given instructional unit, they frequently found that Skills verbiage used to define outcomes were often lower level Bloom’s, while Activities/Projects mostly involved higher level Bloom’s skills. The incongruence soon became very clear and was easily resolved by modifying Skills verbiage to reflect higher level Bloom’s and modifying some project-based workshop activities to become Assessments.

The HFM CTE Center team also used Rubicon Atlas to create a list of CTE teacher/career program Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s) to facilitate the required New York State Education Department Annual Professional Performance Review teacher evaluation process.

To support school leadership in preparing for the annual review, Rubicon’s staff was able to modify Atlas to replicate the NYSED APPR, creating the appropriate documents. Atlas helped them to develop a program that demonstrated career pathways and align curricula for a P-Tech Grant that spans Grade 9 through A.A.S degrees in college for specific career clusters.

What were the outcomes?

Atlas maintains organization for instructors, centralizing daily lessons, curriculum, and resources. In addition, Atlas has supported teachers in integrating curriculum with interdisciplinary connections. They have also established a more project-based curriculum. And, standards alignment within units has helped them to be recertified as a CTE school in New York State Education re-approval self-study and external review process.

Testimony

“Atlas curriculum mapping is a time-saving problem solving tool. I use it to facilitate State Education Department requirements and other local industry or community organizational needs to provide information, verification, and validation regarding our CTE programs. However, the key to fully take advantage of what Atlas curriculum mapping has to offer is to look for creative and unique ways to use it to solve problems and address your own instructional needs” - Mark Tanner, CTE Curriculum Development Specialist