

Broward County Public Schools

Closing the Instructional Divide

The Broward Enterprise Education Portal (BEEP) began as the Broward County Public School District assessed a need for a portal that would house curriculum resources. The Curriculum and Instruction/Student Support Division was researching a solution with the vision of “One Stop Shopping” for the district’s 15,000 educators. After initial discussions with vendors, the school district realized that a product to support their concept was not yet developed. In continuing a search, a partnership evolved with Riverdeep, in which a portal would be developed as part of a package to include their Learning Village application program, to store juried and sequenced best practice lesson plans.

The BEEP project has a vision to target students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Phase One of the project was to develop the teacher portal. Classroom educators were viewed as an immediate need of support for portal resources given that: (a) approximately 2,000 new teachers are hired each academic year in Broward County, and (b) Florida state law permits educators to earn certification through alternative-to-teacher-education programs. Many new educators earning alternative certifications are not required formal training in education. Additionally, Broward Schools has begun making student resources available through BEEP, which currently includes access to the district’s data warehouse (Virtual Counselor) and electronic online textbooks. A fully developed Student Portal, Phase Two of the BEEP project, is expected to be completed within the next few years.

The district’s Curriculum and Instruction/Student Support division operates the BEEP project. Within the division all departments are actively involved in curriculum and resource development. The Instructional Technology Department is responsible for managing the portal. The Core Curriculum Department is responsible for managing the Learning Village, the application program that holds approximately 8,000 juried and sequenced lesson plans for curriculum subject areas (in addition to curriculum resource support documents). The Executive Directors within the division hold regularly scheduled bi-weekly meetings as the BEEP Steering Committee.

District data shows that greater than 50% of the district’s educators are users of BEEP, with increased amounts using on a regular basis. The portal hosts the district’s benchmark assessments (including individualized student scantron answer sheets), single-sign-on access for nine different application programs, videos and resources imbedded into thousands of lesson plans, and electronic textbooks. The culture of teaching is changing with the use of the highly engaging curriculum and resources on BEEP.

Contact: Dr. Earlean Smiley, Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction/Student Support, Broward County Public Schools, earlean.smiley@browardschools.com or Mark Quintana, K-12 Curriculum Specialist, Broward County Public Schools, markquintana@browardschools.com

