

EDUCATION NEWS

Cities, Schools Battle Digital and Reading Illiteracy

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Digital illiteracy — the inability to use a computer, the Internet, or different computer programs— driving states and cities to take a stand against both digital and reading illiteracy. In Philadelphia, a new program called myPLACE online, has begun to get low literacy adults the tools and education they need to succeed.

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In Philadelphia, a new program called myPLACE online, has begun to get low literacy adults the tools and education they need to succeed. The myPLACE online program is offered through the Canvas learning management system. It has teamed up with the Mayor's Commission on Literacy to help adult learners get a better job and help the city's economy.

Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter has charged the Mayor's Commission on Literacy to develop initiatives that help these adults functioning below basic education levels to qualify for family-sustaining jobs and post-secondary training and education. As changes in industries have caused more jobs to require work-ready soft skills, such as reading comprehension and critical thinking, Philadelphians must increase their educational levels in order to fully participate in the workforce and contribute to the economy. The myPLACE initiative and Canvas component seek to address this issue at scale in a way that could be replicated across the nation to deliver similar results.



The focus of myPLACE online, as stated by Virtual Strategy Magazine, is to reduce poverty rates, end unemployment, jump start economic and job growth, and lessen dependency of low literates on government programs. Another focus of the program is to help people get into the workforce and provide for their families. In Philadelphia, where the poverty rate is 26% (almost twice the national average) and one-half the population does not have the education needed to further their job prospects, this is a huge issue.

(Continue on next page)

Cities, Schools Battle Digital and Reading Illiteracy (continued)

Many are looking to the success of this program and waiting to see if it can be used on a national scale. People need to be computer and reading literate and have work-readiness skills to find good jobs to help support their families.

The new Canvas program marks the first offering directed at adult learners on the platform and underscores Instructure's commitment to improving education at all age levels. Since launching Canvas in February 2011, Instructure has helped more than 600 educational institutions simplify the learning experience for more than 11 million faculty and students around the world.

The Canvas learning management system helps to simplify learning for adult students by offering them the tools and resources to make learning easier. The Canvas system was developed by the Instructure company, which is a technology business that provides teachers and students with resources and tools that aid in the learning process. The Canvas system has also opened three new campuses in Philadelphia, where low literate adult learners can take online classes, classroom classes, and have access to coaches and tutors.

Other states, like Rhode Island, are taking a similar approach to digital illiteracy. According to a *Miami Herald's* article, Rhode Island's digital literacy training programs [will be available statewide in all adult learning programs](#). Teachers of adult programs will be trained on the basics of a new system called Broadband Rhode Island.

According to statistics, 30% of Rhode Islanders do not use the Internet. This has created a problem because those who do not know how to use a computer, its programs, or the Internet have a harder time finding a good job.

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