

Westwood High School has long recognized the need to enhance student opportunities to use target languages they are learning in an authentic manner. They turned to SANAKO Study 1200 to ensure that they would meet those goals.

Westwood High School

- International Baccalaureate World School in Mesa, AZ
- 2200 students enrolled
- Languages offered: French, Spanish and Chinese

Westwood High School is one of seven high schools in Mesa, Arizona, the third largest city after Phoenix and Tucson and one of the fastest growing cities in the US. Westwood is a comprehensive high school of approximately 2000 students in an aging suburban area of Phoenix, AZ, and serves a very diverse student population. Approx. 50% of our students identify themselves as Hispanic, 30% as Caucasian, 10% Native American, 7% African American, and 3% other. Over 90% of our students qualify for the free-and-reduced price lunch program. Westwood qualifies as both an urban and impoverished school under the Federal Perkins Loan Forgiveness program and the school is the oldest high school in the district.

Westwood has a strong world language program, offering students the option of studying either French, Spanish, or Chinese. We currently offer 7 different Spanish courses, including two years of Spanish for Spanish Speakers courses, AP Spanish Language, AP Spanish Literature, and Dual Enrollment Spanish. We offer 4 years of French, culminating in the AP French class and are currently expanding our Chinese program, offering the first two years of Chinese. We have 9 language teachers at our school.

SANAKO Study 1200

- Installed in language classroom
- Provides opportunities for oral practice for each student
- Offers more teacher-student and student-student interaction
- Allows teachers to monitor student activity
- Improves efficiency - teachers can do more in less time

The difficulty we faced prior to the installation of the lab was trying to facilitate and provide feedback to students based on their performance in speaking activities. This problem was especially prevalent during AP and IB testing, as we have steadily increased the number of students completing the AP and IB tests, both of which include recorded conversations. Imagine trying to conduct 60 oral interviews using a handful of old tape recorders. Furthermore, we wanted to enhance the interaction and engagement in our classrooms, incorporating some of the new technologies that students are using daily in their personal lives.



Students can self-pace their audio and video lessons



Exciting Learning Environment

The SANAKO language lab has done wonders for us, as we now have the ability to dramatically increase the number of interactive speaking activities that students are able to complete. We can simultaneously record up to 32 student conversations, simplifying greatly the time and effort it takes to practice and evaluate recordings. Instead of constantly purchasing audio cassettes, we can easily download student MP3 recordings to a flash drive, another PC, or burn to a CD and evaluate as time permits. Additionally, our students have enjoyed using the internet to look up cultural information, and then immediately turn around and record their findings in spoken form.

We were the pilot school for our district in installing the lab. We wanted a fully digital lab that could easily be configured to meet our needs. We purchased the all digital Sanako 1200 system, which we use in a lab that has 32 student stations and one teacher console.

We have enjoyed many benefits from the implementation of the language lab. The 9 language teachers at the school rotate through the lab on a biweekly basis, allowing our students approximately 2 hours per month in the lab. While this may seem little at first, teachers are amazed at how many communicative, listening, and other challenging activities can be accomplished during that time thanks in part to the efficiency the lab environment provides. This is the first year we will use the lab for our AP and IB testing, and we are hopeful that the additional practice will improve our results on both examinations.



Daniel Allen enjoys the ease with which he can monitor and assist his students.

The Results

Westwood is proud to be the first high school in the state to offer its students the benefits of a fully digital Sanako Study 1200 software-only language lab. We continue to have the largest number of students successfully taking AP and IB exams in a foreign language in the district.

We were impressed not only by the outstanding product SANAKO offers but by the professionalism and support offered by their local dealer, International Teaching Systems. ITS/CA installed all of the software on our server and computers, configuring the classes to meet the needs of our individual teachers. We received 8 hours of training on the lab, and have had continual access to a local sales representative who has provided additional support. We were also lucky enough to host a state-wide open house, sponsored by ITS, that allowed teachers and administrators from around the state and within the district to check out the lab for themselves.



Teacher and students benefit from a new learning environment.



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