

# Case Study

## CYPHER Learning



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- ✓ Review by a Real User
- ✓ Verified by PeerSpot

### What is our primary use case?

We use it for grading and all my class assignments.

### How has it helped my organization?

I used it during COVID. So, we had distance learning where we were doing Zoom, then I would still have the students do their assignments in CYPHER Learning during the distance learning.

I put the date in when I wanted students to be able to see an assignment. Then, I would have all the assignments in CYPHER Learning, but I wouldn't let the students see it until the day it was assigned.

I particularly like the discussions, which have

been good for student engagement. Students can log in, and if we are having a discussion online, they can read everyone else's responses. They can also respond to what was said. I would have them comment on the other students' thoughts based on the discussion, and that was excellent. Organizationally, it was excellent because it is how I run my class, where all assignments are in CYPHER Learning.

A lot of it has to do with just knowing your students and what their needs are. If I come across a student in CYPHER Learning, who is in my class, then I can grade according to whatever their specific needs are. I can help them in a class according to what their needs are.

Once you get your class set up in CYPHER Learning, you can reuse assignments or go to the library and find assignments. Once



everything is in CYPHER Learning, you can reuse it, which is awesome.

## What is most valuable?

I like the survey, quiz, and discussion features. The grading program is pretty good too. I do a lot of essays in my class. So, I will have prompts where students need to think critically about a reading, then they must write an essay about it. So, they are writing essays in CYPHER Learning, then I am grading them in CYPHER Learning. That is super helpful. This is why the discussion, quizzes, and surveys are super helpful, and probably the assignments that I give the most often.

Another feature that I like is having one class with three child classes. When I assign it to my parent class, then it gets assigned to all my child classes. All my students do the same assignments, but I might modify how I grade the assignment according to their needs.

It is easy for educators to communicate with students using CYPHER Learning. Students often message me through CYPHER Learning. Also, I can comment on students' assignments, then they are able to respond to the comment that I put in CYPHER Learning. There is an email feature. So, if a student sends me a comment, then I also get an email about it, which is also helpful. It is important for teachers and students to have dialogue regarding expectations. Also, students can ask questions about assignments and I can clarify information for students.

## What needs improvement?

One thing that has been a problem is that CYPHER Learning doesn't save the students' work while they are doing it. For example, if you are on a Google Doc, and you close your Google Doc, then you come back, the work that you did has been saved. However, in CYPHER Learning, if for some reason the student clicks out of CYPHER Learning and goes back in, whatever they typed isn't saved. That is an area that they need to improve. A lot of my students may write an essay, but if they are two paragraphs in and their iPad crashes or something, when they go back, they are like, "All my work is gone." So, this would be an area that I would recommend for improvement in CYPHER Learning. It needs to auto save, and it doesn't auto save. That is definitely a weakness.

## For how long have I used the solution?

I have been using it for four years.

## What do I think about the stability of the solution?

For four years, the stability has been good.

## What do I think about the scalability of the solution?

Our entire district uses CYPHER Learning. As far



as that goes, it is good. Also, it is nice having a library where people save stuff and see what other people are doing.

There are approximately 1,500 teachers and 13,000 to 14,000 students who are using CYPHER Learning.

The product is being extensively used district-wide.

## How are customer service and support?

If I had questions, I was able to get my questions answered. We were able to give feedback to CYPHER LEARNING about different questions or features. CYPHER LEARNING was usually able to address whatever the questions or issues were, which was helpful. The auto saving thing is something that hasn't been addressed that I am aware of. So, that is an ongoing issue that hasn't been resolved.

I would give the technical support nine out of 10. Usually, they get back to me pretty quickly with a solution, for whatever the issue was.

## How would you rate customer service and support?

Positive

## Which solution did I use previously and why did I switch?

Prior to CYPHER Learning, we didn't have an online solution. It was just old school.

## How was the initial setup?

The initial setup is pretty straightforward. If I can learn it, anyone can learn it.

It is pretty intuitive. You need to set up your lessons. Since you will need to set them up somewhere, I feel like CYPHER Learning was pretty intuitive as far as what I needed to do as far as setting it up.

Any way you slice it, you will need to prepare your lessons. So, it doesn't take any longer in CYPHER Learning than it would any other way. It is a lot easier to have all your stuff in one place than to have a million papers flying around as well as having to grade papers. Having it all online is definitely better.

## What about the implementation team?

We have one tech coach at our school. If you have a tech question, you can go and ask them, then they will figure it out and help you. Anytime you do something new, you need professional development and training. So, we have tech coaches who help people to implement. So, if you are new, you can ask questions of the tech coach.



The tech coach piece is good, providing ongoing support for teachers while they are implementing. That is a tip that is good protocol. That way, people aren't getting frustrated with it. At first, certain teachers didn't really like the grading thing. They were like, "Oh, I like Easy Grade Pro, and I want it to be Easy Grade Pro." I am like, "It's not like Easy Grade Pro, so just get over it."

## What was our ROI?

When I do a survey, CYPHER Learning is helpful because then I can more quickly peruse students' responses. I don't have to go through question by question. Grading-wise, it has certainly helped, when giving a survey, to streamline my grading for that assignment.

## Which other solutions did I evaluate?

I am sure there was some type of analysis that went into choosing CYPHER Learning. However, in the end, when the district selected CYPHER Learning, everyone was happy with it.

There is not much gamifying through CYPHER Learning. I do a lot of other activities in my class through other solutions, like Blooket, Quizizz, and Kahoot!. That is how I do gamification in my classroom.

## What other advice do I have?

Overall, it is a good learning management system and provides a good way to organize your class.

I would rate the solution as nine out of 10. The auto-save thing is the reason why they are not getting 10 out of 10.



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