



# Maplewoodshop:

## Reach Cyber Charter School Case Study



### School Vitals

**School:** Reach Cyber Charter School is a tuition-free online public K–12 school in Pennsylvania, connecting students with certified teachers and a high-quality curriculum.

**Students:** Reach Cyber has more than 7,000 students. Almost 40 high school students participated in the school's carpentry program during the spring semester of the 2021-22 school year.

**Location:** Pennsylvania

**Grades using the Maplewoodshop program:** 9-12

**Teachers trained:** One teacher for spring semester course and plans to add a club and second level carpentry class in the 2022-23 school year.



**Use:** Looking to expand the school's Career Pathways program, Reach Cyber added a new carpentry track to help expand career exploration options for high school students. The program allows students to gain skills in woodworking and construction through partnerships with Maplewoodshop and the Eastern Atlantic States Carpenters Funds.

### Why Maplewoodshop

As a cyber school, it seemed highly unlikely they could start a hands-on carpentry program, but JD Smith, director of career readiness for the school, was still determined to try. "It is so important for us to promote career readiness, not just college readiness," said Smith. "It is our responsibility to ensure students are aware of every possible path for their future."

Reach Cyber partnered with Maplewoodshop and the Eastern Atlantic States Carpenters Funds to create opportunities for students to gain skills and experience in



carpentry, earn credit, and get a jump start on their career through apprenticeship opportunities. “Maplewoodshop’s partnership with the Carpenters Union is great for apprenticeship opportunities. And, the curriculum provided for the program is top notch,” said Smith. “The program was easy to get started since we were already sending STEM kits to our students, so it wasn’t a foreign idea to send out woodworking kits.”

## Educating with Maplewoodshop

**Projects created:** Birdhouses, bookcases, step stools, and tool boxes

**Concepts reinforced:** Reading, math, safe and proper use of tools

**Life Skills Learned/Reinforced:** Teamwork, goal setting, and entrepreneurship skills

With prior experience in education and as a carpenter and electrician, Wyatt Anderson was hired by Reach Cyber as a full-time instructor to lead the Career Pathways’ carpentry program. “This program emphasizes the importance of trades as additional opportunities for students after graduation,” said Anderson. “Students are able to explore woodworking and advance their knowledge through hands-on experiences, while also learning about potential career paths.”

During the first month of the semester, Anderson went over the safety rules and introduced the tools during classes, before going through the projects. Students were then given the diagrams and measurements of each board and video demonstrations walking them through the instructions. During classes, students took the time to ask questions and focus primarily on the current project. “This has been a great opportunity for students to learn 21st century skills,” said Anderson. “It has really opened up more ideas for students while promoting career readiness.”



Eastern Atlantic States

REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS



## What’s Next?

Following the success of this program in the first semester, Reach Cyber is expanding its carpentry program to be offered during both semesters of the 2022-23 school year, as well as adding a carpentry club. “With our partnerships with Maplewoodshop and the Carpenters Union, it is incredible how we’ve been able to bring the trade to the virtual learning environment,” said Smith. “Students are thrilled to have more opportunities this school year to expand their carpentry skills.”

Building **confidence**, **creativity**, and **community** in students through woodworking.

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