

# Students at One of America's Top High Schools Prefer ABC-CLIO Online Solutions to Google!

## Bayard Rustin High School Practices 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and Fills Curriculum Resource Gaps Daily with ABC-CLIO Online Solutions

### SITUATION

Bayard Rustin is the newest of three high schools in the district, all of which use ABC-CLIO online solutions. Opening its doors in 2006, it has already been named as one of America's Top High Schools by *Newsweek*.

The Rustin High School library is a bustling, energetic library where students gather—especially every morning before school—to study together, play Sporcle on the computers, and catch up.

"The library is PACKED in the mornings with up to 135 kids at a time."

Although teachers and librarians at Bayard Rustin were happy with the databases they had (which included several ABC-CLIO databases), they felt there was a gap in coverage in social studies. Students and teachers were frustrated with finding resources for ancient and medieval history. Some resources were available through Access Pennsylvania, but resources were spotty and access to them was slow.

Bayard Rustin's goal is to teach information literacy skills across the curriculum, as well as to maintain curricular connections between elementary and secondary students. There is a feeder pattern, with similar educational experiences provided as they advance through grade levels. Educators expressed concern that students were not really learning—or not able to use—good research skills, in spite of teacher and librarian efforts to infuse information literacy skills across the curriculum. Teachers felt that students were going to "Google their lives away"—especially the 9th graders.

### SOLUTION

ABC-CLIO's *World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras* provided both an

effective overview and the comprehensive depth of coverage needed for their wide range of students. Once this was added, teachers and librarians felt that they had the range of resources needed for the curriculum.

***"Teachers felt that students were going to 'Google their lives away.' Students are using these resources rather than going to their favorite search engine, which makes us very happy!"***

Every class comes to the library and reviews the databases in a hands-on session with Librarian Shirley LeClerc that includes health, English, social studies, psychology, and military history. In addition to

teaching the students, Shirley understands that she also needs to train the teachers on these resources.

### The Future

The teachers and librarian have already developed many collaborative units using the databases, and a major goal for this fall is to develop even more.

## Enhancing Critical Thinking and Analysis

Finally, students were gaining keyword searching skills as well as learning the value of high quality databases compared to general search engines. Instead of getting thousands of hits on Google, students using ABC-CLIO solutions spent dramatically less time searching or finding topics, and more time researching, understanding, and learning.

Thus, the databases are a critical component for reaching the school's goal of teaching information literacy across the curriculum—a standard for Pennsylvania as well as for Common Core.

## EVALUATING SUCCESS

With ABC-CLIO databases, students as well as teachers feel they have the range and quality of resources needed for their curriculum and for all of their student needs. Once the students come to the library for an overview at the beginning of each class, they find that the databases are easy to use whether they are in the library or at home.

According to Shirley LeClerc, the following says it all:

*Students are using these resources rather than going to their favorite search engine, which makes us very happy!*

*“ABC-CLIO resources allow our students to search thousands of resources simultaneously using the federated search engine. More importantly, they provide an opportunity for information literacy skills to be taught as students choose the most appropriate resource for their needs. The history databases cover all the topics covered in our Social Studies courses and allow teachers to be creative in assignments rather than depending on textbooks. The teacher resources provide great ideas that can be modified to fit our needs.”*

## DISTRICT LEADER

### Shirley LeClerc

Library Department Chair,  
Secondary  
Bayard Rustin High School  
West Chester Area School  
District-PA



## QUICK FACTS

### Bayard Rustin High School

- Selected by *Newsweek* as one of America's top 500 High Schools
- Bayard Rustin is the newest of three high schools in the district, all of which use ABC-CLIO online solutions
- 11,654 students in Grades K–12

### West Chester Area School District

- Mission: to educate and inspire our students to achieve their personal best
- It serves a 75-square-mile suburban, urban and rural area, with 16 schools in the district
- College board scores are consistently above state and national averages. Up to 90% of graduates seek higher education; the dropout rate is less than 2%
- Nine Blue Ribbon School awards have been presented to WCAS schools by the U.S. Department of Education
- **Curriculum focus:**
  - Integrating the teaching of information literacy skills across the curriculum
- **Databases used:**
  - *American Government*
  - *Daily Life Through History*
  - *World at War: Understanding Conflict and Society*
  - *World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras*

## BAYARD RUSTIN HIGH SCHOOL: EXAMPLES OF ABC-CLIO DATABASES ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

The databases provide an effective general overview for choosing a research topic, and they supply in-depth resources when students are ready to dig deeper. As a result, the ABC-CLIO databases are used in many ways throughout the curriculum. Here are just a few examples:

### ABC-CLIO's *American Government and the U.S. Constitution*

ABC-CLIO's *American Government* database directly supports student understanding of the U.S. Constitution—a required unit in the 11th grade.

### *Daily Life Through History and Steinbeck in the English Curriculum*

*Daily Life Through History* is a critical resource for using inquiry and information skills to research the Dust Bowl—why it occurred and what happened—when Steinbeck is studied in the English course. By researching why it occurred and what happened, students think more deeply about issues surrounding the event.

### *World at War and Daily Life Through History*

*World at War* and *Daily Life Through History* allow students to find background and issues related to the popular young adult

novel *Fallen Angels*, such as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, the music of the times, the counter culture, and the many personalities of the Vietnam era.

### *Daily Life Through History, World at War, and World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras across the entire history curriculum*

*Daily Life Through History, World at War, and World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras* can all be used in history classes where students are asked to select a topic within a specific time period to research and report on.

### *World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras and Constantinople*

Using *World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras*, students can research the Greek gods and the time period when they study Constantinople.