

A Decade of Digital Success: How VirtualSC and Taito Learning Empower South Carolina's Students



For ten years, supplemental online education provider VirtualSC has relied on Taito Learning's TypeTastic to equip K-6 students across South Carolina with essential keyboarding skills, fostering digital literacy and enhancing student success in online learning and testing environments.

CHALLENGE

When South Carolina law mandated that all statewide assessments be administered online, state educators and leaders were concerned about students' keyboarding deficits and worried that these skill gaps would impede their ability to perform at their highest potential during testing. Sharon Dublin, Program Coordinator for the South Carolina Department of Education, was ready to shift to a keyboarding partner that would provide a personalized solution that meets state and student needs.

"We saw there was a challenge for our students in elementary who were not familiar with the keyboard. It was unrealistic to ask them to respond to typing prompts without providing them a resource to help them be successful."

- Sharon Dublin, Program Coordinator

Further, Dublin and other like-minded educators knew it was essential that their academic offerings better ensure that South Carolina students graduate from high school with critical digital skills to be successful in their future academic, professional, and personal pursuits. Before partnering with Taito Learning, Dublin and the broader VirtualSC program faced several obstacles in implementing a robust, scalable keyboarding program:

- 1. Statewide Access Need:** A growing demand for consistent keyboarding instruction from schools and districts statewide.
- 2. Varied Student Skill Levels:** Students entered courses with different typing proficiency levels, making standardized keyboarding education challenging and preventing students from performing at their best on assessments administered online.
- 3. Administrative Complexity:** Managing thousands of students, schools, and districts required a user-friendly, scalable system.
- 4. Alignment with State Standards:** VirtualSC courses and programs must meet the unique demands of South Carolina state standards.

VirtualSC Overview:

- Began offering courses in the 2007-2008 academic year
- Supports grades K-12 students in the state of South Carolina with free, supplemental online learning
- Served 110,331 students and approximately 1,000 teachers and administrators across 49 South Carolina school districts in the 2023-2024 school year, including:
 - 57,896 public school students
 - 4,545 charter school students
 - 1,153 private school students
- Works with diploma-granting schools, as well as adult education centers, to provide state-funded online courses for high school credit at no cost to the students
- 86% overall successful course completion rate

TARGET OUTCOMES

1. Improve student keyboarding skills to enhance performance in online learning and testing environments.
2. Implement a statewide keyboarding program accessible to all South Carolina students.
3. Provide engaging and comprehensive typing instruction aligned with state standards.
4. Streamline implementation at scale with advanced management and reporting features.

IMPLEMENTATION

Having initially trialed other typing programs, Dublin sought a more tailored solution that aligned with South Carolina's educational standards while equipping students with essential typing skills. The search led to a partnership with Taito Learning's TypeTastic over a decade ago.

"The TypeTastic curriculum is aligned to our state standards. With the curriculum being aligned, when teachers are using the resources, they have what they need, they have lessons and they're teaching the standard. They're also providing opportunities for students to learn how to type, which is essential when they go take those standardized tests."

- Sharon Dublin, Program Coordinator

The Taito Learning team's responsiveness and willingness to adapt sealed the partnership. "The Taito Learning staff made it easy. We were able to have a voice in what our program looked like," Dublin explained. "We've been with them for over ten years and have been able to provide them with feedback that really has taken off."

The partnership evolved as technology advanced. Initially, VirtualSC had to roster students through CSV files. However, in response to customer feedback, Taito Learning adapted its product to allow integration with Clever, Google Classroom, and LTI links—solutions already in use across districts. "That makes integration easier for our districts and students," said Dublin.

The program also supports skill development in content areas beyond keyboarding. Dublin noted, "TypeTastic can also reinforce literacy. We're able to create tests, and build those tests around other subject areas they may be struggling with, which enhances literacy skills." This capability was inspired by VirtualSC user feedback, demonstrating Taito Learning's genuine commitment to innovation, continuous improvement, and authentic partnership with their clients.

As students and educators got acquainted with TypeTastic, the program's intuitive design, engaging gamified approach, and top-quality customer service made implementation a breeze. Dublin shared, "Kids love TypeTastic. It has a user-friendly platform, it explains the lessons, it provides a foundation which students need. Students love the Island of Adventure theme as they move from island to island. It gives them a sense of confidence that they are progressing as well." Calling the program "easy to implement," "robust," and "rigorous," Dublin highlighted TypeTastic's differentiation as a key benefit – "You can adjust the settings for students who may have accommodations or you can increase the rigor for students who are high-flyers. It has all of that built in to make sure it taps each student, no matter what level they are, no matter what that student's background."

"Taito Learning provides a product that reaches all, serves all, and benefits all."

- Sharon Dublin, Program Coordinator

RESULTS

Since implementing TypeTastic, VirtualSC has seen impactful benefits and continues to promote the program as one of their top virtual learning opportunities for students. The VirtualSC team and students experienced:

- 1. Improved Typing Proficiency:** As a result of using TypeTastic, students demonstrated increased typing speed, accuracy, and overall engagement with keyboarding instruction.
- 2. Improved Digital Performance:** With greater typing fluency, students are better equipped to succeed in online courses, state assessments, and daily tech tasks.
- 3. Scalable Adoption:** The state now offers a proven keyboarding program to K-6 students, enhancing consistency with keyboarding instruction. Thousands of students have developed essential tech skills over the last decade.
- 4. Administrative Efficiency:** With TypeTastic's advanced reporting and centralized dashboards, VirtualSC experienced seamless implementation and management at a large scale, saving precious time on administrative tasks and allowing VirtualSC staff to focus on enhancing student learning.

After experiencing success with TypeTastic, Dublin became curious about Taito Learning's digital citizenship offerings. Dublin recalled, "Digital citizenship was not on our radar at the time [our partnership began] but then, with offering students keyboarding, we thought, 'Why not offer digital literacy so we know our students have a strong resource that can provide them with the foundation that they need?' That's how we were introduced to digital literacy." Dublin knew that South Carolina students needed support with digital literacy beyond typing, and her inquiry sparked important conversations about what a full digital citizenship curriculum could look like. She remembered, "We asked Taito, 'Do you guys have a program?'" At the time, they did not, but with a passion for innovation and collaboration, Taito Learning was inspired to begin developing the Digital Citizenship Curriculum.

In fact, the Taito Learning team closely partnered with VirtualSC, educators across the state, and other valued clients to test the program, gather feedback, and fine-tune it across the development process. Through ongoing collaboration, the VirtualSC team has provided Taito Learning with invaluable input to refine and enhance the Digital Citizenship Curriculum. Dublin shared optimistically, "We're excited to roll out [the Digital Citizenship Curriculum] with students. We know this will have a positive impact on students' career and life readiness."

Dublin's commitment to VirtualSC's partnership with Taito Learning is ultimately rooted in open communication and two-way collaboration. When asked what the most important thing other potential partners should know about working with Taito Learning, she reflected:

"Your voice will be heard. We were so fortunate in our partnership with them that they heard our voice, and I do believe they are willing to listen. That's the greatest value you can have, is to feel that you're heard, and have the product that will deliver the results you're looking for."

-Sharon Dublin, Program Coordinator

Today, Taito Learning continues to support VirtualSC's vision of a scalable, standards-aligned keyboarding program that prepares students for both academic assessments and future digital success.



ABOUT TAITO LEARNING

Taito Learning is dedicated to providing students with the essential digital skills they need to thrive in the 21st century. Through programs like TypeTastic and the K-5 Digital Citizenship curriculum, Taito Learning provides schools with comprehensive, engaging, and standards-aligned resources that empower students and support educators. Known for their exceptional customer service and seamless integration, Taito Learning partners with schools to deliver impactful solutions that prepare learners for a tech-driven future.

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