

CASE STUDY

VILLA  MARIA



**How Villa Maria Improved
School-wide Organization with Studyo**

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School Profile

Established in 1854, Villa Maria is a private co-educational school serving 1,549 students in English and French on the island of Montreal, Quebec. As the education landscape was changing, the Leadership at Villa Maria undertook a rigorous strategic planning process to ensure the viability of their school long-term. Ambitious in their goal to become a reference for modern schools, Villa Maria prioritized investments in education technology while remaining true to their student-centered pedagogical commitments. They began with a 1:1 iPad initiative in 2015.



The Challenge

Improve organization and promote executive function

As a part of integrating a 1:1 program into teaching and learning at Villa Maria, they were initially using a digital planner that lacked the flexibility and functionality they needed. They wanted to standardize schoolwork communication and planning between teachers, students and parents. Ryan Forster, Coordinator of Information and Communication Technologies, explains, “we started out using a bare bones digital planner. The students quickly outgrew this platform as it was missing important planning elements. For example, it only had a single agenda view. There was nothing that made room for planning or tasks or breaking things down. Students couldn’t see their daily schedule, they didn’t have any insight into how tasks look on a timeline, they weren’t developing their executive function.”

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Assistant Director of Educational Services, Geneviève Hogue, said “It was not a flexible tool. We were looking for a tool that could better support students and parents and give them more options.”

One option they could not compromise on was the ability for teachers and students to interact with homework, assignments, and tests in more advanced ways to promote organization. Geneviève added, “the goal was to improve the *way* students can plan and get organized”.

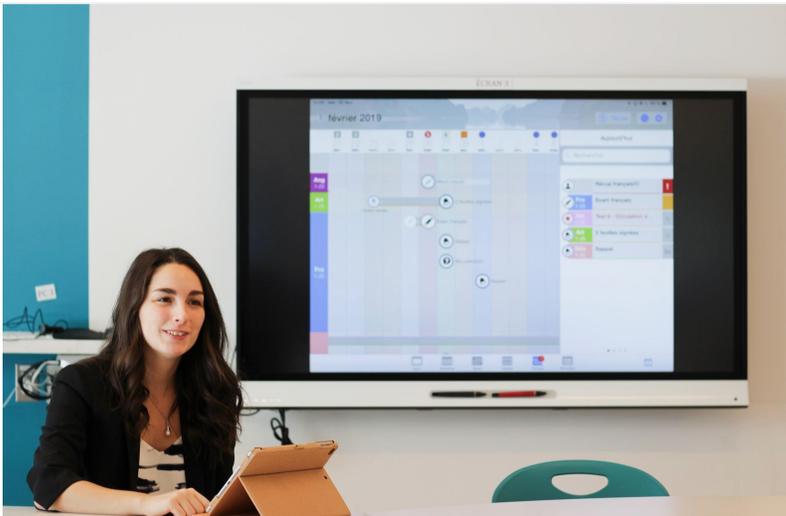


The Solution:

A flexible tool and a student-focused implementation plan

Villa Maria believed Studyo was the right fit but another challenge lay ahead for them – timing. “After vetting the platform and meeting the team from Studyo, I was convinced”, says Ryan, “but we require the approval of teachers and the Educational Services team and I only had 8 days of school left. So, I invited all the teachers in for a staff meeting and gave a presentation but I think it was Renaud, Studyo’s CEO, that really won over their hearts. Mostly because, for one, he has a good product that met our needs school-wide, but two, he speaks to the teachers in a way that they connect to. He spoke to the group in English, French and Spanish. There aren’t too many others that I think would have won over our staff that afternoon – Renaud did. The teachers approved the change and we signed our agreement with Studyo mid-june.”

The technical implementation began over the summer with Renaud and Ryan working closely together to sort out single-sign on and get the school calendar and student schedules customized, “technically, it was as easy as possible. The teachers just logged in and used an activation code and they were into their customized schedules,” Ryan said.



“It’s a really nice way of communicating with students. I can also see how much work each student has. **I can be sure everyone is on the same page.**”

At the beginning of the year the teachers had two pedagogical days where they received training from Renaud. After that, it was about getting the students onboard. To support students, Villa Maria offers an Advisory and Technology course taught by Marie-Ève Emond. Marie-Ève says, “my goal is to help kids become great students – we focus on how to do research, how to avoid plagiarism, citing sources, study skills, and getting organized with Studyo”. Marie-Ève believes teaching organization is explicitly a key to student success and that Studyo can help teachers do this, “It’s a really nice way of communicating with students. I can also see how much work each student has. I can be sure everyone is on the same page.”

Having Marie-Ève teach as many of the Advisory and Technology courses as possible is a strategic move, Ryan explains, “by teaching almost all the groups of students, she is able to standardize how they use Studyo and collaborate with teachers to promote school-wide consistency.”



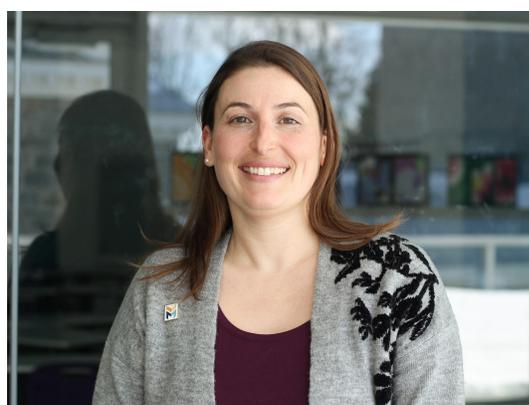
The Results

We improved how students get organized

88% of all students use Studyo daily.

The students have adopted Studyo as their own, “we really brought it in for the kids, and for their parents to have access to what needs to be done. It’s now our go-to place for organization,” Ryan says. Studyo usage data confirms that 88% of all students use Studyo daily.

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Geneviève agrees, “I feel the students are more organized and they see things coming more. They have a timeline. It’s more visual and they can see things coming at a glance... unlike a paper agenda where you have to turn the page to see things.” Where teachers are asked to enter crucial elements such as exams, based on a student survey of half the school population conducted by Ryan, **83% of students report entering their own homework and school tasks into Studyo** – taking on that responsibility and helping them to visualize their whole workload.

“The longstanding complaint from our teachers is that kids don’t always take their work seriously, they don’t do their homework. We can’t guarantee that the kids are going to do their homework. But what Studyo does is it gives everybody the best chance of coming in prepared for class. Studyo picks up where there is a natural weakness in planning for kids,” says Ryan.

“Parents say they enjoy using Studyo because “there is no more ‘there’s no homework tonight’”. Parents can go online and check and get email updates on Fridays, so they know what is coming up. My parents all love those features.”

Administrators are also able to creatively support their students. Geneviève and Dyanna Morin Roy, both expressed the ease in which they’re able to schedule a time for students to meet them in between classes. Dyanna explains, she can “easily enter into an agenda for a student to come see me. I don’t need to interrupt their class time or send a message. I know the students are looking at Studyo many times a day so I know they will see my message.”



An Unexpected Benefit

Strengthen technology investments

For Ryan, Studydo has had some beneficial side effects, “the kids and the teachers have more reasons with Studydo to be on their device, they are using it for more academic reasons. It helps drive comfort with the device, which is leading to more frequent academic usage of it. It’s hard to say that because of Studydo the kids are using their iPad more but I can say that because of Studydo kids *are* using their iPads as a learning tool and teachers *are* using their iPads as a teaching and learning tool in the classroom.”



Our next steps

As Ryan looks to the future, he shares, “we started out using a bare bones digital planner but this was really a case of ‘Substitution’, if you know the SAMR model – students were just going from paper to digital doing the exact same thing.

Now we are augmenting and modifying the technology. Now we can go well beyond what we could do with a paper planner with the kids and we can still go deeper and further with Studydo. That’s the plan.”

Going forward, Ryan is also looking forward to making use of the new Insights Dashboard. Studydo aims to make whole-school and individual student progress with executive function visible to school leaders, teachers and parents through usage analytics and data visualization.

To learn more about Studydo and the team, visit www.Studydo.co.