

Showcase of New Coding Curriculum: Chicago Public School Students Create Their Own Websites

The popular Chicago-based coding school Actualize has piloted a new coding curriculum at Walt Disney Magnet School teaching students from 5th through 8th grade to create their own websites. These websites are being showcased at an event at 1871 in the Merchandise Mart on January 17, 2017.

Walt Disney Magnet School, an innovative leader in bringing technology education to its classrooms, initially approached Actualize to see if a coding curriculum can be created that would teach its students real world skills while not taking away from the other core subjects.

“Teaching our students to be creators rather than consumers of technology has long been a focus of our technology programs at Disney, “ stated the school’s technology coordinator Brad Fisher. “Our partnership with Jay and Actualize are helping to take that vision to the next level, and provide our students with a vision for their future that they might not have previously imagined.”

Actualize created an innovative curriculum that would allow teachers - even those without coding backgrounds - to teach kids to create websites that can serve as replacements or supplements to traditional reports or cardboard displays. With a website, a user can interact with the student report using interactive elements and videos - things which are not possible with printed reports.

“The primary goal here is to expose the students to computer programming,” says

Jay Wengrow, founder and CEO of Actualize. “Most kids don’t even realize that software engineering is a career path, but if they’ve seen the power of coding and the fact that they’re capable of actually coding themselves, it will increase their likelihood of pursuing it later in life.”

This pilot program was [recently highlighted](#) by the White House as part of their Computer Science for All program announcement of innovative partnerships teaching students the highly marketable skills of computer science.

Actualize plans to bring this curriculum to elementary schools across the nation. It is designed to be taught by the teachers of core subjects such as history and science, and allows computer science to be brought to the classroom without taking away time from another subject.

At the Showcase at 1871, Chicago’s most prominent tech hub, the students will be showing their websites to the public. Educators, parents, and anyone who is interested may attend at no cost by [RSVP’ing here](#).

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