

## **Banzai:**

I attended the Banzai webinar on behalf of CPI on 9/13/2023.

Here is a summary of my notes from the webinar, which may be of interest to CPI members who have been providing credit education with Banzai and their local schools. The webinar was led by Morgan Vandagriff, CEO and Co-founder, as well as the product developers Kendall Buchanan and Nikole Rios.

Morgan reported Banzai opened in 2007, and now has reached high penetration with record breaking teacher growth. Banzai is now used in more than 1/2 of all U.S. high schools. They had 100,000 teachers last fall, and 20,000 new teachers have signed up in the last year, mostly in the last 2 months. There has been a 25% increase in booklet requests provided at no cost to the schools.

Banzai now speaks in 5 languages; Spanish, French, Tagalog, Chinese and Vietnamese with coaches and articles. Kendall asked that if any teachers need materials in other languages to let Banzai know. He said there is better support for screen readers.

Banzai accomplishments in 2022-2023 include a new "manager" process, making their online program easier to use. The Manager Toolkit is used to find marketing materials as well as a section with help on how to teach their materials in a classroom. They have also focused on student privacy, to stop bad actors from stealing private information from students. Banzai is on a "white list", meaning their programs are secure. Banzai Direct now offers a quiz with rewards, and its partner pages can now be customized.

Banzai now has mobile apps for Google Play and IOS phones. Their Pocket Advisor is now available at the APP Store. Using Hometown Financial, the apps contain 5 commonly used calculators. For example: how to speed up debt reduction and mortgage payoff, as well as a calculator to help plan for retirement.

Nikole Rios, as Curriculum Director, announced they have new workbooks, including one on digital citizenship for middle schoolers. They have a workbook on career planning. The workbook on internet safety is called Digital Footprint, and explains how identities are tracked online. Another workbook is on banking (how to run your own bank or credit union - and how it improves the economy).

Banzai.org has a more updated look and feel, and more customizations in the Wellness Center are coming. A new product in 2024 will help employees make better

sense of their benefits, which will also deepen their appreciation for their company's culture. It could be a tool used by Human Resources.

I'm glad that Credit Professionals International is able to use their tools to help us provide credit education, citizenship and planning tools to future generations.

**Kathryn Greiner**

**Retired Director of Credit Education for the University of Michigan Credit Union and member of Credit Professionals of Ann Arbor since 1982**