

Mead School District

Challenge

Like many school districts across the country, the Mead School District (Mead) in Mead, WA, was data rich, but information poor. They knew comprehensive data analysis was key to effective school improvement planning, but data for the more than 9,000 students enrolled in the district was not easily accessible or readily available to the educators tasked with making a difference.

“We couldn’t pull together WASL (Washington Assessment of Student Learning) scores and keep track of them without creating our own spreadsheet,” said Dorcas Wylder, the District’s director of elementary curriculum. Much of the data was stored on separate computers throughout the District’s eight elementary schools, two middle schools, two high schools, and an alternative school.

Mead teachers and administrators had one main opportunity to review and analyze student test scores. Annually, the district hired a data publishing service to bring together state testing results for each school. Teachers within each building then met to discuss and analyze results and develop building goals. While these meetings were useful to develop educational strategies, Mead administrators and teachers knew they could be doing more with their students’ assessment data—and more often.

“There was enough knowledge out there among building principals that there were opportunities for data to be used in a more robust way,” said Matt Miller, Mead assistant director of technology. “The real cry and need for it came from district leaders and teachers.”

To help their educators use assessment data more efficiently and effectively, Mead decided to purchase a data analysis tool.

Solution

When it began looking for a data analysis system, Mead had recently switched to a new student information system (SIS), Pearson’s PowerSchool® Premier. With PowerSchool the District was able to customize how it gathered information and had a more accessible central location to store and view student information, such as grades, test scores, and attendance.

After looking at other products, Mead found Pearson Inform to be their best choice for data analysis. It integrates with PowerSchool and provides the District the features they had been looking for: flexibility and usability.

With Pearson Inform, Mead’s data is consolidated and stored in a system that is easy to access and navigate.



“Pearson Inform makes teachers more powerful. They just needed a tool to help them decide what they needed.”

- Matt Miller, Mead assistant director of technology

Mead educators can compare classrooms, analyze school-wide performance, and conveniently drill down to individual student data leading to actionable strategies for intervention, curriculum revision, and school improvement.

“As we look at effective schools and change, we can’t change without good discussion about student learning and we can’t discuss that unless we have easy access to data,” Wylder said.

“Mead has found that Pearson Inform accepts a wide range of data, is user-friendly and displays data in a way that is visually appealing, easy-to-understand, and powerful. Standard data analysis features, such as the ability to query and drill down into more specific data, are accomplished very easily through Pearson Inform because of the intuitive design,” Miller said. Features, such as creating intervention groups, are giving Mead information they had never had access to before.

Benefits

Mead now has a complete performance picture so that all educators—from the classroom teacher to the superintendent—have the longitudinal student performance information they need to make effective decisions to improve teaching and learning.

The data publishing service Mead had hired to group its data for the annual assessment review meetings is no longer needed. Mead’s data team can use the Pearson Inform tools to group the data and create the charts and graphs they need to conduct the annual meetings. In addition, the District now has the ability to input district assessments into the system. This creates year-round conversations about students’ progress because data

analysis can be discussed at each staff meeting instead of just once a year.

“With Pearson Inform, viewing and analyzing student performance data will become increasingly routine,” Miller said. Accessing and analyzing the data year round will help teachers make adjustments in instruction and document the strategies that are working more often. For building principals, the data analysis in Pearson Inform will help them decide where they should invest in staff development.

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