

# Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Applies Best Practices for a Student-Centered Education

“Chancery SMS is the keeper of all of our student data. Everything from school budgeting, employee hiring, food services, and textbook inventory are directly connected to the SIS.”

Victoria Philpot  
Director of Software  
Application Services

## QUICK FACTS

- 75,000 students
- 133 schools

Whether it's narrowing the achievement gap, raising students' reading levels, or reforming the secondary school experience, officials from Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) have proven a quality education must be student-centered. Improving reading scores by 40 percent, boosting the graduation rate by more than 10 percent, and surging the number of students enrolled in advanced courses by 75 percent in middle school and 90 percent in high school is no simple task, Nashville school officials confess. From students serving on the school board to utmost reliability of their student information system (SIS), every district decision is strictly based on the best interest of the student.

“We're trying innovative ideas to engage kids so they will want to learn, go to college and get a good career,” Victoria Philpot, MNPS director of software application services said. “Information from our student management system is what we rely on to find out what is and is not working, and we make decisions based on that information.”

With a population of nearly 75,000 students, keeping track of each student is critical to making informed decisions. Nearly two-thirds of Nashville Public Schools' students are minorities, seven out of 10 students come from poor families, and students districtwide speak about 80 different languages.

“Our previous SIS had limited functionality. We needed increased capability, more information, and the ability to update the product as needed without the high maintenance,” Ms. Philpot said. “We wanted a web-based system that was user friendly and didn't require a 10-year implementation process, as we saw at one east coast school district using a system from a different company.”

MNPS rolled out Pearson's Chancery SMS during the 2004-2005 school year.

“Chancery SMS was one key component of bringing technology into the classroom,” said Kathy Nicholson, MNPS' student management system product manager. “For the first time we brought computers and other technology into classrooms and had to train teachers and counselors. We had to help them understand that we were not giving them more work, we were giving them tools to better manage student information.”

After 17 years in elementary, middle and high schools, Ms. Nicholson knows the challenges of keeping up with classroom resources. And equipping more than 5,000 classrooms with technology was a tough but necessary charge.

“We have over the last five years increased by leaps and bounds the number of machines for student and administrative use. We had to. Kids live on their personal computers and televisions at home. They're bored when they get to the classroom. By incorporating technology, we can better engage students and improve our graduation rate,” Ms. Nicholson said. “We're going to include more interactive technology in the classroom.”

Chancery SMS will continue to help track the classroom instruction's impact on student achievement and provide school officials with important information to make operational changes.

“Chancery SMS is the keeper of all of our student data,” Ms. Philpot said. “Everything from school budgeting, employee hiring, food services, and textbook inventory are directly connected to the SIS.”

By matching real-time class enrollments, MNPS officials are able to better assign funds, teachers, meals, and even textbooks to each school.

“Chancery SMS helps us get a more accurate and up-to-date count of resources needed. Our new textbook inventory system is tied to Chancery SMS and is expected to save us about \$750,000 in lost textbooks,” Ms. Philpot said.

The student information system became the center of MNPS' universe. Despite the snags of incorporating the SIS into 133 schools, district officials are so delighted with the technology's effectiveness they are carrying out 130 technology projects to expand the use of technology.

“We'd absolutely recommend Chancery SMS,” Ms. Nicholson said. “Even with the challenges, we get more accurate and faster information about our students than was ever possible without it.”

## ABOUT PEARSON

Pearson is the global leader in educational publishing, assessment, information and services, helping people of all ages to learn at their own pace, in their own way. For students preK-12, Pearson provides effective and innovative curriculum products in all available media, educational assessment and measurement for students and teachers, student information systems, and teacher professional development and certification programs. Our respected brands include PowerSchool, Chancery SMS, Pearson Inform, Scott Foresman, Prentice Hall, and many others. Our comprehensive offerings help inform targeted instruction and intervention so that success is within reach of every student. Pearson's other primary businesses include the Financial Times Group and the Penguin Group.

**PEARSON**

For more information  
about Pearson, visit  
[www.pearsonschoolsandcolleges.com](http://www.pearsonschoolsandcolleges.com)  
on the World Wide Web  
or call 877-873-1550.

Copyright © 2000-2007 Pearson Education, Inc. or its affiliates.  
All rights reserved.