

Challenge

The Independence Public School District (Independence) in Independence, Missouri, has 18 elementary schools, five middle schools, and five high schools that together serve over 12,500 students. Since 2006, Independence has managed its student data and delivered required state reports using Pearson’s PowerSchool® centralized student information system. However, schools within Independence have used different resources, solutions, and software applications for standards-based student assessment, performance data, and curriculum management.

One significant shortcoming to using multiple student assessment solutions was that it took a long time to return results. For example, the benchmark common assessments given in middle schools took approximately six weeks before students and teachers could see—and act on—the results. This was a serious issue, because students could not remember the specifics of the assessment, and it was too late for teachers to alter the curriculum or prescribe remediation.

Solution

Independence began working with Pearson in 2008 as a member of the Product Advisory Board to help shape and define PowerSchool – Studio Edition—a new tool that combines assessment and curriculum alignment with powerful reporting and analytic capacities. By providing feedback on the prototypes—alpha and beta versions of the application—Independence guided the creation of a solution that provides sorely needed assessment and reporting features, as well as the data to inform differentiated instruction.

PowerSchool – Studio Edition provides the first connected learning environment created specifically for K-12 education that integrates multiple education solutions, including assessment management, information systems, and course management, into one comprehensive platform. PowerSchool – Studio Edition connects the dots between student data and student learning, providing students with personalized education.



“MY FAVORITE FEATURE OF STUDIO EDITION IS THE WAY IT INTEGRATES WITH OUR STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM, POWER SCHOOL.”

Sage Arnote, District Technology Integration Specialist

As Gloria Stephenson, executive director of technology for Independence explains, “The Independence School District has been looking for a data warehousing, curriculum, assessment, and alignment package for several years. We’ve had ongoing relationships—a very good relationship—with Pearson. PowerSchool – Studio Edition seemed to be a really good match for us, as far as looking at the analytics component in it, as well as the assessment and curriculum alignment.”

PowerSchool – Studio Edition supports a variety of tools to support 21st century learning inside and outside the traditional classroom. PowerSchool – Studio Edition’s accommodation of student response devices and interactive white boards support classroom interaction and immediate feedback. System accessibility—anytime, anywhere—provides students with an online environment for learning that parallels the way that students think and communicate outside of school.

Benefits

By fall 2009, Independence administrators and teachers were delivering benchmark common assessments through PowerSchool – Studio Edition and receiving real-time scores and reports much more quickly than before. The value of returning assessment scores in real time, with item-level analysis, was a major step forward. Teachers could now review results that tell them which questions gave the class or individual students trouble and detail how those questions relate to specific educational standards. Real-time results allow teachers to make immediate adjustments to lesson plans and take action to remediate students who need additional help.

Moreover, students now have access to assessment results, allowing them to see where they might have made mistakes while the test is still fresh in their minds—not days or weeks later when the results no longer fall within the context of their current lesson.

Teachers have found PowerSchool – Studio Edition’s automated grading of assessments to be a significant time saver. By putting the right tools in teachers’ hands, Independence educators can better analyze student achievement and help students improve their performance. PowerSchool – Studio Edition allows teachers to concentrate on assessment for student learning, not just assessment of student learning.

School and district administrators appreciate the value that PowerSchool – Studio Edition provides. As assistant superintendent Beth Savidge observes, “One of the things that districts continue to work on is ways that you can follow a child, track a child, track a group of children, a cohort of children over time. That’s been one of the beauties of this entire project—for us to be able to do that and to use assessment data and a variety of assessment data, to see where kids are.”

PowerSchool – Studio Edition also delivers benefits and efficiencies to technology directors and administrators. Sage Arnote, district technology integration specialist,

believes PowerSchool – Studio Edition has made his life easier in several ways. “My favorite feature of Studio Edition is the way it integrates with our student information system, PowerSchool.”

PowerSchool – Studio Edition, designed and developed with K-12 educators in mind, embraces everyone involved in the education process

About Pearson

Pearson (NYSE:PSO) 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 success is within reach of every student. Pearson’s other primary businesses include the Financial Times Group and the Penguin Group.