

Northeast Metro 916 Improves Individual Education Plan Management

Northeast Metro 916 Intermediate School District provides educational services for children with special needs from ten districts in northeast St. Paul, Minnesota. The district needed a data management system that streamlined the development, management and reporting required for individual education plans (IEP). Campus Special Education provided the integration, data entry and reporting tools that Northeast Metro 916 needed.

Need for Integration

The IEP is developed by the student's special education team (includes school personnel, parents and student). The IEP drives the school services/programming that the student receives and can include services from psychologists, special education teachers, physical therapists and other professionals.

Before 2001, Northeast Metro 916 used two separate systems for data management - one to record student data and the other for IEP planning. During the 2001-2002 school year, Northeast Metro 916 became a Campus Customer and a beta site for Campus Special Education. Through the use of the fully integrated Campus Special Education module, Northeast Metro 916 greatly increased the accuracy and efficiency of IEP management.

"The main reason we made the decision to go with Infinite Campus® was the integration of Campus Special Education as part of the Infinite Campus system," says Mary Wiltse, Northeast Metro 916 Accounting Specialist. "As an intermediate school, Northeast Metro 916 provides a wide range of services including federal setting IV programs and itinerant services."

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Mary Wiltse
Accounting Specialist
Northeast Metro 916 ISD

Cooperative IEP Development

The service provided by Northeast Metro 916 requires a team of professionals. The members of the IEP team vary from student to student and are dependent upon individual student needs. Members of a student's IEP team may change as his/her individual program needs change.

To function effectively, IEP team members must be able to access the student's records, including test scores, evaluations, etc. Campus Special Education permits each member of the team access to update progress in each of these areas, which facilitates accurate analysis and contributes to the collaboration necessary to help the student move forward.

Access to sensitive IEP material can be restricted to team members and the roster of member access can be changed at any time to accommodate changes in the team. Case managers can monitor access to insure state and federal compliance without impeding the work of integral staff.

Discussing the benefits to Northeast Metro 916, Wiltse says, "With Campus Special Education, all assigned staff has access from their computers to the same information, including the IEP and other special education documents associated with a student. Team members can go into the student file from any location and document their portion of the IEP."

Northeast Metro 916 Intermediate School District
White Bear Lake, MN
2,510 students

Monitoring Change from Anywhere

“The only constant is change” might have been written with IEP management in mind. Students with an IEP progress through elementary grade, middle school and into high school in the same fashion as children without special needs. Behavior patterns, health conditions, family situations and skill development all change as time passes.

Through Infinite Campus, Northeast Metro 916 provides accurate and timely records as student’s conditions and physical school locations change. This continuity of information allows a student IEP history to follow from site to site and grade to grade, increasing the student’s likelihood of success.

Determining what is working and what is not must be regularly assessed. IEP meetings are regularly scheduled and real-time data is available to all IEP team members to monitor progress, accessible from any computer with Web access. The IEP team can spend its time in collaboration and teaching, rather than data management.

“Many special education staff members work on their student’s IEP from home, Campus Special Education allows teachers to do that without typing up a draft from home, and then entering it into a separate system once they are at work,” says Wiltse. “This is a time saver for the staff.”

IEP Reporting Made Easy

The world of special education is the most carefully monitored element of public education. Northeast Metro 916, as an intermediate school district, must not only fulfill the reporting requirements of state and federal agencies, but maintain a systematic communication with its ten member districts. Campus Special Education includes features that streamline data accumulation, case management and reporting.

Although students with severe disabilities comprise less than one-half of one percent of the general population, most school districts cannot afford the special programs, equipment and expertise that these students need.

Northeast Metro 916 provides cost-effective and efficient programs for these students. Enrollment of member district students may be short term, as in the case of behavioral problems or suspensions, or long term to address more challenging student needs. The complex nature of student enrollment and the variety of programs offered makes the need for accurate data management and easy access to information and reporting a vital commodity.

Using Campus Special Education, Northeast Metro 916 has set up a special education tuition acknowledgement form that is sent out to student’s resident districts. Information from the student information system and the IEP can be gathered and included in this report with a few key strokes.

To insure compliance to state and federal regulations for special education, the Minnesota Department of Education conducts regular audits of all schools offering special education services. A record of audit findings, specialized forms, procedures and reports specific to Northeast Metro 916 are all readily accessible through customized tab fields on Campus Special Education.

Controlling the Cash Flow

Since 2007 the Minnesota Department of Education requires that hours of participation be reported for all special education students. Payment for services is generated by the state based on the hours and data submitted directly from the IEP document.

“We needed a method of calculating special education hours for each of our students directly off the student’s IEP,” says Wiltse. “Infinite Campus went to work and today the calculation of these hours works great and populates the Minnesota required MARSS report that is sent to the department of education.”

Producing current and accurate reports is essential to maintain cash flow. Infinite Campus not only generates the reports for the state, but produces a custom report enabling estimation of future revenues.

Describing the importance of custom reports for financial analysis, Wiltse says, “One of my responsibilities is estimating future revenues for the district. Infinite Campus and special education provides me with the tools to analyze trends and conditions and make predictions necessary for administrative decision making. The ability to set up these reports from one source saves me a great deal of time and provides the district with dependable cash flow information.”

For Northeast Metro 916, Campus Special Education has provided essential tools for guiding student learning plans, for managing information and for generating reports essential for funding. They couldn’t imagine handling these processes without Infinite Campus.

About Infinite Campus

For more than a decade, Infinite Campus has successfully implemented its solutions for customers of all sizes. Today, Infinite Campus applications manage more than 4 million students in 42 states. Infinite Campus customers range from districts with fewer than 100 students to those with more than 100,000 as well as regional consortia, state departments of education and the federal government.