Sequoia Union High School District

REDWOOD CITY, CALIFORNIA / 8,100 STUDENTS

The Sequoia Union High School District serves 8,100 students in the San Francisco Bay Area. Since adopting Infinite Campus in 2010, a few of the immediate benefits Sequoia has found are the grade book and portal integration, instructional management tools, customization, and reporting and visualization. In addition, Sequoia has found the company to be responsive, both in new development and support issues.

CHALLENGES

In 2009, Sequoia's legacy student information system (SIS) was being discontinued. They were told they could move to a different SIS in the parent company's product line at a deep discount. They explored the new option and decided to begin a search for a new system.

"We were looking for a system with more flexibility that allowed us to enhance communication with our parents, students and community," recalled Ken Bazan, Sequoia Information Services Manager. "We also wanted more integration so teachers wouldn't have to work in two separate systems when recording their students' grades."

"We wanted more classroom management features. For example, we wanted teachers to be able to post a homework assignment along with a PDF and for students to be able to turn in their homework as an attachment," said Eric Trice, Sequoia Programming, Web and Server Services Manager. "Only Infinite Campus offered this functionality. It set them apart from the other vendors."

About Campus

▶ We are the largest American-owned student information system. Campus applications manage 7 million students in 43 states.

SOLUTION

Teacher/student communication is important to Sequoia. They have found the integration between the Campus Grade Book and the Portal to be invaluable. Nearly 100 percent of our teachers use the grade book because the administration has made it a priority.

"We've closed the communication gap we had with parents because as soon as a grades or attendance is entered, it's automatically posted in the portal," observed Bazan. "And it's saving teachers a lot of time. With our old system it was a separate product. Teachers had to export their grades and then upload them to another website. Now there's not that extra step."

Trice and Bazan have seen benefits from the extensibility they have found in Infinite Campus. "One of the greatest things about Infinite Campus is that we're able to customize it to fit our needs," said Trice. "The integration with MS SQL Server is huge. We can insert our own JSP pages as tabs that link to MS SQL Reporting Services. There's usually a way to meet our goals by providing a custom report to get what is needed."

Customizing reports has given teachers a one-stop shop. Bazan said, "I created reports with basic demographic plus CSPS information. Though we have another application called Data Director, teachers don't really need to go to it until they do benchmarking. Before, they had to log in to another product to obtain the same data."

"With Infinite Campus we've been able to give instructional vice principals custom reports and it's helped tremendously," Bazan continued. "The ability to create charts and tables allows us to learn what's really going on in a school. For example, our instructional leaders now see the breakdown of the ELL and special education students by section."

RESULTS

The reports Sequoia utilizes have informed the district administration's resource allocation decisions. "It makes a big difference to see real-time attendance numbers because 20 more kids means another teacher is needed," Trice explained. "Getting the count as accurately and quickly as possible lets us assign teachers to the schools more quickly and with a lot more confidence. With our old system we could never check our exact attendance percentage. Now, we know."

Sequoia has also enjoyed their experienced with the company. "Everyone says 'we have new features in the pipeline' but you guys actually release new things and fix things that are broken. It's a nice feeling that our feedback actually gets adopted," said Bazan. "And your implementation team was amazing. The developer knew exactly what we needed. You guys really do take care of your customers."

Bazan also appreciates the way Infinite Campus has changed his working life. "With the legacy system I'd spend my winter and spring breaks in my office running reports for days. The rollover would take me weeks to do and now it takes me less than a day. Now I can take some time off over breaks and not worry about the things I used to with the old system."

"If another district were looking for an SIS, I'd recommend Infinite Campus as highly as I can."

Ken Bazan
Information Services Manager
Sequoia Union High School District