College Community School District

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA / 4,000 STUDENTS

In 2001, College Community School District in Cedar Rapids, Iowa selected Infinite Campus as its new student information system (SIS). The district wanted to understand individual student achievement at both the district and classroom levels. For more than a decade, College Community has experienced improved educational decisions, changes in professional learning communities, and an increase in overall achievement scores.

CHALLENGES

College Community's previous SIS was decentralized, making it difficult to aggregate data for decision making. Since every building in the district had its own data, it was almost impossible for data to stay consistent and up-to-date.

"We were concerned about the reliability of the information we were receiving," said Craig Barnum, College Community Director of Information Services. "We weren't comparing apples to apples, so we spent a lot of time assembling and confirming that the data was correct."

SOLUTION

Infinite Campus brought a strong integrated data system to the district, with an architecture that touched on every level of the administrative focus. Its flexibility gave College Community a powerful tool for the direct implementation of data in the ways in which it approached educating its students.

"With Infinite Campus, we are certain the data is accurate, and provides our decision makers with the most current data available" said Barnum. "And after so many years of using Infinite Campus, it is the foundation to everything we do. So much is driven by some type of data and most of our data triangulates its way back into Infinite Campus."

About Campus

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

Beyond basic classroom data, there is also extensive comparative data available to teachers. Infinite Campus organizes even these robust data sources, and allows teachers to base their choices on the information these data sources provide. "There is data from NWEA, and diagnostics like basic reading inventory representation," Barnum explained. "Infinite Campus displays that information on the teacher's class roster which they use to inform individualized instruction."

According to Barnum, "Infinite Campus gave us a concise way for teachers to better understand their classroom and individual student needs. We can match test records to each student with a unique student ID number, allowing the teacher to evaluate the student progress."

To ensure that all teachers make use of the broad range of student data, College Community requires them to use Infinite Campus. "Every teacher in the district uses the grade book," said Barnum. "That is non-negotiable. We house all of our assessment data in Infinite Campus, so teachers have assessment and achievement data at their fingertips. "

Once the teacher had access to student information, the district realized it needed to radically change the way it viewed professional development.

"We needed our staff to be focused on their daily practices and their professional development to be driven by what was going on in the classroom," said Barnum. "We felt our staff should

be coaching each other, developing best practices and sharing effective learning plans.

College Community restructured their day to provide an hour before school for teachers to collaborate and undertake personal professional development activities.

These changes and the management of student achievement data provides College Community with a tool to measure how each teacher is performing in a classroom. It also helps the district work with the teacher to perform their best while ensuring students receive an excellent education.

"We have pried the doors off the classroom by encouraging this collaboration amongst our teachers and publishing the results on the Campus Portal for our patrons," said Barnum.

RESULTS

Barnum sees how Infinite Campus saves time and money in the process of collecting and reporting data. "In the state of Iowa we have to deliver just over 100 unique data elements for every child, and we have to report these three times a year. With Infinite Campus, I know we've saved enormous amounts of money just in terms of administrative overhead."

Beyond saving time and money, the investment in the students' education is also yielding rewards. College Community has had a steady increase in its Iowa Test of Basic Skills scores over the past 10 years. Between the 2002 to 2008 school years, there was a significant achievement above Iowa's standard proficiency set for NCLB.

"We certainly couldn't have implemented a new professional development model and achieved these higher test scores without Infinite Campus."

Craig Barnum
Director of Information Services
College Community School District