South Texas Independent School District

MERCEDES, TEXAS / 3,400 STUDENTS

South Texas Independent School District (STISD) serves 3,400 students in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas. STISD chose Infinite Campus in 2010 as its student information system (SIS) and has experienced several improvements. Teacher-parent communication has increased from the Grade Book, Messenger and Portal integration. The administration is pleased with the power of the scheduler, and the IT staff has enjoyed the flexibility of Cloud Hosting. In addition, Infinite Campus has improved PEIMS reporting and provided efficiencies across the district.

CHALLENGE

STISD's legacy SIS was not up to the challenges within the district. "We have courses that meet in irregular patterns and in the legacy SIS everything had to be very linear and tabular," said David Houston, Programming Specialist in the district. "It seemed you could configure the app to work the way we needed it to, but in practice it didn't really work."

"The old system couldn't give us the flexibility to do scheduling the way we needed to," recalled Alex Medrano, Instructional Technology Specialist. When STISD sought help from the vendor, none was forthcoming. "Their support was unwilling to help and a lot of our users were not happy with the system," added Medrano.

In addition, their former system was not census driven, therefore parents had to have separate user accounts in order to view each of their children. Usability was also a weak area in which the district hoped to see improvements. After vetting several vendors, STISD knew that Infinite Campus could provide the solutions they sought.

About Campus

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

SOLUTION

"Coming in, Infinite Campus needed to be good for all users," said Medrano. He reports that both teacher and administrators have been pleased with Infinite Campus, "Teachers like the ability to post an assignment and make it available for multiple courses. On the other side, the administration finds the scheduler both simple to use and very powerful. It handles our rotation and the graphic interface is intuitive."

David Houston found the Cloud Hosting Option provides flexibility. "We can schedule backups and replication into a sandbox. We're able to access the database remotely over ODBC and to use SQL Reporting Services to develop and deploy reports," explained Houston. "I like that we can help ourselves by updating and copying what we need. And when we can't, we have Campus Support, which has been very helpful."

Teachers have also seen benefits with their new SIS. "Infinite Campus makes my work easier. With the color coding I can follow my students' information across the page," observed Sandra Jimenez, Health Science Technology Instructor. "I also like how Infinite Campus is Web-based, letting me use it at home."

The efficiency and usability of Infinite Campus have also been appreciated by counselors. "Infinite Campus has cut my time in half with entering, retrieving and correcting information, especially with student transcripts,"

said Fatima Garza, STISD Counselor. "I can add a summer grade or a credit much faster. I can also immediately send student transcripts by uploading them to a college, so it helps me help students. What used to take me weeks to do I now do in days."

RESULTS

Across the board, stakeholders have been impressed with Infinite Campus. "Anything I need is at my fingertips and it is easy to make changes to student demographic, transcript, behavior and graduate information. I can also transfer students immediately," said Michael Aranda, STISD Principal.

"Infinite Campus has positively impacted our district across the board," said Jeff Hembree, STISD Deputy Superintendent. "From our scheduling, tracking and reporting to communication with students and parents, Infinite Campus enabled us to more efficiently and effectively do our work. With tools like this in our arsenal, we are better equipped to provide our students with the most positive and supportive learning environment possible."

High quality, user-friendly PEIMS reporting is an essential attribute of a first-class SIS for Texas districts. Irene M' arquez, STISD PEIMS Specialist said, "Infinite Campus has made my job easier. I can pull data more quickly, allowing me to create student and state reports more efficiently."

Houston heard what was promised during the sales process and witnessed the realities of using Campus, from implementation through the present day. "Infinite Campus has been consistent with the information and details we received in the selection process," said Houston. "The product does everything we were told it could do."

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Deputy Superintendent
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