



## CUSTOMER CONNECTIONS

### PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOL DISTRICT IMPROVES TEACHER PRODUCTIVITY, STUDENT ASSESSMENTS AND TRACKING, WITH PerformancePLUS

#### SCHOOL DISTRICT PROFILE

- Tulpehocken Area School District is located in Berks County, Pennsylvania
- Approximately 1,550 students in three schools
- Two-person IT department

#### CHALLENGES

- Pennsylvania school district wanted to enhance intervention programs, enhance teachers' ability to improve curriculum and meet state standards

#### OBJECTIVES

- Increase the amount of data for under-performing students
- Enhance intervention programs and follow-up strategies
- Enable teachers to leverage expertise of other Pennsylvania districts' educators
- Adhere to the state's Standards Aligned System

#### PerformancePLUS APPLICATIONS

- PerformanceTRACKER
- AssessmentBUILDER
- CurriculumCONNECTOR

#### BENEFITS

- Teachers and administrators can analyze centralized data
- Schools can implement and monitor interventions faster and earlier in a child's education
- Educators leverage state-wide information to develop tests
- Expects third-grade assessment tests to improve
- Teachers develop goals and track progress
- **PerformancePLUS** complements Pennsylvania's standardized tests

"It was very reassuring to see [that] the way curriculum is developed in CurriculumCONNECTOR aligns very nicely with Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned System. They're on the same page as the people who are in the state's Department of Education. We are not reinventing the wheel."

BARBARA DAVIS

Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Tulpehocken Area School District



Tulpehocken Area School District, which once housed islands of unconnected student and curriculum information, is creating a tightly integrated, centralized repository of easily searchable, reportable data that teachers and administrators use to improve students' achievements and the quality of their studies.

The transformation began when district administrators from the Pennsylvania school district were invited to attend a presentation of **PerformancePLUS** and its family of solutions: PerformanceTRACKER, AssessmentBUILDER and CurriculumCONNECTOR. Soon after, Tulpehocken began implementing PerformanceTRACKER, an assessment management tool that teachers and administrators can use to access student information, as well as national, state and local assessment data.

"We liked that all our data would be in one location," said Davis. "We liked the software's ability to dig deep into the data, drilling down to get to the heart of what a student needs. It allows us to take a student who's struggling, look at every piece of data we have on that student and create the most appropriate intervention plan to help them succeed."

Although each of the district's three school principals initially shared data with teachers, soon the educators themselves began accessing and using PerformanceTRACKER to monitor their students' performances. "Now the teachers take the lead with that. They are in [Performance]TRACKER on a daily basis," she said. "In meetings, we now can analyze the data



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rather than spend time reviewing it. Our meetings are more meaningful to the team. They can start developing intervention plans immediately."

PerformanceTRACKER enabled Tulpehocken to identify more potentially struggling students in the earliest grades, said Davis. As students move in and out of interventions, the district can determine which approaches were most successful and mirror them with other students when possible.

Delighted with teachers' acceptance of PerformanceTRACKER, Tulpehocken quickly rolled out AssessmentBUILDER, a tool that allows staff to create, score and analyze local benchmark assessment tests. Teachers quickly bought into the software, especially their new ability to create tests with their own content or using the standards-based questions within the application, said Davis. Third-graders are the first to be tested state-wide and earlier grades' teachers are using the software to create standards-based tests that both assess performance and make youngsters comfortable with the state's standardized test, she noted.

Although only in its first year at Tulpehocken, the district expects next year's third-grade standardized test performances to improve, said Davis.

"The great thing is we're able to set a goal and track progress toward that goal. When we achieve that goal it really lets us know we are on the right track," she said. "The teachers are involved in developing the goals and tracking that progress. When they see that achievement of the goal, it gives the teacher that motivation and buy-in."

Most recently, Tulpehocken began using CurriculumCONNECTOR.

"I would say with [Performance]TRACKER, we're probably using 80 to 90 percent, so that's where we're ahead. We use AssessmentBUILDER for our 4Sight testing — our benchmark test that we use in grades 3-11, and our secure skills tests, and, some teachers use it for their class assessment tests. So that's about 25 percent," Davis said. "Right now, I think I only have one course in CurriculumCONNECTOR. But we plan to add more quickly."

Having heard about their latest tool, teachers are eager to leverage the curriculum management solution's many built-in advantages.

"The nice thing about CurriculumCONNECTOR is it gets the curriculum out of the file cabinets and into the teachers' hands. It allows the teachers to have the curriculum at their fingertips and let them find the resources," said Davis. "They are very happy they will be able to borrow resources from other districts across the state. And teachers like the fact that standards and anchors are there for them; they don't have to rewrite them."

Even as state standards continue to evolve, driven by No Child Left Behind and the more recently unveiled Race to the Top, PerformancePLUS continues to align with Pennsylvania's strategies. This allows Tulpehocken teachers and administrators to focus on the children, secure in the knowledge that technology and education goals are in sync.

"It was very reassuring to see [that] the way curriculum is developed in CurriculumCONNECTOR aligns very nicely with Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned System. They're on the same page as the people who are in the state's Department of Education," said Davis. "We are not reinventing the wheel."