Putnam Public Schools, Connecticut

District Unifies Its Data Solution with Tyler

Key Challenges
Putnam Public Schools’ student information system and processes were manual and outdated. In 2010, the district had been a client of their student information system provider for 20 years, but felt the strain as their system aged without offering the new features available from others in the marketplace. Producing student transcripts was a particularly manual, inefficient, and, most concerning, inconsistent process in their previous system. By law, student transcripts must be preserved by the district for 50 years. “It is a document that must be perfect and is often requested 10, 20, or even 30 or more years after a student has left the district. We needed to find a way to correct this inconsistency,” said Cecile Lee, the district’s guidance secretary. Administrators sought a modern student information system that was up to the task of producing reliable student transcripts, as well as automating and customizing data maintenance and reporting.

The district also sought a system that would more seamlessly integrate with their existing software and hardware solutions. Their goal was easy access to and interfacing of student, staff, financial, and transportation records without patching together multiple systems. Says Lee, “With the myriad state reporting requirements in Connecticut, it is imperative that...
we have systems that communicate and integrate with one another and push out accurate data.”

**Action Taken**

The district sent out a request for proposal to several top student information system vendors, including Tyler SIS™. Putnam Public Schools was already happily using Tyler’s Versatrans® solution for student transportation management and Tyler’s Infinite Visions® solution for financial, payroll, and human resource management, as well as the Infinite Visions employee portal. “Because of this success with Tyler,” Lee said, “we felt the opportunity to try their student management solution would also be a positive experience. After seeing a demo, we became excited about the possibilities of upgrading our student management system to Tyler SIS.”

After selecting Tyler SIS as its student information system, several departments in the district worked side-by-side with Tyler’s implementation team to complete data templates to capture important information about their schools, staff, student demographics, student contacts, courses, grading, attendance, and more. This data was vetted in a test site before being uploaded into the live database to ensure accuracy from the onset. “In the end, we feel the implementation went well, in part because of the planning that took place. Both Tyler and the district stayed on schedule and continually worked as a team from beginning to end,” said Lee.

**Results**

Putnam Public Schools has seen a great benefit from the ability to integrate all of its Tyler student information and district data solutions. “The major outcome of the Tyler solution was saving time and improving efficiency of operation,” Lee notes. Because data can be accessed in real time between Tyler SIS, Infinite Visions, and Versatrans, less information needs to be entered manually, which in turn decreases erroneous or duplicative data entries. For example, administrators who previously needed access to basic student transportation data but had not been fully trained on how to use Versatrans are now able to access the data they need via student data captured and imported to Tyler SIS.

District staff have experienced the advantage of a cohesive, comprehensive system. Imported student transportation records can be viewed alongside gradebooks and attendance records to help teachers and guidance staff flag potential student issues earlier. District administrators have access to a streamlined, standardized, and vastly improved transcript maintenance and request process with Tyler SIS.

Lee specified that one of the district’s auxiliary goals was to improve communication with parents. The Tyler SIS portal has helped the district achieve stronger, more meaningful contact between teachers, administrators, students, and parents. “Parents can now view their children’s grades and information online and feel more empowered and informed,” she says. Giving parents and guardians direct access to their child’s data and a communication portal to their teachers strengthens the network surrounding each child, and ensures the district gives each child the best tools to succeed.

“In their own words:

“There is a huge benefit to being able to integrate between products, particularly if they are from the same vendor. It helps to alleviate data entry errors and provides consistency of data from one program to another. Our state reporting has been much easier with the Tyler SIS solution.” — Cecile Lee, Guidance Secretary, Putnam Public Schools

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