



## Maricopa County Superintendent of Schools Office Phoenix (Maricopa County) Arizona

**Name:** Maricopa County  
Superintendent of Schools Office

**Size:** 72,000 students;  
28 districts

**Location:** Phoenix, Maricopa  
County, Arizona

### Objectives

- Provide a comprehensive accounting package.
- Meet complete statutory requirements.
- Realize significant cost-savings.

### Solution Suite

Infinite Visions K-12 Financial and Personnel Management software implemented at 28 school districts hosted by Maricopa County servers.

### Benefits

Time and money saved while meeting County reporting responsibilities more efficiently than ever.

### Background

The Maricopa County Superintendent of Schools Office (MCSSO) provides and maintains financial accounting and payroll systems for school districts in Maricopa County. The office's responsibilities include serving as the fiscal agent for school districts, with total annual expenditures of more than \$300 million. The office also provides educational programs and support services for students; maintains payroll services for school district employees; conducts school district elections; oversees home instruction; and provides technology support for member school districts.

Prior to the implementation of Infinite Visions, Maricopa County hosted CIMS<sup>®</sup> Finance software for 27 of the 28 school districts, providing financial management, payroll and fixed assets tracking.

### Challenge

When Maricopa County initiated a search for a new system that could handle financial and personnel management tasks and reporting for 28 school districts, they needed it to accomplish three objectives:

- Increase efficiency with online tools for consolidated financial and personnel management reporting by the County and the 28 districts.
- Conduct a smooth transition without interruption of workflow, while replacing multiple legacy systems including CIMS<sup>®</sup> Finance software.
- Save time and money.

### Solution

After a thorough RFP process, the County was successful in all three areas with the selection of Infinite Visions, now a Tyler School Solution. Impressed with the comprehensive functionality, efficient implementation model and value, the Infinite Visions suite replaced their CIMS<sup>®</sup> legacy system while adding applications for about the same cost.

"They partnered with us to manage the project," said Jean Bandes, director of technology for MCSSO. The project kicked off in March 2004 with the import of data from the County's legacy system. "Tyler's Infinite Visions implementation team completed the CIMS<sup>®</sup> data import for the first six districts. At that time, the County suggested a few import modifications and they were very receptive. We then completed the remaining conversions."

**"Now processes  
are much easier  
and efficient."**

— *Jean Bandes,  
Director of  
Technology, MCSSO*

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Tyler's Infinite Visions implementation team then implemented the system and trained the users at six districts, with County personnel shadowing their work. "The remaining 22 districts were trained and implemented by the County under their oversight," said Bandes.

The County has over 460 user accounts, with up to 200 users accessing the system at any given time. In addition, Tyler's Infinite Visions implementation team provided a customized interface for the County, enabling it to consolidate reporting for the districts. Mandated tasks include ACH file transfer, reconciliation to the County Treasurer, check printing, retirement reporting, and certification verification.

"With their assistance," Bandes said, "the County was able to continue providing these services without interruption even though they were consolidating data from multiple accounting packages. This freed up district personnel so they could focus on their district responsibilities."

In July 2005 the goal was reached as planned: just 15 months from data import to full, much improved functionality at all 28 districts. This was due partly to the efficiency of the "train-the-trainer" method employed by Tyler's Infinite Visions implementation team. The model is designed to tailor each implementation to its clients' needs and help them transition more quickly and easily.

## Client Benefits

Maricopa County's new system came in on time and below budget. Tyler's Infinite Visions implementation services team has been very responsive to Maricopa County's needs. "Anytime we have asked for information they were always there to provide it. The support has been excellent," explains Bandes.

After converting to Infinite Visions, the County gained the ability to manage accounts receivable and personnel management, substantially reducing paperwork and improving accountability.

Along with the client-defined expectations of the implementation – the ability to meet all requirements, uninterrupted service, and the positive return on investment – the most noticeable thing about Infinite Visions is the time saved.

At the large districts, payroll posting went from two hours to less than one. Jobs can be processed immediately, a big improvement from a system that would only process one job at a time, queuing them for slow completion.

According to Bandes, "the very best time saver is the ability to export any data to Microsoft Excel®. The end users really like that." Another important benefit is "immediate knowledge," as Bandes called it. That is, the ability to see the results of changes and additions made to information in the system in real-time. With the previous system, reports had to be printed to view the changes, which was time consuming and wasteful. With Infinite Visions and its SmartGrid technology, the view of data is always immediate and can be easily personalized to fit every user's needs.

"Our districts are very happy with the system," according to Bandes. In addition to features such as the personnel management application, the system is very easy to navigate using standard knowledge of basic Windows® tools. "Our users have reported that many of their processes are much easier and more efficient on the Infinite Visions system."

## Conclusion

Infinite Visions and Maricopa County – all 28 districts – were a perfect fit. "The Infinite Visions system works very well for our environment," Bandes concludes. "We are able to support the product efficiently, utilize our resources to provide ongoing training on all applications of the product, and keep the users informed of enhancements to the software."

## Technology Snapshot

- » The County hosts the databases of all 28 districts via Microsoft SQL® server running Microsoft Windows® 2003.
- » Six load-balanced Citrix® servers are used by all districts.
- » "We have high speed DS3 lines coming into our data center, and most districts have high-speed Internet on their end," Bandes said. "Response time is good."