

Curriculum & Instructional Management

Teachers gained valuable time for teaching by using desktop-delivered student information and state-aligned curriculum.

Mesquite Independent School District

Students	36,000
Schools	45
Location	Dallas County, TX

Challenges:

- Increasingly mobile, diverse, and growing student population
- Deploying a district-wide curriculum with limited resources
- Getting teachers to use curriculum resources
- Obtaining easy access to student information

Solution:

- SchoolNet Align, which facilitates easy access to standards-based curriculum and student information.

Results:

- Successful deployment of a district-wide standards-based curriculum
- Student performance records are readily available and accessible across the district
- Flexible, easy to use, and automated system resulted in high adoption rates among teachers

PROFILE: Mesquite Independent School District (MISD)

MISD serves 36,000 students in the Dallas, TX area on 45 campuses, including 31 elementary schools, 8 middle schools and 5 main high schools, several of which are among the largest in Texas. Additionally, MISD offers The Mesquite Academy, which offers accelerated instruction for nontraditional students. MISD is a progressive school district, recently recognized with a 2005 “What Parents Want Award.” MISD is always looking for ways to improve and continue to meet rising expectations and is open to change and innovation.

CHALLENGES

With 15,000 hours of standards to teach, but only 9,000 hours of classroom time, MISD wanted to find a way to give their teachers more time to do what they needed to do – teach. In order to free up teachers’ time, MISD took a hard look at teachers’ non-instructional duties to identify ways to save teachers time. They found that a lack of easy access to student information and low adoption of a district provided curriculum were key problems.

A highly mobile student population meant that teachers spent too much time tracking down information about students who transferred into their classes. To find historical student data or to see how students performed on a benchmark assessment, teachers sifted through paper files in a cumbersome process that consumed valuable teaching time. Easy access to student information would be a great time saver for teachers, and ensure that mobile students would be incorporated into their new classrooms as quickly as possible.

In the past, curriculum had been created by each teacher individually, based on district provided scope and sequence. Now, given the reality of rigorous state standards, MISD created one district-wide, standards-aligned curriculum. Distributed as stand-alone materials, the curriculum had low adoption rates. MISD wanted a way to ensure that the curriculum was used by all teachers, freeing-up teachers’ time for teaching.

To successfully serve their diverse, growing, and constantly changing population, MISD’s leadership realized they needed a district-wide system to deliver both the state-aligned curriculum and student information to teachers. The system would need to be available on-line 24/7, and work district-wide across all schools and core subject areas. Above all, it would have to add enough immediate value that teachers would incorporate it into their daily teaching right away.



SOLUTION: Curriculum and Student Information, powered by SchoolNet

After an extensive search, MISD chose SchoolNet's Align curriculum and instructional management system. The previously created state-standards aligned curriculum was brought into SchoolNet Align, as were student demographic and academic information, and local and state assessment results.

Once the curriculum was housed in SchoolNet Align, MISD performed an audit of their curriculum. They determined that while teachers were implementing the basic scope and sequence of state objectives, they needed more depth in the curriculum. In response to this finding, subject area coordinators formed grade level curriculum teams to improve the curriculum. Working within SchoolNet Align, the process included both editing content already in SchoolNet Align, and purchasing curricula from another Texas public school district which they revised and refined to suit their needs. They were able to both write, then deliver district-wide, their more robust curriculum using SchoolNet Align

Bottom line: MISD was able to rewrite its own curriculum using pre-existing material and third-party curricula, with SchoolNet Align providing the content-neutral infrastructure that pulled it all together.

SchoolNet Align helped MISD's teachers make their curriculum management easier and more sustainable over time, but most importantly, allowed them to put additional time back into the teaching day.

SOLUTION BENEFITS

- ✓ Online curriculum content allows teachers to have the most updated version in one place and available 24/7 at school or at home.
- ✓ SchoolNet Align places integrated academic and assessment information for 36,000 students and thousands of curriculum documents into one portal. This process allows teachers to use performance data at the class and student levels to tailor instructional practices.
- ✓ Teachers spend more time discussing and improving instruction, and less time on searching for curriculum, materials, resources, and student data.
- ✓ Curriculum and instructional staffs now have a user-friendly tool for the design, creation and management of a diverse array of curricular materials. Using this tool has allowed the MISD staff to bring order to a wide range of materials.
- ✓ SchoolNet Align provides curriculum and instructional materials consistently in each classroom throughout the district, thus reducing the negative curricular impact associated with high student mobility

"Because of its ease of use and reliability, SchoolNet's Align has helped Mesquite Schools deliver a consistent curriculum to the district's 2,300 teachers. Previous curriculum delivery products we tried failed miserably, but the adoption of SchoolNet has resulted in improved teacher usage of the district's curriculum.

James Rusk, Manager of CSI, MISD

"[Using SchoolNet] teachers can find information about students that in the past we had to go down to the big file room and dig out files - one student at a time. Now, with just a few clicks of a mouse, we can get just about anything we need on their past performance"

*Jimmy Tustin, Teacher
John Horn High School
MISD*

To learn more about SchoolNet Align, go to www.schoolnet.com/align.

To contact SchoolNet, e-mail information@schoolnet.com, or phone 646-496-9000

