Opening

K12 Education School Districts are facing many problems today including budgetary constraints, limited IT resources due to constant demand, data accuracy between desperate networked applications and the need to consolidate their data in order to automate the submittal of validated data across systems for maximum funding.

Challenge

Richard Nadeau, Executive Director of Technology for Horry County South Carolina faced similar issues with a district consisting of 52 locations and over 37,000 students in a highly progressive area where enrollment in growing at approximately 2,000 students per year. Nadeau, knowing that he and his staff must integrate data sources and improve accuracy across systems such as the SIS, Food Services, Transportation, etc. made an attempt to resolve these issues by communicating with independent application vendors and found no specific vendor solution to assist.

Solution

Nadeau discovered the Schools Interoperability Framework Association and had carefully monitored the progress of SIF for a number of years. As SIF matured, the technology staff determined that SIF provided the framework for the solution Horry County Schools needed to provide horizontal application interoperability within each school.

During the time Horry County was monitoring SIF, Nadeau was also working with the South Carolina Department of Education to establish a unique student numbering system. Participating in this project, Nadeau was familiar with the work CPSI (SIF and Data Integration Experts) was doing with the State. Horry County encouraged the state DOE to leverage their SIF Zone deployments to flow student information in SIF standard format from the district level up to the state level – achieving vertical as well as horizontal interoperability. As the state adopted this strategy, Horry County Schools became an integral part of the initiative; serving as a pilot in data population from Pearson SASI to the state using the CPSI-Connect Vertical Reporting Agent and establishing its on-going relationship with CPSI.

Working with CPSI, Ltd. to provide application integration, in 2004 Horry County Schools was the first to successfully implement the unique numbering system; leveraging the SIF Infrastructure. Once the statewide Student Unique Numbering System (SUNS) was in place, Horry County Schools deployed Follett Destiny to provide media and textbook management services for students.

To support their 52 campuses, two CPSI SIF-Connect Servers (Zone Integration Servers) were installed. Each campus was assigned its own zone and an individual instance of Pearson SASI was integrated into it. SharpSchools' hosted student email services, including content management and web hosting, which were then brought into the SIF Zone using the CPSI - Connect Universal Agent, as was the Kuder Career

Planning System for individualized graduation plans. Finally, a SIF Agent/Application pairing from School-Link Technologies, WinSNAP, for food services was added.

Benefits

Utilizing SIF and the expertise of CPSI, Horry County has been able to re-direct its Technical Resources in the area of data analysis, collection and the reporting Valid Data. Data inaccuracy and inconsistencies across desperate systems has also been alleviated by the seamless and immediate integration SIF provides .

Horry County intends to leverage their current successes by replacing aging/legacy applications with SIF Certified Applications and bringing their CPSI centralized Data Warehouse online using the CPSI-Connect Universal Agent Suite to populate it.