



## Challenge

“Leading the State in Raising Student Performance” is the core mission of Marion County Public Schools (MCPS), an Ocala, Florida-based district. MCPS is the fifth-largest geographic school district in Florida, with 42,000+ students and 6,000+ employees. With a student-centric environment and a tech-savvy administration, MCPS was eager to build upon its strong foundation with an educational technology solution that would impact student learning on a new level.

In 2003, MCPS launched a major curriculum initiative which drove the district’s need for a data analysis tool that would report student information at the district, school, classroom and student levels. Previous technology solutions – including a legacy system – were unable to offer the interoperability necessary to support this task for such a large district. As such, MCPS sought a flexible and customizable student information system (SIS), which would provide teachers with quick and easy access to data and assessment reports.

MCPS also wanted to improve upon its ability to meet the individual needs of students and achieve higher standards of student accountability. But above all, MCPS wanted to gain better insight to district-wide performance for its 50+ schools within the district. With the ability to analyze data from multiple perspectives, MCPS believed it could make better decisions regarding curriculum and performance, and identify key trends across the district regarding teachers, schools, grades levels and standards achievement.

Finally, the new solution had to include the ability to accurately collect and report state-required data elements to maximize funding for students within the district.

## Solution

MCPS needed to move from a legacy “green screen” system to a modern, web-based and scalable system, with full Florida State Reporting functionality. In 2006, the district acquired the Chancery SMS solution, the leading web-based student information system designed to meet the unique needs of large urban K-12 districts.



**“BY GIVING OUR EDUCATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS ACCESS TO ACCURATE, REAL-TIME STUDENT DATA, SMS HAS ENABLED US TO BETTER ASSIST IN STUDENT LEARNING NEEDS ON A DAILY BASIS”**

*Cynthia Saunders, Principal of Lake Weir High School in Ocala, Florida*

During the implementation process, MCPS required significant support in the data migration process for each school. As early adopters of technology and with a strong technology team in place, MCPS decided to convert all of its data at once (approximately 15 years of historical data) and forgo the typical pilot process for the new SIS. As a result, Pearson provided on-site technical, training and project management resources to support the district throughout the conversion and migration to Chancery SMS. During the peak of implementation, Pearson deployed a 12-member support team at MCPS. Pearson and MCPS collaborated to form a cohesive deployment team, responsible for the implementation and overall project execution. According to Scott Hansen, Director of Technology and Information Systems for MCPS, “We took an extremely aggressive approach with the implementation of Chancery SMS and our success is directly attributed to the teamwork displayed from curriculum, school based personnel and technology staff members who worked countless hours to ensure our success.”

Through the deployment process, Pearson and MCPS worked together to ensure that State Reported data elements were in place for all students and that all State reports were submitted. Thus, the new Chancery SMS solution allowed MCPS to fully manage its student data as well as report all required data to the State.

MCPS also worked with Pearson to integrate Pearson Inform, a performance reporting system that gives principals access to intuitive reports on student

achievement and make it easier for schools to target assistance, measure progress, and to make informed decisions.

With an interoperable, web-based system in place, Pearson and MCPS began to configure the Chancery SMS solution for deployment in the 2007-2008 school year.

“We have a strong partnership with Pearson, and SMS has proven to be the best choice for our teachers, administrators, and students and now we will direct our focus and efforts towards implementing a parent portal,” said Scott Hansen. “By using a web-based solution, we now have the tools and capabilities in place to provide teachers and administrators with real time data to make critical data driven decisions in their schools to achieve higher standards of student accountability and better empower student performance in our district.”

## Benefit

Today, MCPS teachers can look up student data including test scores and attendance information right in the classroom. New data input features offer administrators more flexibility and customizability streamlining the reporting and scheduling process, which were once time consuming and complex. Through the integration of Chancery SMS and Pearson Inform, Pearson’s one-click access to clear, intuitive reports on student and school performance, MCPS can measure student achievement with better data analysis and improved decision support.

Consistent training of all MCPS teachers, administrators and end-users played a key role in the successful implementation of the SMS solution. From the onset, MCPS recognized that such an upgrade would require sufficient up-front and subsequent ongoing staff training, particularly since the district had a very short turnaround in launching the new system.

According to West Port High School, the second largest high school in MCPS, the SMS solution has improved the quality of student data insight immensely and enabled the school to run more efficiently. MCPS’ ability to query data at the school level work station without having to request it from the district enables educators to quickly assess student placement and progress. In all, educators across MCPS can now analyze patterns and trends across different schools that can impact and ultimately enhance student performance.

From aggregated reports that monitor individual school progress in specific areas to attendance rules/alerts, which allow for closer student monitoring, MCPS can now analyze patterns and trends across different schools that can impact student performance on a daily basis.

“By giving our educators and administrators access to accurate, real-time student data, SMS has enabled us to better assist in student learning needs on a daily basis,” said Cynthia Saunders, Principal of Lake Weir High School in Ocala, Florida. “At Lake Weir, the most important feature of the SIS is centralization. With key information like the grade book program, data collection and our performance reporting system all in one place, we are able to save time and effort that puts the focus back on classroom learning.”

Overall, MCPS is able to target more students in need, measure progress, and make more informed decisions as a result of the new solution. The enhanced business processes and technology improvements at MCPS equip teachers and administrators with timely, accurate information needed to make valuable choices that impact student performance and academic success.

## About Pearson

Pearson, the global leader in education and education technology, reaches and engages today’s digital natives with effective and personalized learning, as well as dedicated professional development for their teachers. This commitment is demonstrated in the company’s investment in innovative print and digital education materials for pre-K through college, student information systems and learning management systems, teacher professional development, career certification programs, and testing and assessment products that set the standard for the industry. The company’s respected brands include Scott Foresman, Prentice Hall, Addison Wesley, Benjamin Cummings, PEMSolutions, Stanford 10, SuccessNet, MyLabs, PowerSchool, SuccessMaker and many others. Pearson’s comprehensive offerings help inform targeted instruction and intervention so that success is within reach of every student at every level of education. Pearson’s commitment to education for all is supported by the global philanthropic initiatives of the Pearson Foundation. Pearson’s other primary businesses include the Financial Times Group and the Penguin Group.