SKYWARD®

Districts appreciate lesser burden with Skyward's state reporting system
CASE STUDY

"I WOULD HIGHLY RECOMMEND SKYWARD FOR ANY DISTRICT FOCUSED ON DRIVING EFFICIENT AND ACCURATE STATE REPORTING."

CUSTOMER PROFILES

DISTRICT: Cornwall-Lebanon SD
STATE: Pennsylvania
ENROLLMENT: 4,700
SCHOOLS: 6
IMPLEMENTED: 2008

DISTRICT: Galesburg SD
STATE: Illinois
ENROLLMENT: 4,700
SCHOOLS: 11
IMPLEMENTED: 2008

SOLUTION
Skyward's State Reporting

BENEFIT
Skyward's inclusive state and federal reports assure mandated submissions are error-free and on time

THE CHALLENGE

State reporting obligations can be time consuming and costly for school districts. The process takes skilled employees away from educational tasks and forces them into tedious data-mining and submission practices. They spend hours sorting through, searching for, and compiling information to prepare the reports. When requirements change, districts experience the added stress of quickly learning about and adapting to the new policies with little turnaround time before state-imposed deadlines kick in.

THE SOLUTION

Skyward, a leading provider of K-12 school administrative software, offers unmatched state reporting assistance to schools. Skyward's powerful tools help districts complete reporting in a shorter timeframe, eliminate redundancies, improve accuracy, and adapt to new requirements.

With Skyward, districts have access to:
- A dedicated state reporting ream that maintains contact with Departments of Education
- Priority development and quick deployment, leaving districts with more processing time
- On-time reporting and greater accuracy to help districts acquire all the funds they deserve
- All required business and student-related state and federal reports
- A powerful data analysis option, including graphs with drill-down capabilites
- Calculation, field, and reporting options built in for extensive analysis without needing to learn a complex report writer
- Fully customizable data mining reports that can be shared or exported to Excel, Word, or OpenOffice
- Auto email reports for electronic delivery as needed

"State reporting is completely refined and intuitive with Skyward; it is a totally automated process that has been streamlined down to just a few simple steps."

Jason Murray, Technology Coordinator
Cornwall-Lebanon School District, Pennsylvania

An increasing number of districts are discovering the benefits of working with Skyward to complete state reporting obligations. Cornwall-Lebanon School District in Pennsylvania and Galesburg School District in Illinois are just two examples of the many customers who use Skyward services to satisfy these rigorous and ever-changing demands.

THE RESULTS

Cornwall-Lebanon School District, PA

Streamlined reporting process—from weeks to hours

The Cornwall-Lebanon School District, which serves 4,700 students, is "committed to excellence and continuous improvement." It comes as no surprise, then, that the district sought to improve on the nearly 100 percent manual, inefficient data manipulation method it had been using to meet the state reporting requirements.

In 2008, Cornwall-Lebanon decided to make a change by implementing the Skyward Student Management Suite (SMS) and the School Business Suite (SBS) to manage every aspect of its administrative operations, including state reporting. The results were dramatic.

Organization and efficiency: District administrators who partner with Skyward can quickly find the information they need, without having to sort through pages of data, assuring that all of their mandated submissions are error-free and on time.

Prior to using Skyward, the person in charge of reporting at the district had to pull information out of the system and transfer the data into Excel spreadsheets using formulas, pivot tables, and other similar tools to clean the data. The rigorous process required multiple tweaks whenever reporting requirements were updated. But that all changed when the district moved to Skyward.

"State reporting is completely refined and intuitive with Skyward," said Jason Murray, technology coordinator for Cornwall-Lebanon School District. **"It used to take me about two full weeks working 10-12 hours a day to clean the data and get it ready for reporting. With Skyward the entire process has been reduced down to just a couple of hours."**

Accuracy: Skyward has a number of controls in place in order to ensure accuracy in reporting. For example, Skyward includes a name table that eliminates the possiblity for a student to be entered into the system under different names, such as William, Will, and Bill.

Skyward has reduced the district's potential for error in state reports. "Now when we hire a new teacher, for example, Human Resources enters the person's information into the system and the information is automatically populated throughout our SMS and SBS systems," said Murray. "If the data is clean going into the system, we can be confident in the accuracy of our reports."

*Adaptation: Skyward understands that it is not only difficult for districts to meet the reporting requirements, but also to keep up with—and adapt to—ever-changing requirements. That's why Skyward attends all of the state's vendor webinars in order to make the necessary changes and updates well in advance of enforcement deadlines. Whenever a requirement is added or changed, Skyward emails its district customers a link to the update and a PDF explaining every aspect of the change. **This process ensures that our partner school districts will never again have to worry about being caught off-guard or being non-compliant.***

The district is enjoying the peace of mind that comes with putting change control processes into someone else's trusted hands. "With Skyward, the updating process is extremely easy and intuitive," Murray said. "We simply log in to Skyward's customer-access portal, download the link, and hit "Go" and it installs the update. We really don't have to do anything more."

THE BOTTOM LINE

"Even though [other districts] are using school management systems, when it comes to state reporting, many still face a very cumbersome and time-consuming process," Murray said. **"With Skyward, all we have to do is export the data to a single spreadsheet. It is so much easier and a time saver. I would highly recommend Skyward for any district focused on driving efficient and accurate state reporting. It is definitely one of the best systems I've seen."**

Galesburg School District, IL

Fifty miles east of the Mississippi River sits Galesburg, a city rich with history. Known to history buffs as the site of the fifth Lincoln-Douglas debate, Galesburg is also striving to be recognized as a leader in education. With nearly 4,800 students attending 11 different schools, the district has a lot to keep up with, even without the added stress of state reporting obligations.

"Skyward is leagues ahead of every other system out there that we are aware of when it comes to state reporting."

Mike Doney, Software Support Specialist
Galesburg School District, Illinois

In 2008, the district decided to move away from its 20-year old legacy system in order to manage operations with the Skyward Student Management Suite and the School Business Suite.

Timeliness: Skyward helps districts to submit reports on time and error-free

"With Skyward, enabling on-time submissions is far easier," explained Lisa Unger, the district's student information systems coordinator. **"The capability of what I can upload and download from the state is great. And all of the data mining reports that we have access to are also terrific."**

The Skyward approach: Many districts are attracted to Skyward's state integration option and consolidated reporting method

Galesburg School District was drawn to the Skyward approach. "Our previous system really didn't place a strong focus on state reporting, but for us it was a major priority. We wanted a system that was far more integrated so we could reduce inefficiencies, such as redundant data entry, and ensure cleaner data," said Mike Doney, the district's software support specialist. "Skyward offered integration with the state and could consolidate all of the reports we had to generate and submit."

THE BOTTOM LINE

When compared to other systems, Doney said the Skyward solution is unmatched. **"Skyward is leagues ahead of every other system out there that we are aware of when it comes to state reporting. They are on top of it, always knowing what new requirements will be imposed on the districts, and they work feverishly to make sure that that information is programmed into the software… I would recommend Skyward hands down."** Unger agreed, **"Skyward is by far the best system that I've ever worked with."**

Skyward is an industry leading K-12 school administrative software provider proudly made and supported in the U.S.A.

To learn more, visit www.skyward.com, or contact your local office.

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