

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

Oppenheim-Ephratah-St. Johnsville Central School District



When new Superintendent David Halloran walked into Oppenheim-Ephratah-St. Johnsville (OESJ) nearly three years ago, his School Board's first challenge was to build a technology infrastructure that would completely change the way their students learned and how their instructors taught. The goal was to implement a new and innovative educational environment that was technology-driven, collaborative, and where the students could engage in meaningful and authentic learning through research-based instructional practices. The objective was to prepare students to be self-motivated, life-long learners with a solid technology foundation that positioned them to meet the challenges of life in the 21st century.

"We needed a new technology-based learning environment that would transform the way our students learned and our teachers taught."

--David Halloran, District Superintendent

Current Situation

The Oppenheim-Ephratah-St. Johnsville Central School District (OESJ CSD) started the 2013-2014 school year as a newly formed school district, created by the merger of two school districts in the Mohawk Valley of New York with a focus on school and community activities. The district had a vision of a new learning paradigm that would empower their students to use

technology effectively. Achieving this vision with their current technical infrastructure, however, wasn't possible. The school's two campuses had a mix of disparate end-user devices- computers, laptops, iPads, smart boards- but no integrated environment to bring them all together. The problem was compounded by internet connectivity issues and sporadic wireless access, creating limited or no continuous connection from one classroom to the next. Sitting on the Superintendent's desk was an unfulfilled purchase requisition to buy MacBooks for all the students, but no plan for integrating them into the current environment or applying them to the learning process. It was clear that an upgrade to the infrastructure was required, but first, they had to determine where they stood and design an integrated structure to support the dramatic changes envisioned by the School Board.

The goal was a safe and orderly environment where technology is central to improving motivation and student learning and where learning is valued. The emphasis on the use of technology should accommodate each student's individual learning style and strengths, and embrace all students, including minority cultures, students from homes where English is not spoken, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students. Teachers should be trained to use new state-of-the-art technologies to prepare and deliver their lessons, to inform individualized instruction plans for each student, and to monitor progress on a daily basis.

The Problem

- Outdated network
- Mix of end-user devices
- No integrated environment
- No integrated technology plan or learning program

IT in education poses different challenges compared to IT in the business world. In New York State, schools traditionally depend on the Regional Information Centers (RICs) for IT consulting services. At that time, the district was presented a “standardized” philosophy towards technology, rather than customizing the infrastructure to support the districts mission and goals. Dave Halloran felt the new learning paradigm demanded a pioneering approach that would individualize their design, yet still allow them to use state funding and RICs where appropriate. IT Director, Bill Cooper, was brought on to provide business-world experience, determine their needs, and to deal directly with vendors. After a brief search, Bill brought in Computer Professionals International (CPI) as the district’s technology partner.

“We had all the carts but no horse to pull them”
--Bill Cooper, IT Director

Solution

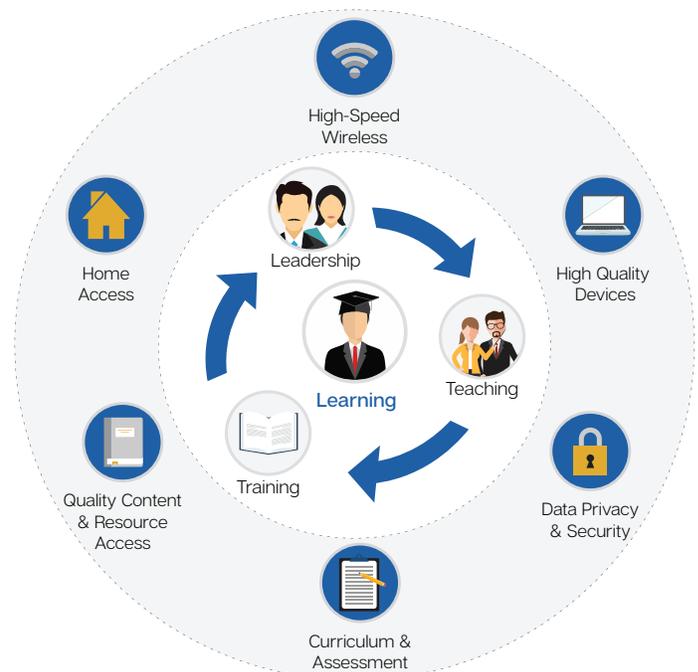
From the get-go, the CPI team took a collaborative approach to the project, working together with the district to assess their current situation and develop a design and a plan. To support the district’s initiatives, the current technology plan and the MacBook purchase were put on hold and a new network and technology improvement plan was devised. The integrated structure would use

“CPI was communicative and professional in every way – we knew we were working with a quality company whose team was confident and took pride in their work.”

--David Halloran, District Superintendent

state-of-the-art wireless connections to support a one-to-one program across all grades, with students and teachers each having their own devices. The team settled on Chromebooks for all, which fit the technology structure better, were cost-effective, and suited the needs of both students and teachers. CPI took the time to lay out a comprehensive blueprint for a district-wide network, including wiring, access points, and servers. With their broad experience in both school districts and business settings, CPI made recommendations for preferred manufacturers and vowed to help the district make informed purchasing decisions that were both cost-conscious and technically competent solutions.

Innovated Educational Environment



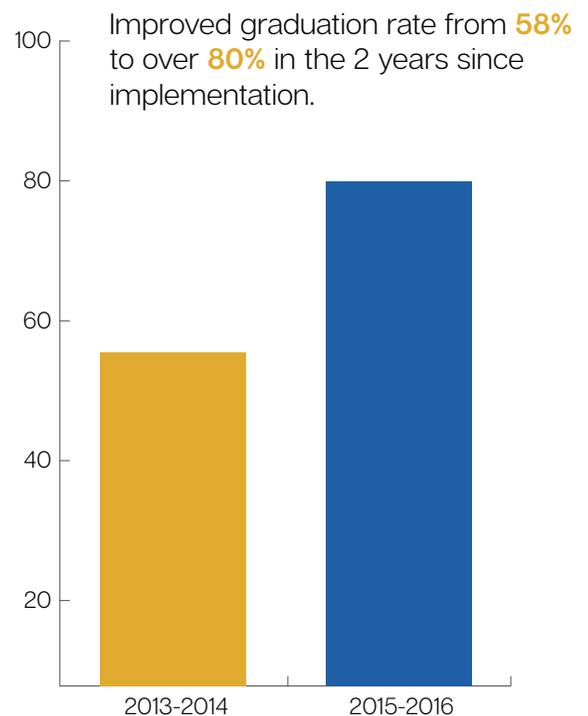
Adding to the project complexities was the aggressive timetable for completion. The work had to be done while school was out for the summer. The goal was to open the school year with the students, and their instructors, in a live environment. Not only did the infrastructure need to be in place and reliable, but teacher training needed to be ready to go. CPI was there every step of the way, setting up pilot programs with Chrome books for teachers, going back to school in September with the students, and standing at the ready to address any glitches or adjustments in the live environment.

The Solution

- Partner with technology expert
- Assess current environment
- Develop technology plan to support District’s new learning environment
- Implement district-wide network
- State-of-the-art wireless technology
- One-to-one program with Chromebooks for all students/ teachers

Outcome

The District’s vision of a new learning experience was grounded in the belief that schools can offer a more effective experience through well-planned and executed technology integration that entertains, educates and informs- all at the same time. OESJ CSD is experiencing this in real time with the successful implementation of its new technology platform. The students are more engaged than ever before and have become dynamic participants in learning rather than passive vessels. Through their Chromebooks, they have the collective knowledge of the world at their fingertips. They have become active learners,



innovators, and collaborators who can work in isolation but come together in project-based initiatives. As a student collective, they research together, educate each other, and are discovering that they can compete globally with the best students across the country.

As a result, the District has realized a 20% improvement in their graduation rate, growth in ELA and math scores, and a notable decline in discipline reports. Attendance has improved, as has Regents performance.

The impact of the new technology platform is being felt beyond the student population. The District’s teachers, through their Chromebooks are now able to monitor student performance daily. With the data available to them, they quickly pinpoint holes, lagging students, and commonly misunderstood concepts and themes. The flow of information has become a game changer for the District, informing teacher instruction, and allowing them to respond immediately to situations that, before, would have taken weeks or months to become apparent. Technology now acts as a guide for the delivery of instruction and to improve communication with all

The Outcome

- Improved graduation rate from 58% to over 80% in the 2 years since implementation
- Instruction informed by daily student performance monitoring
- Growth in ELA and math scores
- Improved attendance
- Decline in discipline reports
- Improved Regents performance

“CPI’s focus on customer satisfaction speaks volumes about the integrity of the people in their organization. They truly became a partner, participating in school-sponsored events on their own time and even offering a scholarship. With the true commitment they demonstrated, they were invaluable in translating our vision into reality.”

--David Halloran, District Superintendent

students regardless of location.

The OESJ CSD takes great pride in providing the best education available to their students. Partnering with CPI to implement their vision of a new learning environment has enabled the District to prepare their students to be self-motivated and engaged learners and ethical users of today’s technology.

About CPI

Computer Professionals International (CPI) provides a complete portfolio of Hardware, Software and Services that tailor readily to your unique business and IT needs – today and in the future. CPI works with a host of technology partners, including Cisco, Citrix, HP, Microsoft and NetApp, to provide strategic solutions for companies wanting to boost security, enhance internal infrastructure and manage the rapidly growing mobile device market. CPI brings together experience, best practices and tools that are applied to meet unique project requirements. The company has developed a solid reputation in the Banking, Higher Education, State and Local Government and Services sectors. Computer Professionals International was founded in 1981 and today is one of the premier technology companies in the Northeast.

Want to learn more? See how CPI can help you at www.comproinc.com