

Challenge:

Jeff Davis County Schools, a small rural public school district in south Georgia, is entrenched with the core belief that personalized learning is of paramount importance and that to achieve this we must embrace technology. Because our district values the use of instructional technology, we are experiencing a paradigm shift as our staff (K-12) is rapidly evolving to embrace a digital ecosystem.

Solution:

As our district evolves to embrace a digital ecosystem as a way to personalize learning for all students we immediately realized that two issues were prevalent: 1) the excessive time for technology personnel to roster digital resources for use by students and staff and, 2) the excessive loss of instructional time as students, especially younger learners, logged in and then navigated to the digital resource that was to be used in that day's lessons. To solve these problems we turned to the industry for solutions. We found the IMS Global community was "tuned" to educational problems of this nature and they were working to solve these issues with a standards-based approach. We found their thinking to be congruent with ours so we became an affiliate of IMS Global.

Furthermore, this partnership enabled us to connect and then partner with other organizations, namely ClassLink (also an IMS Global affiliate), as a way to collectively work to implement solutions to these problems. Our answers were ClassLink's single-sign on solution, LaunchPad, and then, working cooperatively with ClassLink's R&D, we developed a working instance of IMS Global's OneRoster standard.

Learning Impact Outcomes

Implementing the OneRoster standard has four immediate benefits: 1) our district's technology staff is able to devote time to other projects that was previously required to roster applications, 2) staff trust that digital resources will be quickly available for use. The result has been a renewed interest in the use of formative assessment data as a means to "steer" personalized learning, 3) the district is able to ensure that third party applications will integrate with existing resources since we are able to show the need for a "standard" way to roster applications and, 4) since all students throughout the district use their username and password once to access the district's portal which, once there, invoke any of the district's digital resources with a single click, negating the need to supply a new username and password, instructional time is preserved.

Return on Investment

Building a digital ecosystem that staff and students can easily use has further helped foster an environment centered around personalized learning for each student's needs. The ability of our technology department to "zero day" roster applications has established trust with the staff that digital applications can be a "go to" resource for student learning. Also, the integration of technology into the classroom incurs no "cost" of instructional time as students use a single login name and password to access all of the district's digital resources. This, coupled with a launchpad that delivers a single location for launching all applications, ensures that all students are focused on learning and not accessing the resource.