

Charleston County School District

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SUCCESS STORY

Charleston County School District implements a Novell® Nsure™ solution to automate ID management, saving the district time and money.

OVERVIEW

With approximately 43,700 students, 79 schools and more than 7,000 employees, Charleston County School District is the second largest school system in South Carolina and one of the area's top employers.

CHALLENGE

Integrating IT systems is one of the greatest administrative challenges facing K-12 school districts. Charleston County School District was manually updating student and staff information across multiple systems in 79 schools, a time-consuming and inefficient process. The district wanted to create a solution based on the Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF) standard for integrating and managing data across multiple systems.

The district also needed a Web portal to give administrative staff and teachers secure access to e-mail and other resources.

SOLUTION

While preparing to implement a SIF* solution, Charleston County School District attended a K-12

education seminar hosted by Alphanumeric Systems, Inc., a leading provider of technology solutions and a Novell platinum partner, as well as a Novell Academic Partner Specialist. The district engaged Alphanumeric to perform a SIF Readiness Assessment.

After evaluating Charleston's technology infrastructure and operational processes, Alphanumeric presented a plan to leverage a Novell Nsure solution (Novell eDirectory™ and Novell DirXML®), Edustructures SIFWorks* (Zone Integration Server) and the Novell File System Factory software. The plan also included a Web portal to improve access to e-mail, staff directories and a variety of Web applications.

"The plan was to create an ID and profile for a student in the first grade that would last until they graduated from high school," says Douglas Ouzts, Novell Practice Manager at Alphanumeric Systems, Inc. "The profiles will maintain an e-portfolio of the student's files throughout their academic career."

The district is now using its SIF solution to automate manual processes for creating and

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—Connie Britton,
Technology Infrastructure
and Support Officer,
Charleston County Schools

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managing student IDs. Once the district enters student information in its Pearson NCS SASI system, the SIF solution updates information to Novell eDirectory using the Novell DirXML SIF Agent, allowing Charleston to maintain a single user identity for each student. The SIF solution provides the capability to update student information across all systems, such as library, transportation and food services, so students can have immediate access to these services on the first day of school.

The SIF solution also automatically updates students with the applications, disk space and content filtering that they need on classroom computers. For example, middle school students might be allocated 50MBs of disk space and then receive 100MBs when they move into high school.

“The real benefit of our Novell solution is that we will be able to do more with fewer people,” said Connie Britton, technology infrastructure and support officer for Charleston County Schools. “Instead of spending time managing and manually entering student IDs, we will now have more time to focus on important things, like educating children.”

Alphanumeric leveraged Novell DirXML and Novell iChain® to create a Web portal to provide employees and staff members secure access to e-mail and other Web applications. Employees log

on to the portal, authenticated by Novell iChain, to receive personalized views of information based on their identity.

Now employees can update their own profiles when they move or change phone numbers, ensuring accuracy and saving the district time and money. Novell eGuide provides an online staff directory, making it easy for staff members to contact one another.

RESULTS

A SIF solution will help Charleston County School District integrate data across multiple systems, eliminating redundant manual data entry and automating ID management. With a Novell Nsure solution, the district anticipates being able to set up a new student account 75 percent faster, saving both time and money. A new Web portal with authentication based in iChain provides secure access to information based on identity, and improves communication and collaboration among staff members.

“In an era of tight educational budgets, we need to find ways to increase our capabilities without spending more time or money,” said Britton. “Our Novell-based SIF solution gives us the foundation to increase staff productivity and streamline data administration so we can focus more time on students and education.”

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