



# CUSTOMER SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT

## Client Spotlight: Newark Unified School District

### THE CLIENT

Newark, California, is a small city of less than 50,000 people located at the southeast tip of San Francisco Bay and completely surrounded by Fremont, California. Its Unified School District is comprised of 13 campuses – 8 elementary schools, a junior and a senior high school, 2 alternative schools, and a pre-school academy – that together serve less than 7,000 students from pre-school through 12th grades.

### THE PROBLEM

Like all California schools, these are challenging times for Newark USD. Budgets have been slashed almost 25% from just a few years ago, while at the same time, the state's reporting requirements have increased and Class Size Reduction initiatives demand more staffing. For larger districts with greater economies of scale, the adjustments are easier. At smaller districts, however, it means everyone wears more than one hat, and becoming more efficient is not a choice – it's a necessity.

For Newark USD, state reporting was particularly burdensome. Janet Temple, Newark USD's CALPADS/SIS Coordinator, is responsible for producing that data: "California has multiple reporting requirements that require continuous updates to CALPADS <the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System>. I have to extract all types of information from our SIS – student enrollment, demographic, and program data; staff demographics and assignments; student and teacher courses; and more – and it must be accurate. With our existing system, we dreaded every reporting period; the information was difficult to extract and import into the State system, and it constantly had to be manipulated to be accurate. In particular, the system could not track our mobile students – students who transferred between schools or to one of the alternative campuses and back."

The District also had technology challenges. Their existing student information systems (SIS) were decentralized, so that data from each school had to be uploaded to the District's master database on a daily basis. Only enrollment information was available in real time. The District used separate, non-integrated applications for electronic grading and nutrition, and its student/parent web portal required the development of software processes to automatically update those systems. Due to limitations in the software's functionality, the District's administrative and office staff was forced to devise ways to "trick" the system in order to manage the realities of their school's processes.

Finally, as a smaller district, Newark USD faced the daunting task of fixing these problems on a limited budget and with limited resources. The District simply did not have the capability to support an extended roll-out of a comprehensive SIS solution, much less the extensive user training a more aggressive implementation would require.

### THE SOLUTION

Edupoint's GENESIS student information system is a tightly-integrated, modular solution that can be implemented in phases. Newark USD would be able to roll-out the core solution to meet immediate enrollment and reporting requirements, then add functionality at their own pace as budget and resources allowed. Edupoint had previously replaced the same legacy system used by Newark USD for a number of other clients and was confident that the installation, configuration, data migration, and user training could be completed quickly. The District purchased GENESIS in March 2010 and was able to launch the system in August for the 2010/2011 school year.

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Daily synchronization and backup of data files are no longer required of the schools as GENESIS is web-based and uses a central database to deliver real-time information on all students at every campus. Core functionality and all modules are completely integrated so that redundant data entry tasks are eliminated. Ms. Temple is especially pleased with the reporting capabilities.

“Other companies talked about compliance reporting,” she said, “but Edupoint proved they could do it. I also talked with other GENESIS users. While we’re not as big as other Edupoint clients such as Long Beach Unified, San Francisco Unified, or the San Diego County Office of Education, we still have the same reporting requirements. As powerful as their reporting tools are, however, it’s Edupoint’s response to new reporting requirements that has been most impressive. For example, before attending classes in 2011-2012, all incoming students in grades 7-12 are required to have a pertussis (whooping cough) vaccination. The requirement could have created an issue for the reporting and tracking of student records, but Edupoint had an update to GENESIS ready in time. Now, they are working with us to implement an electronic approval process for attendance reporting that will eliminate our need to print hundreds of paper reports each week. From my experience, Edupoint goes above and beyond to ensure its clients are compliant.”

## **THE RESULTS**

GENESIS has exceeded each of Newark USD’s project goals. The system was launched on time, and users have adapted quickly. After the conversion and final scrub of data from

the existing system, state reporting has been seamless. There were interim requirements to integrate existing third-party applications (those products will be replaced when the District implements additional GENESIS modules), and GENESIS’ open architecture based on Microsoft’s .NET standards made the process painless.

District administrators and site users no longer have to trick the system. The robust functionality provided by GENESIS easily adapts to Newark USD’s unique requirements to empower teachers to manage their classrooms more effectively. After some initial disbelief, then pleasant surprise, and now rave reviews, registrars, counselors, and other users have accepted that data need only be entered once to be replicated across the system.

Productivity is increasing each month as the District makes use of more and more GENESIS functionality. Spring 2011 marked the first use of the solution’s ClassBoard™ mass scheduling tool, and next year, Newark USD would like to implement its Master Schedule Builder. The District hopes to implement the GENESIS TeacherVUE™ electronic Gradebook and the StudentVUE™ and ParentVUE™ web portals in Phase II and III of their long-term plan.

While Edupoint has earned an enviable client list comprising many of the largest school districts in the country, Newark USD is a great example of how GENESIS’ modular approach also allows a smaller district to build a world-class SIS over time, as its budget and resources allow.



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