

The Changemakers: Henry County Schools & SRG Technology



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THE CHALLENGE:

Henry County Schools saw its student body of 48,524 diversifying in a number of ways and was convinced the traditional “one-size-fits-all” method of teaching was no longer an effective way to reach different types of learners. The students deserved a more personalized approach. After much discussion, the district was ready to embrace a “Big Vision” change and adopt a new methodology in teaching and learning – one that was designed to focus on each student individually and empower students to be critical decision-makers in their own education. After all, the Henry County School district motto is “Ensuring Success for Each Student” and that is exactly what Henry County Schools intended to do.

The challenges Henry County Schools faced were significant. The following questions needed to be answered:

1. Can struggling learners be engaged when they are all at different levels, enjoying different interests and subjects?
2. Can the graduation rate be increased?
3. Can students be encouraged to take ownership of their own learning?
4. Can teacher delivery methods and classroom instruction be transformed to promote blended learning?
5. Can educators realistically and relevantly prepare students for careers and college?
6. Can the district successfully shift to personalized learning in all of the district’s 59 schools by 2020?

*“With the vision for the Learner Profiles in Henry County Schools, kids are not having school **DONE** to them, they are having school done **WITH** them.”*

Aaryn Schmuhl
Henry County Schools

THE SOLUTION:

Henry County Schools heard of SRG Technology's (SRGT) BlenderLearn™ suite of software applications and found that it employed enhanced data collection and analysis to promote personalized teaching and learning in order to fuel a cycle of continuous improvement. The district thought BlenderLearn was the right technology to use as a springboard for its change efforts.

BlenderLearn supports a strategic, phased approach to implementation by allowing priority needs to be met first while building toward a broader vision. Platform administrators are able to configure the software as people and priorities change -- making it easy for BlenderLearn to adapt on pace with customers' changing size and needs. BlenderLearn provides individually relevant, data-driven dashboards and reports for a personalized experience and better decision-making.

Henry County Schools found that although BlenderLearn offered much of what it was looking for, the solution was missing some important components necessary to achieve the District's vision. Early in 2015, Henry County Schools decided to work directly with SRGT to co-design a system to create individual student plans and track personalized learning for each student.

By forming a forward-thinking partnership, Henry County Schools and SRGT successfully designed Individual Learner Profiles (ILPs), an array of data sets compiled into a unique profile for each student. Because each stakeholder in the education process plays a valuable role in a student's educational success, students and parents are encouraged to contribute to the student's learner profile; take an active role in the student's individual learning plan; and become part of the educational decision-making team.

This was what we needed: technology in our schools that could support teachers by giving them easy access to crucial student information and support the standardization of best practices while also increasing communication and student engagement,”

Aaryn Schmuhl
Henry County Schools

Aaryn Schmuhl, Henry County School’s Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Leadership, summed up the goal of the project best by saying, “With the vision for the Individual Learner Profiles in Henry County Schools, kids are not having school ‘DONE’ to them; they are having school done ‘WITH’ them.”

Teachers and administrators are able to gain insight into a student’s thinking, capture a 360° view of students, identify students’ learning styles and tailor lesson plans to resonate with individual students, which is exactly what Henry County Schools was looking to achieve.

“This was what we needed: technology in our schools that could support teachers by giving them easy access to crucial student information and support the standardization of best practices, while also increasing communication and student engagement,” Schmuhl said. “We searched for years to find what we were looking for, and we were thrilled to discover that the BlenderLearn ILPs fit our needs -- thanks to SRG Technology’s willingness to co-develop their existing tool!”

Why BlenderLearn ILPs:

- Consolidation of disparate legacy and new data including traditional and untraditional data sets
- Survey tool to populate and refresh student profile information
- Ability to filter searches based on interests (sports, artists, visual learners, etc.)
- Facilitates insight into student learning styles

BlenderLearn ILPs Unique Benefits:

- Student-led Conferences
- Content aligned to student interests
- Portfolio connected to performance indicators
- Academic Journal – a space for students to reflect
- Innovative Feedback Loop

THE CONCLUSION:

By spring 2017, Henry County Schools was well on its way to reaching its goal of personalizing the learning experience for all its students. To date, the usage report data numbers continue to grow and feedback from Henry County Schools' stakeholders is very positive.

- One year after the implementation of BlenderLearn ILPs, the graduation rate at Henry County Schools is a sign of success: in 2016, 85.3 percent of seniors graduated on time, up from 84.1 percent in 2015, making it the second highest graduation rate in the state of Georgia.
- As of May 2017, the ILPs pilot program reported 4,200 student users at 50 of the 59 schools.
- In the 2016-2017 school year alone, the ILPs hosted more than 46,000 sessions and 200,000 page views.

"Without BlenderLearn ILPs, all of the exciting shifts in our schools would not be coming together the way they are," said Karen Perry, Henry County Schools Special Projects Coordinator.

The process of transitioning to the ILPs has placed Henry County Schools at the epicenter of the emerging movement toward personalized learning in Georgia and the nation. SRGT and Henry County Schools have plans to continue the BlenderLearn partnership; and SRGT remains a willing and excited partner on Henry County Schools' excellence adventure.



200,000+
page views



46,000+
sessions



4,200
student users

ABOUT THE PARTNERS:

SRG Technology

SRG Technology (SRGT) creates cutting-edge enterprise software solutions that help people live smarter, healthier and safer lives. With enhanced collection and analysis, SRGT harnesses the value of data by making it individually relevant to encourage engagement, ignite action, promote best practices, fuel improvement and achieve meaningful results.

SRGT's flagship Education suite of software BlenderLearn™ is an eco-system of innovative applications designed to drive student, teacher and school improvements by facilitating and promoting personalized teaching and learning.

SRGT has developed solutions for the Education, Healthcare, Travel and Transportation industries.

Henry County Schools

Henry County Schools in Henry County, Georgia, is one of the nation's leading districts in the movement towards personalized learning. At 42,000 students, Henry County is a large, diverse district with approximately 52% economically disadvantaged students and 66% non-white students. The wide variety of demographics within each of its 50 schools makes Henry County unique, and its schools' district mission is "Ensuring Success for Each Student," led by a vision of "Building a Culture of Personalized Learning." The goal of Henry County Schools is that each student, no matter their background, graduates from college career and life ready.