



### Overview

- Public school district in eastern Pennsylvania
- Urban and suburban areas
- Approximately 7200 students
- 12 schools including:
  - 2 high school buildings on a single campus (separate schools for grades 9 - 10 and 11 - 12)
  - 3 middle schools
  - 7 elementary schools

### Summary

Like many districts, the Coatesville Area School District is striving to raise its educational quality in the face of falling budgets. The **eSchoolPLUS+** Student Information System from SunGard Pentamation has helped the district save on maintenance and training costs — while actually providing a more effective learning environment by offering educators complete, up-to-date insights drawn from student, employee, and fiscal data. “With its ease of use and web access,” said Abdallah Hawa, Director of Technology at Coatesville School District, “**eSchoolPLUS+** has been a very valuable tool.”

A \$12.5 million budget deficit can create quite a pinch for a mid-sized school district. But timing is everything, and just as the financial news was reaching Coatesville Area School District, the IT department was setting up a brand new student information system called **eSchoolPLUS+**. This web-based student management software has helped the district sustain its level of learning and actually reduce its technology budget.

**eSchoolPLUS+** is a web-based, centralized, district-wide student information management system for K-12 schools. All educational stakeholders — from administrators, to teachers, to school board members, to parents — access the student information they’re authorized to view. Based on a single, integrated, district-wide database, **eSchoolPLUS+** keeps information up to date whether it’s entered by a teacher in a classroom, a counselor in the field, or a nurse in the infirmary.

“If you know how to use the web, you can use **eSchoolPLUS+**.”

#### **Abdallah Hawa**

Director of Technology,  
Coatesville Area School District

"*eSchoolPLUS+* really is user friendly. The user interface flows nicely as I am working."

**Debbie Kummerer**

*Technology Aide,  
Coatesville Area School District*

### Benefits

- Cost effective
  - Technology department has significantly reduced system maintenance and technical training costs.
  - Administrators can create reports faster with less help from the technology department, freeing technicians to do other duties.
- Simple to deploy
  - Entire district can be maintained by a single technician.
  - Web-based architecture allows fast, centralized, district-wide database updates via the network.
- Works the way educators do
  - Teachers and counselors can get a fast, accurate, complete overview of student profiles to enhance learning.
  - Educators now spend less time gathering data from various binders and databases freeing time to spend with the students.
  - Attendance recorded from classrooms for more timely, accurate reports.

## Off and running

Intuitive to use and built on web standards, *eSchoolPLUS+* has quickly helped Coatesville do more with fewer resources. When the position of system analyst was cut, for example, Director of Technology Abdallah Hawa trained technology aide Debbie Kummerer to maintain *eSchoolPLUS+* district-wide. "She took off running with it," said Hawa. "We didn't miss a beat — didn't miss a deadline."

When asked about her rapid transformation from aide to technology troubleshooter, Kummerer explained, "*eSchoolPLUS+* really is user friendly. The user interface flows nicely as I'm working."

## Minimum training

Other staff members adopted *eSchoolPLUS+* with ease, as well. "It took minimum training for teachers to pick it up," said Hawa. "All we did was send out instructions with a note saying, 'If you have problems we'll schedule training.'" Hawa never needed to schedule a teacher training session. "I didn't get one request."

*eSchoolPLUS+* allowed Hawa to shift his Help Desk duties away from training and into more specialized tasks such as maintenance, inventory, and system upgrades. He concluded, "We now have the freedom to do more valuable work."

District-wide updates are simpler with *eSchoolPLUS+*, since everyone accesses a web server where all updates are made. A technician does not need to visit every campus or touch every computer to complete an upgrade. "We don't need to install a client on every machine," said Hawa, which saves the district many hours of work.

## Efficient administration

Administrators have integrated *eSchoolPLUS+* into their daily routine of running reports, creating transcripts, and analyzing data. "If you know how to use the web, you can use *eSchoolPLUS+*," said Hawa.

The district's former student information system allowed anyone with authorization to run reports. "But back then, they wouldn't dare do it because

"I spend less time tracking down information and more time helping the students, and that's what education is all about."

**Becky Layfield**

Head of the Coatesville Senior High School Guidance Department

it was so difficult to do," explained Hawa. Now administrators quickly and easily produce their own state and federal paperwork, award applications, and eligibility lists for a range of programs.

Attendance is another area that's more efficient now. Teachers record roll counts in each homeroom "so attendance secretaries are no longer solely responsible," said Debbie Kummerer. The secretaries now use their time more constructively, pitching in to fill gaps left by budget cuts in other areas.

## Better decision-making

By giving everyone with a stake in student achievement full access to potent and actionable student information, *eSchoolPLUS+* helps instructors make more informed educational choices. Becky Layfield, Head of the Coatesville Senior High School Guidance Department, said, "With *eSchoolPLUS+*, we can be more effective because it's easy to get a more well-rounded perspective on a student."

Previously, before meeting with a student, she would gather academic records from a binder, attendance records from the office, and parent contact info from Emergency Procedure Cards. Now with a few keystrokes, a complete student profile is at her fingertips. Because she's not out gathering student information around campus, "it's allowed me to be in my office more so students can find me."

*eSchoolPLUS+* gives Layfield access to potent and actionable insights drawn from student data. She uses *eSchoolPLUS+* to assess whether a student issue is isolated to a single class, the result of poor attendance, or a combination of several different factors. "I get an overview of what is going on with each student," said Layfield.

***eSchoolPLUS+* includes:**

- Demographics
- Medical Records
- Scheduling
- Master Schedule Builder
- Student Fees
- Attendance
- Discipline
- Report Cards
- Standards and Competencies
- Transcripts
- Test Scores
- Gradebook
- Home Access Center
- Performance Dashboards
- Performance Analysis

## Starting on even ground

Because the students at Coatesville High School know *eSchoolPLUS+* puts all of the facts in front of their counselors and teachers, student interactions are more productive.

"Students know that the counselors know exactly what homework is missing, how many times they've been tardy... everything," said Layfield, "So we can start on even ground and get right on to making constructive plans. And that helps the kids."

## Home access

Coatesville Area School District has implemented many aspects of the eSchoolPLUS+ system, including Student Administration and Teacher Access. Currently, they are planning to implement the Home Access component which allows parents and guardians secure access to data about their students' scores, attendance, assignments, discipline records and more from a password-protected web site.

## Freedom to do more

As deficit cuts loomed, eSchoolPLUS+ from SunGard Pentamation gave teachers, administrators, and the IT staff the tools to be more efficient and effective in their roles of educating students and managing resources. "I spend less time tracking down information and more time helping the students," said Layfield, "and that's what education is all about."

Director of Technology Abdallah Hawa agreed that eSchoolPLUS+ has provided Coatesville with many benefits. "At a time when our resources were spent," he said, "eSchoolPLUS+ gave us the freedom to do not less, but more."

For more information about  
eSchoolPLUS+ visit  
[www.eschoolplus.com](http://www.eschoolplus.com)

**SunGard® Pentamation, Inc.**  
3 West Broad Street  
Bethlehem, PA 18018  
Phone: 610-691-3616  
Toll-free: 866-905-8989  
Fax: 610-861-9323  
[www.pentamation.com](http://www.pentamation.com)