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## **CPSI Solutions Help Phelps Clifton Springs School District Achieve Their Ultimate Vision**

Phelps Clifton Springs School District (PCSSD) in New York is one of 47 districts within the Genesee Valley/Wayne-Finger Lakes Regional Information Center (EduTech). PCSSD, with four schools, housing 1935 students and 240 staff, is the model district for EduTech's SIF Proof of Concept for horizontal integration. EduTech envisioned an interoperable solution of horizontally transferring and securing all the administrative software's data, including the Student Information Systems (SIS), Human Resources applications, and others. By using CPSI's SIF Certified products, the vision has become a crystal clear reality.

### **The Problem**

PCSSD's challenges are like most school districts with regards to data. Basically, none of the applications at use in the district were sharing data. Not only that, the applications in any district may be running on a variety of hardware and software platforms. In addition, the data is "owned" and maintained by different groups. The Student Information System (SIS) and HR systems are usually owned by different database groups. Cafeteria systems are run by the Food Service people. Bus systems are run by the Transportation department. Network identities and e-mails are managed by the IT department. One of the first data automation objects was to integrate student information with the ID Badge Maker system.

Before implementing the CPSI solution, information was handled by different people in different departments. It usually took up to a week, sometimes longer, to get the same information into each system. Student information was entered into the SIS, followed by filling out a form that contained basic information about the student. The form was copied and dropped into the mail for the other departments to enter the information into their systems. Let's just say that it can get time consuming to enter information everywhere, and the chance of human error multiplies with each entry.

"Sometimes more information than what was on the form was needed before entering the information into the separate systems. The info had to be looked up in the SIS and then an account was created. This was very inefficient and drove me nuts for a long time," explained Bill Gowan, PCSSD Technology Coordinator.

PCSSD, and other districts in the EduTech region, needed a highly adaptable solution that would not be extremely expensive. With a small IT staff, and little time to spend on mundane tasks, PCSSD and EduTech decided to use the CPSI SIF Certified products set to automate the exchange of data between systems. The objective was to have data entered into the SIS and be used to automatically populate the Active Directory, ID Badge System, and provide a Data Warehouse from which statistics could be gathered.

"We were not using a Data Warehouse solution before getting the CPSI Data Warehouse. Every office would take extracts from the SIS to use for mail merge and



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other applications. The several databases would all contain the same information,” reports Gowan.

### The Solution

When the decision to incorporate the SIF standard was made to reach these goals, CPSI’s solutions were utilized. Implementing the CPSI SIF products eliminated the prior dilemmas caused by SIF agents that were not fully functional and were poorly documented.

EduTech and PCSSD decided to adopt interoperable data standards and technologies by implementing the SIF standard. CPSI was chosen for their K-12 experience exceptional support. The solution was sectioned into two parts. First, the SIF-Connect Server a (Zone Integration Server), the SIF-Connect Universal Agent Suite, and the SIF-Connect Data Warehouse were installed in order to automate the ID Badge maker system. The second integration consisted of populating the active directory by adding the SIF Agent for Visual CASEL (VC) to populate and manage user accounts automatically from data supplied by the SIS.

“Let me explain,” said Gowan. “We have an ID Badge maker system and the staff no longer has to enter duplicate information in the ID software. All student information is pulled from the CPSI Data Warehouse. PowerSchool is the Start of Authority for all student information. Each school office enrolls their own students into PowerSchool. All this information is immediately (and automatically) transferred to the Data Warehouse. The person enrolling the student can then immediately open the ID maker software, find the new student, and take a picture and then print an ID card for the student to use. While this is all happening, the student has already been automatically entered into our café system, library system, and a network account with user name, password, and home folder has been created.”

The next step for the district is to use the Universal Agent to “remap” all of the in-house Access databases developed throughout PCSSD directly to the SIF-Connect Data Warehouse so that users have current information all of the time.

### The Results

After the implementation of the SIF-Connect Product Suite and Visual CASEL, PCSSD’s productivity has increased due to a single point of data entry. Data is more accurate, information is delivered in a timely manner, and there is a substantial reduction in the time it takes to manipulate data.

“Now within about ten minutes, the student is enrolled, an ID card is printed and an account in the café system is created with all the contact information. A library system account has been created and the student has an active directory account plus a home folder to save files to,” said Gowan. “Out of all the CPSI products, the Universal Agent with the mapper was definitely the feature that sold us on the products.”