Northside Independent School District

TAILORS INNOVATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR EACH STUDENT BY LEVERAGING SPECIAL-POPULATION MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE
One of the largest districts in Texas, Northside Independent School District has a long history of excellence dating back to 1949. Its strong connection to the community is evident through the easily accessible information for parents, students, and staff on its website and through social media. Northside ISD (NISD) staff is committed to providing innovative, high-quality, diverse learning experiences for all students in an ever-changing world.

The Challenge

In their roles as district leaders, Northside’s Beth Poss is responsible for managing the Special Education, ELL/LPAC, RTI, Section 504, and Child Find applications (formerly known as eStar) provided by Frontline Education, while Marci Barrientos manages the ELL/LPAC program management software. Their goal is to serve NISD by supporting the teachers and specialists who deliver services through special programs to over 50,000 students. With more than 8,500 users of these Frontline applications, making information easily accessible and providing comprehensive training for teachers and staff are top priorities.

“We want to make sure the teachers are able to facilitate meetings and get the data they need to help our students.”

— Beth Poss, Special Education Instructional Technologist

The Solution

NISD initially selected the Frontline Special Ed & Interventions software simply to store and access special education student records online. They soon discovered an even bigger advantage to using the applications: the ability to quickly gather and analyze student information, and manage compliance electronically. Most important, special education teachers and staff now have easy access to all the data they needed to develop effective service plans for students.

Marci’s position was created when the district decided to divide the Bilingual/ESL department and house English Language Accountability in the Testing and Evaluation department. At that point, it made sense to start using ELL/LPAC Program Management along with the other Frontline Special Ed & Interventions applications. By adding digital storage of records for English language learners, assigned users now have access to data for students in all of the district’s special programs, giving staff a clear view into the needs of the whole child.

Beth and Marci work closely together to give NISD teachers and staff the best tools possible to help them do their jobs, along with the training to learn how to use those resources.

District Background

LOCATION: San Antonio, Texas
ENROLLMENT: 106,066 students
FACILITIES: 119
STAFF: 13,424

Solutions Used

Frontline Special Ed & Interventions
- Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Management
- English Language Learner (ELL/LPAC) Program Management
- RTI Program Management
- 504 Program Management
- Child Find

www.FrontlineEducation.com/whole_child
The Results

COMPLIANCE MADE SIMPLE

It’s amazing how much time teachers and staff can save just by using a single login that provides access to multiple programs.

“Special Education, ELL/LPAC, RTI and 504 [applications] all have the same login. It’s one system, not ten different systems. And when changes come down from the state, Frontline is watching out for us to make sure we’re in compliance.”

— Beth Poss

Frontline gives Northside the opportunity to customize their applications, from forms to screen views to drop-down options. Federal and state compliance requirements are updated in the software automatically, with plenty of advance notice from Frontline before changes go into effect.

PROACTIVE PLANNING & PREPARATION

Responsible for training thousands of staff members, it’s critical for Beth and Marci to know about changes well in advance.

“We really can’t wait, because we wouldn’t be giving the appropriate support for the students. The students are our first clients – we have to stay ahead of the game.”

— Marci Barrientos, Student Placement Center Specialist

A full week of training is scheduled before school starts each fall for all teachers new to Northside. Offerings include specialized training for teachers working in behavioral units, collaborative classrooms and self-contained programs. Hands-on practice for special education and ESL teachers on how to use the Frontline system gives educators confidence that they have the tools and information to meet the needs of their students.

QUICK COMMUNICATION BENEFITS STUDENTS

“Teachers go to one central application in Frontline and get everything they need for their students, which was never possible before, on paper.”

— Beth Poss

The Bilingual/ESL Department is still in the process of transitioning to a completely paperless model, and because of Frontline software, teachers no longer drive to the district office to drop off or pick up paperwork. Since all student data is available online, communication is much faster and easier.

Teachers and staff have instant access to students’ histories, scores, accommodations and recommendations for service. When students move from campus to campus or across the state, their records are electronically transferred in minutes. Even if parents unintentionally omit special education or ELL eligibility on enrollment forms, that information automatically follows the student.

“It makes it more accurate when we give the students accommodations for the state assessments or accommodations that they need for the classroom. Whether they’re Special Education, or LPAC, or RTI, we’re able to see what they need and give it to them. Every teacher in Northside has access to those files. They click a button and get into [the software] and see what those children need, right then and there. When we have ARD or LPAC meetings that change those accommodations for the classroom, [students’ records] are immediately updated and [teachers] have them at their fingertips as soon as that meeting is completed. Our students are getting what they need.”

— Beth Poss

RELIABLE TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR STAFF

With Frontline Special Ed & Interventions, customer service has been phenomenal. From facilitating a major project like importing data from Frontline into the district’s student information system, to uploading assessment accommodations released by the state at the last minute, Frontline representatives are always reliable, responsive and happy to answer questions. Northside counts on them to find the best solution to every problem. Thanks to Frontline, NISD teachers and staff have the right tools and more time to provide all students with diverse learning experiences.
About Frontline Education

Frontline Education is an integrated insights partner serving more than 12,000 K-12 organizations and millions of educators, administrators and support personnel in their efforts to develop the next generation of learners. With more than 20 years of experience serving the front line of education, Frontline Education provides actionable intelligence and insights that enable informed decisions and drive engagement across school systems. Bringing together the best education software solutions into one unified platform, Frontline is pioneering a human capital management approach that meets the unique needs of education.

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