



Maine Department of Education/Transportation Case Study – September 2016

MSAD 27

Fort Kent, ME

District Profile

MSAD 27 is located in Fort Kent, Maine, which is at the top of the state in the northern region. This rural community borders Canada. The District transports 700 of the 900 students enrolled and manages a fleet of 17 school buses that travel 151,000 school bus miles per year.

Solution

The State of Maine leads the nation in offering public school districts a no-cost opportunity to access a comprehensive suite of software products and services from Transfinder to manage their pupil transportation department efficiently and safely. In spring 2016, MSAD 27 decided to take advantage of this State Transportation Operations Program. The goal was to have the first software module setup and ready for the start of the 2016-17 school year.

The district decided to begin by implementing Routefinder Pro, which is Transfinder's robust routing, scheduling, and planning software used by more than 1,600 school districts across North America. The State Transportation Operations Program not only provides access to Routefinder Pro, and several other communication and preventive maintenance solutions, but also training and technical support services. Because MSAD 27 is a small rural district with limited resources they chose to learn one Transfinder module at a time. For them the routing module would be first because it provides data to analysis routes and student counts as well as tracking student information for emergency preparedness.

Peter Saucier, Transportation Director for the district, took advantage of both the free training and support services to help him get up and running quickly to begin the school year. With expertise in neighboring districts, Mr. Saucier also reached out to his colleagues for their support to help him get started. The two districts Peter worked closely with lent him significant support and guidance in setting up his student's addresses and building his current routes into the system. These districts have been strong advocates in the state for using Transfinder due to their own success and increased work efficiency and budget savings.

In addition to the support from his colleagues, Peter attended training at the annual Maine State School Transportation Safety Conference. At the conference school district transportation directors and software technician's work with Transfinder's Maine account executive and a senior trainer from Transfinder in classroom training and one-on-one learning. Finally, Peter worked with Transfinder's support services to apply the finishing touches and answer his day-to-day questions prior to that all important first day of school.



Immediate Benefits

The district has already realized benefits even though they are just a few months into the first school year using Transfinder. The transportation department has been successful with managing student counts and the number of riders on each bus route. Peter says that “I am much better informed about student stops and pick-up times. At this time, I have not been able to remove any buses off the road yet can now easily analyze routes annually.” The software has shown that the routes the district has been driving are efficient for their rural area which helps Peter show that he has been running efficient routing.

The team at Transfinder not only helped to make the process as smooth as possible, so Mr. Saucier is also looking forward to “attending more training and learning all the tools offered in the software.”

Long Term Anticipated Benefits

Data Driven Decision Making – Peter hopes that after the first year of using Transfinder he will have the ability to make decisions backed by the data that will be made available by the system. He would be able to present better reports to his Superintendent and demonstrate and explain safety and the organizational efficiency of the Transportation Department.

Organization and Efficiency – Transportation is complex. Safety is the goal. MSAD 27 Transportation team deals with unexpected school delays, cancellation or other types of emergencies that affect the start times, dismissal times and other pertinent situations. Although such schedule changes are announced via a district tool called SchoolReach, it becomes the responsibility of the Transportation staff to ensure the safety of the students and staff during emergency situations like inclement weather or evacuations. Peter is looking forward to Transfinder’s Infofinder ‘I’ helping him and his team to be more responsive to the parents and the community, reduce calls and complaints to their transportation department and be able to instantly inform the parents and guardians with email notifications.

Testimonial

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