

Customizable PowerSchool SIS Delivers Real-Time Data and More for Ontario School Board



When London District Catholic School Board switched to PowerSchool SIS as its data management system, it had one simple goal: to continue the same functionality as its previous SIS. The school board was pleased to discover that in addition to basic student data management, PowerSchool SIS helped even more—by improving engagement with parents and students, offering the ability to customize the system to fit its needs, and enhancing compliance reporting.

London District Catholic School Board serves 18,500 K-12 students in 45 elementary and nine secondary schools within Ontario, Canada. The 2,000 administrative, teaching, and support staff are dedicated to instructing learners in a student-centered educational community.

When it implemented PowerSchool, the Board looked forward to using a web-based system, as well as utilizing industry-leading functionality and features, "such as user-friendliness, the parent and student portal, and the PowerTeacher Pro gradebook," according to **Sandra Abell, Supervisor of ICT Data & Student Management**. The Board believes that parental involvement is a significant predictor of student success and that students whose parents are engaged are more likely to perform well in school.

"London District Catholic School Board favored PowerSchool because it is a student information system solution with education as its primary focus," says Aster Laleman, PowerSchool's Director of Enterprise Sales.

AT A GLANCE



Challenges

- Lack of customization capabilities to meet unique needs
- On-premise hosting leading to increased management and costs
- Need for Provincial reporting capabilities to keep up with changes from education ministry



Solution

- PowerSchool SIS
- PowerSchool Hosting



Results

- Real-time and mobile access to student performance data
- Ability to customize the system to meet the Board's needs
- Hosting delivers a cost-effective solution that reduces maintenance
- Multiple training options offer convenience



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SANDRA ABELL

Supervisor of ICT Data & Student Management,
London District Catholic School Board, ON

Sandra says, "With PowerSchool SIS, we have been able to introduce new screens and fields of data for our users that have made us more efficient and productive. We are very pleased with PowerSchool and look forward to both continued performance and new enhancements."

PowerSchool SIS delivers real-time access to information

"We're pleased with the functionality," says Mary Latella, Student Information Analyst. "One of the aspects we like is that teachers are able to do attendance in the classroom on mobile devices in real time, and parents are able to see that attendance immediately. Administrators are able to see that attendance on their mobile devices in real time as well."

"We enjoy the overall PowerSchool experience," Sandra says. "PowerSchool is the ultimate in delivering new technology, enabling boards to have a complete educational ecosystem within that SIS system. Things are going very well. We enjoy the look and feel of the system and looking to the future are excited about the expanded reporting functionality and enhancing modules such as PowerTeacher Pro gradebook."

PowerSchool SIS helps with insights to identify at-risk or struggling students

The PowerSchool SIS parent portal helps engage both parents and students with access to student performance to keep them on track.

"Parents and students are able to access information like attendance and mark reporting on mobile devices. And administrators utilize the interactive dashboards to track and monitor students' attendance and students at risk," says Rita Woodiwiss, Student Information Systems Analyst. "This is an all-in-one product that provides information at a timely, immediate moment for parents, students, teachers, and administrators to really analyze students who are at risk."

Cloud hosting saves money and frees up maintenance time

The Board chose to have PowerSchool host its SIS instance with cloud-based technology, saving money, reducing risk, and fostering an effective and efficient technology environment. PowerSchool Hosting provides and manages the infrastructure for the Board in a reliable, secure cloud environment with ultra-high bandwidth, robust failover capabilities, data encryption, storage performance, and systems monitoring.

"When we first looked at implementing PowerSchool, we looked at either hiring someone to host us with the servers on site or getting PowerSchool to do that for us," Sandra says. "In looking at human resource costs compared to PowerSchool Hosting, it was actually cheaper to have PowerSchool host our system. For us, it was very cost effective. We never have to worry about loading releases and maintaining servers. The service overall for us has been amazing."

"PowerSchool Hosting has made our job much easier," adds Cindy Pentland, Student Information Data Analyst. "We don't have to worry about updates or issues with the system. The hosting team we deal with are fantastic and are there for us right away if we need them."

Compliance reporting ensures accurate provincial submissions

PowerSchool SIS is fully compliant with Ontario ministry reporting requirements with more than 50 supported reports and submissions, including easy-to-use OnSIS reporting meeting all OnSIS submissions.

"PowerSchool continues to enhance and develop provincial reporting functions and reports to ensure accurate and compliant reporting," Rita says. "We have a team at PowerSchool that works with us, and we meet weekly on conference calls to discuss changes that are up and coming in our ministry reporting."

"Provincial reporting is going very well. The process for creating and importing data is more seamless, and creating sqlReports has worked well for us," Sandra says. "We have created extensive reporting within the SQL area. The users like the ability to access the ad hoc reports and simply run them."

SIS customizations offer flexibility and adaptability

One major advantage of PowerSchool over other student information systems is its flexibility and ability for customizations that can benefit schools, districts, and boards for their unique needs. PowerSchool SIS allows you to easily create your own customizations or access and implement customizations done by other districts via our PowerSource Exchange.

London District Catholic School Board has taken advantage of this feature by creating an ESL module for teachers to record and store data for those students. The Board has also created a demographical loop to maintain familiarity with the workflow for users entering student registrations.

"One of the attractive features was the ability to customize our own environment to allow the capability to meet some of our own specific needs within our board, and the ease in open access to our students and parents," Sandra says.

Multiple training options offer convenience

The variety of options for PowerSchool training, including traditional onsite training, workshops, multiple instructor-led virtual training methods, and a full catalog of self-paced online courses, has proved invaluable to the district. Teachers and other board personnel can quickly get up to speed with the solution to use it to best meet their needs, increasing their efficiency even further.



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"We love the free training and online sessions," Sandra says. "They have been very helpful for our staff to understand each aspect of the system, as well as new features and functions."

Exceeding expectations

What started as a simple need to meet the previous system's abilities has blossomed into multiple PowerSchool SIS benefits for London District Catholic School Board. The Board looks forward to a continuing partnership with PowerSchool that includes more innovation and functionality from the SIS.

"PowerSchool works well in Ontario," Sandra says. "The company has demonstrated the ability to invest and enhance the product, and the enhancements to the system are much appreciated. Keep up the great work!"



Find out how PowerSchool SIS can power all your board or district operations, increasing efficiency, productivity, and engagement.

Visit www.PowerSchool.com or call 1-877-873-1550 to learn more.