perceptivesoftware

Anchorage School District

Special Education
Human Resources
Student Records

�֎ "Our special education staff has a greatly reduced workload and can now spend more time making sure the files are right instead of managing where the files are."

Jim Davenport

Systems Analyst

Anchorage School District

Located in south central Alaska, the Anchorage School District (ASD) is one of the 100 largest school districts in the country, with approximately 50,000 students and 6,000 employees. Students in ASD speak 94 different languages at home, and minority students comprise more than 50 percent of the student population. The district covers a large area of the state and has almost 100 locations within the Anchorage area, which creates a challenge for storing and sharing thousands of important documents and other school-related information.

The school district chose to implement a document management solution to help control the quantity and quality of paperwork in special education, human resources and student records. After a formal selection process, ASD chose the highest-scoring product, ImageNow document management, imaging and workflow from Perceptive Software.

"One of the turning points in the process was that ImageNow did integrate well with our other software, including our financial systems and student systems. We also did a rigorous look at the price of the product versus the features provided, and again ImageNow was our choice," says Jim Davenport, a systems analyst at ASD.

Improved Security in Special Education

With the implementation of ImageNow, the special education department at ASD is now virtually paperless. All documents are online and up-to-date. This solution has enhanced security, improved auditing, and made responding to legal requests quick and efficient.

"Paperwork related to special education is fairly security-intensive, and ImageNow allowed us to put everything online so there is no loose paperwork floating around. Our special education staff has a greatly reduced workload and can now spend more time making sure the files are right instead of managing where the files are," Davenport says.

With ImageNow, the special education department can also manage document permissions and provide web access to view documents from remote locations via WebNow.

"ImageNow has allowed us to create a separate area for state contractors and auditors to access the paperwork they requested, review it virtually and place their findings online," says Davenport. "Between Anchorage and the state capitol of Juneau there is an airplane flight involved and we have been able to eliminate that cost."

Student Records Document Retention

ASD has thousands of student records on file, with some documents dating back to 1927. The district also had a warehouse filled with volumes of paper and thousands of documents, so finding individual documents was a nightmare.

"Many documents were on microfilm and microfiche, and we needed to get them out of that media and into something better," Davenport says.

With ImageNow, all records are now stored in one central online repository, saving warehouse storage space and time spent trying to locate documents.

"We have numerous records requests for different types of documents, and the paper and microfilm system was often slow and cumbersome to respond to those requests. With ImageNow we can easily search, locate and produce those documents in a greatly improved time," Davenport says.

In addition, ASD recently implemented the State of Alaska's record and retention policy and finds ImageNow has improved the district's ability to maintain documents and comply with retention laws.

Faster Response in Human Resources

ASD saw an immediate impact on request responses by using ImageNow in human resources. The district gets audited on teacher certifications, and ImageNow helps the HR department store all necessary documentation for easy access.

"In the past, the district has been slow responding to those, because it typically was required to pull the box back from the warehouse, find the paperwork, photocopy it and send it. Now we can print the documents, or e-mail them directly to the staff member from ImageNow," Davenport says.

Disaster Recovery, Safety and Security

ASD is located in an earthquake zone, a flood zone and a tsunami area, so there are many manuals on hand to provide instructions and guidelines for dealing with disaster recovery. The school district also has a large set of buildings, with some designated for shelters in the case of an emergency.

"ImageNow just recently was put on our critical applications list and is now part of the districts' disaster recovery plan, which means it is now perceived as being critical to the day-to-day business of ASD," says Davenport. "All of these manuals are stored ImageNow, and we are working on details on how to distribute those to the right individuals at the right time."

ASD also found ImageNow to be useful in storing and managing images, graphics, video files and incident reports in the safety and security department.

Future Plans with ImageNow

During the first three years using ImageNow, ASD has seen a big impact on efficiency and productivity and plans to spread those benefits across the district.

"We've seen a 15 to 20 percent savings in time, in certain cases maybe more. In no cases has that resulted in a reduction in staff; we reapply those resources to quality checking. Now it is easier to scrutinize the products instead of spending time managing the storage," Davenport says.

Next, ImageNow will be integrated with the accounting and purchasing departments to streamline purchase orders and payment processes. The district is also working to incorporate ImageNow into the student registration process to effectively store birth certificates, immunization records and transcripts.

"ImageNow is working so well that we have departments asking 'Can we be next?' and that is a key indicator of how successful the system has been," Davenport says.

Anchorage School District

Quick Stats

- Location: Anchorage, Alaska
- Students: 50,000
- Staff: 6,000
- Integration: Zangle
- Products in use: CaptureNow, WebNow, ImageNow Client

The Challenges

- Multiple locations posed problems for locating and sharing documents
- Responding to records requests was a slow, cumbersome process that took at least 30 days
- The district needed easy access to disaster recovery manuals and a process for distribution

The Results

- Paper documents and files on microfilm and microfiche were converted to 2 terabytes of information
- Responding to records requests now takes less than a week
- The safety and security of student and staff data has improved
- The reduction of paper and file cabinets provided more space
- Now able to store and maintain more accurate records for auditing

perceptivesoftware