



Roxbury Public Schools

CASE STUDY



The Challenge:

Roxbury Township Public Schools, a dynamic and thriving district, is preparing the children of today for tomorrow. Knowing that effective teachers are a critical factor in student success, their primary goal this year is to increase student achievement through a district-wide initiative directed at supporting educator growth.

The Results:

With several of Frontline's other solutions already in place, Frontline Professional Growth turned out to be a natural fit for the district. Thanks to the collaboration of the administrative team and certified staff, along with their partnership with Frontline's client success team, the district has embraced the new professional growth opportunities available to them.

Delighted with a series of actionable changes, district administrators have found that Frontline tools support district goals in multiple ways. They now create customized forms and reports that make state reporting more accurate, quick and efficient. Moving the teacher observation process from paper to online has increased its effectiveness by setting specific timelines for completion, saving weeks of passing paper back and forth.

Perhaps most importantly, the shortened feedback cycle between teachers and administrators is impacting instruction for students. By using evidence collected during observations, principals can provide organic and timely feedback to their teachers, who can then put feedback into practice immediately.

"Frontline has really helped us to streamline the feedback loop – the ability to communicate effectively using given timetables to provide essential feedback and sign off on it – all of those things that used to be a paper chase in the past."

-Chuck Seipp
Assistant Superintendent



District Background

LOCATION: Roxbury Township, NJ

ESTABLISHED: 1903

ENROLLMENT: 3,558

FACILITIES:

- 4 elementary schools (grades K-4)
- 1 intermediate school (grades 5-6)
- 1 middle schools (grades 7-8)
- 1 high schools (grades 9-12)

STAFF:

- Certified staff: 386
- Classified staff: 86
- Administrators: 28

DEMOGRAPHICS:

16% of Roxbury School District students report a home language other than English.

- Caucasian/White: 71%
- Asian: 5%
- Hispanic: 18%
- African-American/Black: 3%
- American Indian/Alaskan Native American: <1%
- Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: <1%



Solutions Used

- Frontline Absence & Time
- Frontline Recruiting & Hiring
- Frontline Professional Growth

The Solution:

Frontline Professional Growth was a key factor in improving the way Roxbury educators view professional development.

HOW FIVE CRUCIAL COMPONENTS CHANGED THE GAME

1 Using data from teacher evaluations to improve instruction.

With the previous paper and pencil system, managing evaluations was a nightmare. When an administrator did an observation of a teacher, nobody else saw what was in it, and there was no way to know what feedback teachers received from other principals. Now evaluators can provide feedback on prior areas of growth, connecting longitudinal data that shows whether teachers have taken action based on the goals and objectives provided during a series of observations over time. Teachers realize that each situation is important and connected as opposed to discrete instances dependent on the observer.

“One of the best elements of Frontline Professional Growth is that any administrator who needs to see a teacher can be assigned as an evaluator. That allows them to see all documents from this year and prior years and gives them the opportunity to comment on continual growth.”

-Chuck Seipp

Administrators report that with Frontline Professional Growth, evaluation data is easy to pull out of the system and organize by school, administrator, departments and grade spans. Along with that, heat maps showing student growth are useful for developing rigorous goals for teachers.

It has taken time to get used to the new system because that kind of data was never readily available before. Conversations with administrators remind them to look at what their peers are doing and to work as part of a team, rather than separate islands.

2 Giving teachers a voice.

The ability for teachers to have continued dialogue about observations is a significant improvement. One of the problems that persisted in the past was that teachers didn't feel as though they had a voice in observations, and feedback from different observers seemed disjointed. Now, instead of feeling judged for their mistakes, teachers are encouraged to leave comments about their observations and dialogue with their evaluators.

With Frontline Professional Growth, teachers can add comments to the observation form, either as positive responses to feedback or as rebuttals. Connecting their input to the observations empowers teachers to be active participants in the evaluation process. By implementing recommended changes in their practice, a sense of collaboration with observers leads to positive changes that will ultimately benefit Roxbury's students.

3 Applying qualitative and quantitative insights.

“One of the things that we have found interesting this year is a heat map of observation reporting, meaning how frequently did we, as an administrative team, assign a particular rating? What does that mean? What sort of feedback did we give on it? That has allowed us to establish focus points. For example, if we identify a particular area to be the least successful across the board, how do we support teachers in being better at it?”

-Chuck Seipp

Using Frontline Professional Growth, district administrators can start to see areas of frequency in how they score teaching and can establish goals to guide the discussion for better instruction. Qualitative aspects depend on improving the questioning and feedback skills of the administrators during pre-and post-conferencing with teachers and on providing actionable, specific and timely feedback. A close look at inter-rater reliability has also helped set the stage for high-quality, fair evaluations because administrators are more aware of the importance of consistency.

"We're able to give such concrete feedback to teachers during observations that gives them the opportunity to then internalize that feedback and make it part of their instructional repertoire. At that point, it has the ability to impact student learning. Once the teachers are able to take the information and put it into action in the classroom, that's when students start to see the benefit."

-Chuck Seipp



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. **The Frontline Insights Platform** makes it possible to efficiently and effectively manage the administrative needs of the education community with solutions including **Frontline Recruiting & Hiring**, **Frontline Absence & Time**, **Frontline Professional Growth** and **Frontline Special Ed & Interventions**.

4 Saving time and increasing productivity.

Going into year two of using Frontline Professional Growth, administrators at Roxbury Public Schools save a tremendous amount of time because everything is online and at their fingertips. Teachers receive prompt feedback on observations without having to wait, and can quickly implement changes. Administrators no longer have to hunt through paper files to review past observations. Eliminating the paper chase and providing very specific timelines for everyone involved has made the entire evaluation process much more efficient.

Additionally, the ability to manipulate and customize forms and reports within Frontline Professional Growth has been instrumental in merging the tools that support district goals. Not only has it improved accuracy and timeliness, but collecting and reporting data for state reports has been quick and efficient. Working with the district's data analyst, Seipp noted that reviewing data from professional growth reports and identifying and fixing errors was much easier than before.

5 Benefiting from quality client service.

As a district that uses multiple Frontline solutions, the administrators at Roxbury have found that Frontline consistently provides high-quality client service across all solutions. From addressing questions and concerns to coordinating training and finding solutions to problems, Roxbury staff know they can rely on Frontline to meet their needs in a timely fashion.

The client service has certainly helped the district roll out the new professional growth program. Without that support — especially Frontline's quick responses to questions and concerns — it would have been much more complicated to work with teachers and administrators in terms of accepting another new instrument.