



Blue Valley School District

CASE STUDY

The Challenge:

Although Blue Valley Schools experiences high levels of student achievement, the Board of Education challenged the district to meet two goals to improve student success even more.

- Ensure that there is an exemplary teacher in every classroom
- Focus on personalized student learning

The Results:

- Blue Valley students **outperformed** nearly every educational system in the world tested in math and science on the PISA exam, following only Shanghai, China. Blue Valley ranked first on the exam's reading section with an average district score of 538.
- Blue Valley Schools was named to the College Board's 7th Annual AP Honor Roll for increasing access to AP coursework while maintaining or increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher on AP exams.
- Graduates of the class of 2016 recorded the top SAT score in district history and exceeded state and national averages.
- In a Customer Assessment survey, 91 percent of community members surveyed said they would give teachers in the district a grade of "A" or "B."
- Multiple district employees have been recognized for their work:
 - Jason Sickel — a vocal music teacher at Blue Valley North: *2017 Kansas Teacher of the Year*
 - Cathy Kerr — a district psychologist: *2016 Kansas School Psychologist of the Year*
 - Kristi Dixon — a high school counselor: *2016-2017 Kansas School Counselor of the Year*
- Blue Valley Schools took **first place** on Niche Rankings' "2017 Best Places to Teach in Kansas" list.

The Solution:

A NEW BRAND FOR HUMAN RESOURCES

Dedication. Collaboration. Innovation.

Providing Blue Valley students with the highest level of instruction possible means having an exemplary teacher in every classroom. To attract and retain this level of talent, the district developed a new brand for the Human Resources department and worked with principals to determine the qualities possessed by exemplary teachers. These conversations sparked a tagline ("Dedication. Collaboration. Innovation.") that is now used in the district's recruiting and interviewing process to identify better talent.



District Background

LOCATION: Overland Park, KS

ENROLLMENT: 22,078

FACILITIES:

- 20 elementary schools (*grades K-5*)
- 9 middle schools (*grades 6-8*)
- 5 high schools (*grades 9-12*)

STAFF:

- Certified staff: 1,848
- Classified staff: 1,418
- Administrators: 104

DEMOGRAPHICS:

10% of Blue Valley students report a home language other than English and identify 70 different primary languages.

Caucasian/White: 74.82%

Asian: 11.91%

Hispanic: 5.49%

African-American/Black: 3.31%

American Indian/Alaskan Native

American: 0.36%

Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.11%

Solutions Used

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

- **DEDICATION:** Exemplary teachers are *dedicated* to doing whatever it takes to help each student succeed.
- **COLLABORATION:** Exemplary teachers *collaborate* and use data to personalize learning for each student.
- **INNOVATION:** Exemplary teachers use *innovative* instructional strategies, integrate technology and create learning environments that help meet the personal learning needs of each student.

LEVERAGING ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS FROM FRONTLINE

Blue Valley Schools partners with Frontline to reach their goals through four main strategies.

1 Hiring people who fit the culture.

To effectively find candidates who are most likely to be exemplary teachers, Blue Valley Schools uses Frontline Recruiting & Hiring to customize the application process and identify top candidates. With Frontline's solution, the district can easily cast a wide recruiting net by posting jobs on K12JobSpot.com and social media — a strategy that has increased their applicant pool. Then, administrators can identify the most dedicated, collaborative and innovative candidates and quickly bring them on board.

"I have been able to depict teacher qualities and characteristics that I want in my classrooms. I am thrilled with the hiring process, which makes the future for our students that much better." – Phoebe Lewis | Principal, Pleasant Ridge Middle School

2 Understanding absence trends.

As part of Blue Valley's promise to have an exemplary educator in the classroom every day, administrators must carefully manage teacher absences. They use Frontline Absence & Time to track data and forecast trends, allowing administrators to place high-quality substitutes where they can best support student learning.

"Frontline's system is very helpful for us in knowing where we stand on a daily basis — how many teachers we are missing from our classroom, where our substitutes are. We're able to identify patterns and better anticipate needs... It's been a really great tool for us in terms of planning, preparation and making sure that learning continues to happen in our classrooms." – Bob Kreifels | Executive Director for Human Resources and Academic Services

3 Gauging teachers' performance against district goals.

Having exemplary educators in every classroom means a commitment to helping educators continually improve their skills. To see how much progress they have made, leaders at Blue Valley Schools use Frontline Professional Growth to gain a thorough understanding of teachers' strengths and deficits. District administrators can identify where the district's teachers perform very well, how teachers take advantage of learning opportunities and which areas could benefit from improvement. Then, they can plan relevant, collaborative professional development opportunities that help every educator become truly exemplary.

"Frontline Professional Growth has been extremely helpful for us in terms of helping us identify where we have strengths, where our teachers perform very well and how our teachers take advantage of professional learning opportunities. Then we can look back to see if there are areas that can be improved, and start planning more focused professional development opportunities. That ensures that our teachers have what they need to do for our kids in the classroom every day." – Bob Kreifels

4 Empowering leaders with insights and visibility.

With easily-accessible data from Frontline's solutions, leaders in Blue Valley Schools are empowered to identify needs at the building, grade, subject and individual levels; explore how initiatives impact results over time and ensure alignment with district goals. These insights give Blue Valley leaders the clarity, focus and alignment they need to reach the goals set forth by the Board of Education.

"Connected systems help us have a broader view of who we are as a school district and how we interact and interrelate with each other. It brings our professional learning, our curriculum instruction and our hiring and recruiting processes together. Ultimately, all of those play a part in student achievement. Now, we have that data available and that data is connected. It provides a much richer conversation and ultimately leads to better instruction and better learning experiences for our kids." – Bob Kreifels



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**.