establishment

Blevins School District, AR

grade level

Pre K-12

no. students

480

no. devices

450

solution

Impero Education Pro

BLEVINS SCHOOLS

case study

background

Blevins School District, located in Blevins AR, uses a combination of PCs and laptops alongside 75 iPads, to support learning in the classroom. Voted #1 in the South West region for 11th grade literacy, Blevins School District needed a solution to help manage its devices effectively.

issues

Before Impero Education Pro, Blevins School District were utilizing SMART Synchronise in two of its computer labs to monitor student activity. However, this left nothing in place to manage the laptops and iPads within the district. With only one person responsible for IT, who also taught for half of the day, the Technology Coordinator would have to manage the entire campus running around between classes – she was often nicknamed "sneaker man". As SMART Synchronise was discontinued, and the need for extra IT support became apparent, a solution to simplify the IT processes within the district was required.

solution

After attending a workshop at their local cooperative, Blevins School District soon learnt of Impero Education Pro and set up a webinar with the Arkansas sales representative. The functionality included in Impero Education Pro would help Blevins School District simplify tasks and save time. After deciding Impero Education Pro was the solution Blevins School District needed, the Technology Coordinator had to pitch it to the board. With a perpetual licence deal, Blevins School District would always have access to Impero Education Pro, and with a multiyear offer over 3 years, Blevins School District would find it impossible to find a person to do the job at such a low cost.

implementation

Since Blevins School District trialled the software before purchasing Impero Education Pro, the implementation was simple. The Impero team set everything up during the trial period and remoted in to the district network. During this process, the Technology Coordinator took notes of what the team were doing and the biggest lab was already set up with policies running. When moving to the full version, all Blevins School District were required to do was add machines and create some additional groups, which was easy after having already been walked through the process.

benefits

Since implementing Impero Education Pro, Blevins School District has realized several core benefits, including:

keep students on track – With a live thumbnail view to monitor student activity, teachers can easily identify students not on task. Teachers can quickly message these students using the messaging system included in Impero Education Pro, and say "hey I'm watching, get back to work" rather than having to shout across the class.

focus learning in credit recovery lab – In order to make up credits (after failing a course) students are required to take an online course in the credit recovery lab. Using allow lists to lock down the lab (only allowing access to the single site used for the course) students can remain focused and are not open to online distractions. Using this functionality, if a student even tries to open a Chrome browser, Impero will pop up and say, "you're not authorized to view this page".

create good digital citizens – The teachers at Blevins School District have never had anything like Impero Education Pro before. Using the live thumbnail views and activity captures, teachers can monitor students even if they're not logged into the server, it monitors local machines as well as those on the domain. Blevins School District can identify online safety dangers and teach students before a situation escalates.

Life saver!

Q&A with Cindy Heagwood, Technology Coordinator

how does Impero Education Pro make your job easier?

It's made a tremendous difference! One of our biggest issues each year is online testing. Every year our state has a new software application, meaning we have to uninstall the old desktop app and replace it with the new one. Last year, with the kind help from the counsellors, it took us two weeks to set up two labs for testing. This year, with the help of Impero Education Pro, we could simply push out the MSI file ready to install. For the same task and same set of labs, we were able to get the online testing ready in an hour and a half – and I was able to do this from my back porch. It even has our install time down to less than half an hour, making programs ready for teachers much quicker. It really has replaced another person on the tech side – you're not going to hire someone for 3 years for 22 thousand dollars, and that's what we got for less money with our three year support plan.

how has Impero Education Pro helped keep your students safe online?

The keyword detection feature is great! I really like the fact it's running automatically in the background. The teachers are even becoming more accustomed to this feature asking me "why is this student's name turning red?" and I tell them it's because they're on something they shouldn't. They're even starting to go in and review the captures themselves. We actually captured a serious incident with one of our high school students; they were accessing a chatroom site (using a VPN Proxy to get around the blocking from our filter) and it was clear she didn't know the person she was talking to. What made matters worse, was it was a very graphic discussion with personal information given, including location. I turned this over to the principal who had to get her parents involved and I think even the police were contacted as there was concern the person was an online predator. It's scary to think of what could have happened. We're grateful for the captures, if we find one that helps protect a student, the filtering through of these captures is all worth it.

how would you describe the support team?

I love the support team! They're excellent. They're very prompt at getting back to me and they can remote into my server and help me isolate the problem, fix it and show me how to prevent it in the future. I've been very pleased with this service.

how would you sum up Impero?

Life saver!

impero