



Maine Department of Education/Transportation

Case Study – January 2016

Central Lincoln County School System/AOS 93

Serving rural communities of Bremen, Bristol, Damariscotta, Jefferson, Newcastle, Nobleboro, South Bristol

District Profile

Central Lincoln County School System/AOS 93 is located in mid-coast Maine and serves seven rural communities. Approximately 1,500 students are transported to 5 Elementary (K-8) schools as well as Lincoln Academy for 9-12th graders. 26 buses are used to transport these students. Separate buses are used for the elementary and secondary bus runs.

Situation

Superintendent Steven W. Bailey reached out to the State of Maine's Department of Education because he was looking to identify efficiencies that could be put into place to improve transportation for the schools. Specifically to reduce student ride time, more accurate timing for student pick up/drop off and arrival to schools, and more efficient access to information on student location and bus ridership. The state directed Mr. Bailey to contact Transfinder due to the state's contract with the routing provider, and the success thus far in the roll out of the State Routing and Transportation Management System-SRTMS. In addition, Debby Newell, the transportation head bus driver at Great Salt Bay Community School, had experience with Transfinder when the state's contract was first introduced in 2009.

Solution

Mr. Bailey reached out to Transfinder, and the company's professional services arm conducted a study for the district in 2015 where they identified certain steps that could be taken to help improve the overall efficiency of the transportation department. The findings were presented to the AOS boards, and several of the suggestions were implemented, resulting in reducing the routes from 8 to 7.

In order to conduct the transportation study, the professional services team had to first work with the district to input student information and current locations of bus stops into the Routefinder Pro software. This significantly helped the district, and Mr. Bailey and Debby, as they worked to move forward with implementing the suggested changes and continue using the software to improve operations.

Since the software was already loaded with the district's transportation information, Mr. Bailey and Debby just needed to learn how to use it going forward. To do this they decided to attend Transfinder University, a 10-week online training course, to help them become proficient. Although the maps used in the course were more urban than the district's rural setting, they were able to take what they learned and apply it to their operation. The district is now successfully maintaining their information in the software, and ensuring data accuracy as they continue to input information and adjust for efficiencies.



Benefits

As a result of the study conducted by Transfinder's professional services the district reduced their number of routes from 8 to 7. This happened at a time when the district was going to lose a driver. One fewer bus was on the road so there were monetary savings and the reduction has increased the efficiency of the routes by reducing the ride time for students on the bus, which is the most significant impact. Currently the longest ride times students have on a bus is 45-65 minutes, so the goal of AOS 93 is to continue to decrease this by identifying areas where routes overlap, and make adjustments where this is occurring.

In addition, they accomplished the secondary goals to have accurate and easy access to knowledge on student locations and bus ridership, and more accurate timing of where buses are at a given time.

According to Mr. Bailey the software is extremely robust, and once the tools are learned it's easy to use and greatly improves operations. He does suggest spending frequent sessions using the software to keep fluent in using all the tools included within the software. In addition, based on experience, the importance of inputting district information correctly before trying to create or adjust routes results in the greatest payoff and reduces the frustration with the number of steps needed to efficiently use the software.

Testimonials

Steven W. Bailey - Superintendent

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