

Spring Branch Independent School District

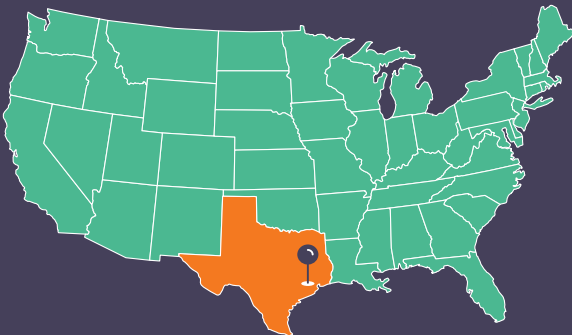
Overview:

Spring Branch Independent School District needed a Learning Management System that would:

- Replace the dozens of different digital curriculum tools
- Allow teachers to continue using G Suite for Education
- Centralize curriculum resources and other materials onto a single enterprise platform

Customer:

Spring Branch Independent School District,
Houston, TX USA



2016

Year Implemented itslearning

District Profile:



46 Schools

8 High Schools, 8 Middle Schools, 26 Elementary Schools, 6 Early Childhood/Pre-K Schools



35,000

More than 35,000 students and 4,000 teachers and staff

Demographics:

60.3% Hispanic



26.6% White



6.4% Asian



4.6% African American



1.9% Two or More



0.2% Native American



56.0% Free/Reduced Lunch



34.4% Limited English Proficiency



Spring Branch ISD Integrates Google for Education with the itslearning LMS, increases user adoption, and improves tracking of student progress

Texas school district moves from using multiple curriculum resources to streamline all of them onto a single, enterprise platform that supports learning 24/7.

Making a Direct Connection

Before implementing the itslearning learning management system (LMS), Spring Branch ISD's teachers were storing their digital curriculum tools in Edmodo, Google Classroom, WordPress, Weebly, and various other sites. Digital content was scattered all over the place, with no central hub for everyone to access and collaborate on.

That changed when Spring Branch ISD started using its new LMS a few years ago. Now teachers, students and administrators no longer need to bounce around between dozens of different educational technology tools for content, curriculum, instruction, and data analysis.

What hasn't changed is how teachers continue to use their favorite G Suite for Education productivity tools such as Google Docs, Sheets, Slides and Drive via a direct integration with itslearning. "The integration of Google and itslearning helps break down a lot of barriers with teachers that were Google Classroom holdouts," says Krystal Weiss, Educational Facilitator for the district. When teachers use the itslearning LMS, much of the experience is already familiar, thanks to the premier partnership with Google for Education. "That is important because teachers immediately recognize their favorite G Suite tools and feel at right at home. Teachers are more likely to adopt new technology if they're working in a space that they're comfortable in, and not having to figure it all out."

Peer-to-Peer Collaboration

From a student engagement and collaboration standpoint, it's now easier for teachers to quickly and easily get information out to students, and for them to collaborate and create groups amongst each other (using itslearning's group setting). "A first-grade teacher, for example, can assemble a group of students to work on a slide deck together," says Weiss, "and share peer feedback with one another."

According to Weiss, Spring Branch ISD's English teachers love the fact that peer assessments (managed in itslearning) can happen with right in Google Docs, and as students are writing their papers. Teachers can also use the Google-itslearning connection to share content with individual groups of students that, in turn, can share their input with those instructors—all using a centralized repository (versus myriad different resources). "itslearning truly streamlines the instructional process," says Weiss, "so there's more time spent teaching and learning."

Teachers also use the LMS to track student progress, show mastery, and to help their students understand which lessons they may need to revisit. "We have other teachers who are doing outside tracking, but putting tons of learning

resources into the LMS," says Weiss. "Once students are done with their tracking and know where they stand, they can go into itslearning and find the resources they need to help them relearn or go deeper."

Cloning Themselves

Using their itslearning LMS, Spring Branch ISD's teachers are effectively "cloning" themselves. They can create instructional videos, for example, or give detailed instructions in a very clear and concise way for students who, in turn, don't have to keep coming back to ask questions.

"You can put everything that an independent learner needs right there in the platform," says Weiss. "That makes it easier to conduct small group instruction, because you can have other students working independently in the platform accomplishing goals, or even working collaboratively in the platform."

Better Together

In addition to the seamless interplay, the itslearning LMS and Google for Education integration goes further so the two actually work better together. For example, a popular feature of the Google Classroom is the option for teachers to personalize assignments by selecting a document from their Google Drive as a general template, so that each individual student or group receives their own copy. itslearning has now made this functionality available in the assignment tool. Teachers share access to assignment documents, enabling them to monitor the progress of students and provide them with real-time feedback. "For teachers, being able to 'push out' the content (e.g., a digital worksheet or rubric) was a top Google Classroom feature," Weiss says, "now they have that capability right in our LMS."

While G-Suite helps to make classroom workflows easier, when combined with the itslearning LMS, Spring Branch ISD also gain one login to standards-aligned content, robust assessment tools, and instant access to standards aligned progress and performance data that simplifies teaching and enhances learning.

To other districts that are considering an LMS, Weiss says teachers and students get the most value from a fully-functioning platform that replaces and/or enhances all of the different approaches that individual teachers have tried on their own. "Teachers need a centralized place where they can get data to and from their students," says Weiss, "and that's just not feasible with any other LMS."