

# Pearson Benchmark Successes

## **Pearson Benchmark Case Study Putnam City Schools Suburban Oklahoma City**

### **Profile**

For the past 90 years, Putnam City Schools (PCS) has been one of the premier school districts in the state of Oklahoma, serving nearly 20,000 students in 27 schools. Among other accolades, the district has been a repeat recipient of the national School Match “What Parents Want” award, given to school districts that exemplify excellence in curriculum, academic test scores, library/media services and above average expenditures on pupil instruction.

Of its three high, five middle, and 19 elementary schools, the urban school district has 11 Title One schools and an ever-increasing English Language Learner population.

### **Challenge**

In the early days of NCLB, Oklahoma school districts withstood a flurry of activity in the development and implementation of state-level norms for each grade, and high school graduation. Achievement of these standards, as well as AYP requirements, is a complicated issue. It requires districts to accurately assess the progress of each and every student, and to do so in such a way as to inform and guide instruction.

Putnam officials knew that they needed a comprehensive, technology-based system that not only supported the progress and reporting requirements of NCLB, but one that would help them address the need to educate an increasingly diverse population. Further, they needed a solution that would easily integrate with their existing student information system and data-analysis tool.

“We needed a solution that could measure our progress – that is, translate our collected, relevant, timely data from multiple sources at multiple levels — and help us monitor what has been accomplished. We needed to know what works, what doesn't, and what remains to be learned,” said Jason Simeroth, director of student achievement and assessment for Putnam City Schools.

Their decision was to select Pearson Benchmark, the customizable, Web-based district benchmark testing system and reporting tool developed by Pearson School Systems. This allowed for total integration with two other technology solutions they currently have from Pearson School Systems: the SASI student information system and Pearson Inform, a sophisticated data-analysis system.

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*Jason Simeroth*

*Director of Student Achievement and Assessment*

*Putnam City Schools*

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## Implementation

PCS' journey to achieve district-wide benchmark testing in order to increase instructional capabilities and affect greater student achievement, began with the installation of the Pearson SASI student information system, the most widely used student information system in K-12 education.

This was followed by the implementation of Pearson Inform, a sophisticated, yet easy to use data analysis tool that leverages integrated data from both the SASI student information system and multiple assessment sources, including state assessments and national NRTs, district, school and classroom tests, course grades and manual score entry. When coupled with the data provided by the newly acquired Pearson Benchmark, the integrated solution can combine, analyze, and report on a variety of student and assessment information components, including student demographics, state tests, standardized tests, district tests, and more.



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District leaders of Putnam City Schools were equally impressed with the test creation and test administration processes of Pearson Benchmark. Its powerful tools for test-item authoring and user-friendly wizards guide teachers through test creation and assignment to groups within and across the student population. In the future, this open system will allow the district’s teachers to formulate, deliver, and score assessments efficiently, quickly and accurately -- on paper or online -- while aligning the local district requirements with state standards.

With a reliable, proven assessment and management tool like Pearson Benchmark, the entire district and each school can now view performance data at the district, school, classroom, and individual levels against target benchmarks. In addition, Pearson Benchmark enables the district and its schools to perform comparative analysis based on aggregate and disaggregate performance data driven by the No Child Left Behind Act and state requirements. Pearson Inform ties this solution together by providing achievement data analysis and decision-support reporting tools that help Putnam’s teachers, principals, and administrators make informed data-driven decisions.

Simeroth noted that as an ASP solution, Pearson Benchmark delivers seamless integration with current student information systems (SIS), minimal maintenance and no interference with teacher or

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student daily activities. Easy SIS integration allows districts to offer parental access to select assessment results, including test scores and mastery of standards, enabling them to help children at home. Pearson Benchmark also provides links to prescriptive resources that address specific needs and increases parent involvement in efforts to improve student achievement.

With the installation of the Pearson School Systems' dynamic trio, combining the power of assessment, reporting and student information solutions many of the complex tasks at Putnam City Schools will be centralized -- from gathering data to assessing performance to delivering instruction and developing reports -- into a single district perspective.



“Putnam City Schools is changing how it does everything from gathering data to assessing performance to delivering instruction and communicating with teachers and parents,” said Simeroth. “Ultimately this will drive the development and implementation of the nine week curriculum map which will lead to making great strides in raising student achievement levels going forward.”

### Results

Simeroth noted that the test run of Pearson Benchmark demonstrated what a difference the technology solution will have at Putnam City Schools.

“Pearson Benchmark is going to give us the big picture view and the intermittent window to look at how we can restructure our instruction to help each student – especially those struggling the most,” said Simeroth.

This fall, students in grades five through eight will begin taking benchmark tests in language

arts, math and social studies. Teachers will begin administering benchmark testing in algebra 1, biology, U.S. history and social studies for ninth and tenth grade students by the end of 2005.

“With the addition of Pearson Benchmark to our educational tool kit teachers and administrators can readily monitor student progress, address deficiencies and recheck mastery,” said Simeroth. “The result is more targeted instruction, shorter assessment cycles, and enhanced student performance for every child in the district.”