



SchoolStatus

Woodward School District
Case Study

GRADUATING FROM A DISTANCE

SUDDEN DISTANCE LEARNING
DIDN'T STOP THIS DISTRICT
FROM GETTING AT-RISK SENIORS
ACROSS THE FINISH LINE

Before Covid hit early in March 2020 and students across the country left for Spring Break, Woodward High School had 36 students at-risk of not graduating and nine who very likely would not graduate.

With sudden, unavoidable distance straining the relationships with students and their families, Covid-19 was threatening the administration's ability to help those seniors in need.

"Normally, when we have them here at school, we can go find them, we can sit down and kind of help get them across the finish line," says High School Principal Ron Sunderland. "We didn't have that kind of opportunity last year."


HOW DO YOU STAY THE COURSE WHEN THE WHOLE WORLD IS GOING OFF-TRACK?

It comes as no surprise that Superintendent Kyle Reynolds looks to technology for problem-solving in his Oklahoma District. The administrator spent ten years as the Technology Director before taking up the Superintendent position for Woodward Public School District in 2014. Ever since bringing his personal computer to his English classroom to reduce unnecessary paper usage years ago, Reynolds has been committed to modernizing instruction.

“With a lot of the technology we have in place when we went into the pandemic, we were in a great position,” Reynolds explains. Every student received Chromebooks for online learning, access to necessary materials via e-books, and educators were communicating with parents via SchoolStatus—a communication tool that helps the district reach every stakeholder. SchoolStatus quickly became an essential tool for supporting students at risk of not graduating.



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That's because reaching parents, in general, is a lot harder than it has ever been. "It's not like 20-30 years ago when you call and leave a message on someone's answering machine at home," observes Reynolds. "Most people don't even answer the phone if you call their cell phone." Parent engagement barriers are even greater when you consider the different languages spoken in many homes. "In the late 90's we were probably five or six percent Hispanic. Today we're about 25-26% Hispanic."

"Now, It's all about texting," he explains. SchoolStatus enables educators to text parents directly, in any language—making two-way conversations more frequent and enhancing the relationships between teachers and parents. "Having the translation options in our area is crucial," Reynolds adds. Working through a translator or worse, a student, is a good way to slow down or cut off the line of communication between home and school. "It is so much more efficient to have the preferred language feature in SchoolStatus," says Reynolds. In addition, with automatic logging and tracking, SchoolStatus helps administrators view the frequency or success of communication efforts district-wide—a great feature as Woodward High School Principals worked to help their struggling seniors graduate over the summer. "Our contacts went up almost 400% after we pivoted to distance learning. It was the tool that we used."



REMOVING BARRIERS TO REACH EVERYONE

“SchoolStatus gave us the opportunity to be in touch with those students in a continuous manner,” explains Principal Sunderland. With no apps for parents or guardians to download, the success rate for reaching stakeholders increases significantly. “In today’s world, as busy as we are, we have a lot of problems just connecting. SchoolStatus gave us a tool that we could use no matter where we were.”

“The principals leveraged SchoolStatus by going beyond the primary contact and going into the secondary and third-level contacts—people who are on each student’s list,” Reynolds says, explaining the multiple contacts available for each student. “Eventually, ‘Aunt Sally’ is tired of getting these calls and mom is going to call you back.”

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IN ACTION

“It became almost second nature not only for us as an administrative team but also for our teachers,” says Principal Sunderland. “The convenience, simplicity, and availability are the biggest things for us. We want to make things as easy as we can for our teachers and SchoolStatus does that.”

For Woodward High School educators, persistence pays off. “There were several kids we had to stay on pretty hard to get them through,” says Sunderland. “When all was said and done, we ended up only having four students who did not graduate. We went from the 36 at-risk of not graduating and the nine that weren’t likely to graduate, and were able to help more through, resulting in graduating 176 out of our class of 180.”

“SchoolStatus created that channel of communications for teachers and our administrators to make sure they could get in touch with students. In many cases that’s what allowed us to reach out to seniors that we needed to get across the finish line.”

ABOUT WOODWARD

Woodward Public Schools is located in Northwest Oklahoma and the home of the Boomers. The district is made up of six schools with over 2,738 students.

Boomer Mission:

We Believe Woodward Boomers will become lifelong learners with a pioneer spirit: cooperative, productive, responsible, and ready for the future.

Boomer Vision:

We will engage all stakeholders in an ongoing, collaborative, data-driven effort to increase student achievement and close achievement gaps.

Values:

ALL site leaders will be mutually accountable for the progress of ALL students through the monitoring of student achievement data and growth on a monthly basis.



ABOUT SCHOOLSTATUS

SchoolStatus is the only data analytics platform turning student insights into parent conversations. Through powerful reporting tools, automatic integrations, and customizable data points, educators easily identify students most in need of engagement. Then using the communication tools built right into the platform, instantly connect with guardians through calls, texts, or e-mails to reach families where they are. We focus on the data, so educators can focus on education. Contact with us at schoolstatus.com, like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @schoolstatusapp.



SchoolStatus

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