

Reynolds School District Uses Visual Analytics to Confidently Communicate Their Story to Stakeholders

THE SITUATION

Reynolds School District is in the green state of Oregon and serves over 11,000 students across the Portland, Gresham, Fairview, Wood Village, and Troutdale areas. The district is committed to excellence and continues to innovate to meet current and future needs. For Cynthia Le, Director of Finance at Reynolds, it was difficult to access the various data sets submitted to the Oregon Department of Education. It was therefore a challenge to produce accurate financial and enrollment projections and peer district analyses in an effective and efficient manner. Le was determined to find a tool that allowed the team to compile reports confidently and quickly to better communicate the district's story to stakeholders.



Organization Type:
K-12 Public School

Enrollment:
11,211
Annual Operating Budget:
\$223M

The Reynolds School District confirmed in 1954 as a consolidation of the Fairview, Troutdale, and Wilkes elementary school districts. The district serves over 11,000 students across Portland, Gresham, Fairview, Wood Village, and Troutdale. Reynolds' four main objectives are to increase student achievement, enhance equity work, increase fiscal responsibility, and increase internal and external communication.

THE SOLUTION

Cynthia Le first heard about Forecast5 when she attended a presentation from neighboring district, Beaverton School District. Beaverton presented key reports they had built using the forecasting and budgeting tool, 5Cast™, and data and peer comparison tool, 5Sight™. Le quickly realized the potential of these tools and was eager to access the finance, academic, student, and staffing data sets to replicate the reports Beaverton was producing. Shortly after becoming a user, Le began developing multi-year forecasts, conducting peer district analyses, and gaining insights on a comprehensive level.

“WE COULD BE USING ONE METHODOLOGY, BUT OUR NEIGHBORING DISTRICTS MIGHT BE USING A DIFFERENT METHODOLOGY. NOW, WE CAN TALK “APPLES – TO – APPLES” WITH OUR PEER DISTRICTS. WE HAVE GAINED A LOT OF CONFIDENCE AMONG OUR STAKEHOLDERS”

— Cynthia Le, Director of Finance

THE RESULTS

Using Forecast5 decision support tools, Le gained the ability to compile and analyze enrollment, staffing, financial, student performance, and demographic data for individual schools in a matter of clicks. She saved a substantial amount of time and produced peer comparison, historical trend, and multi-year projection reports in a presentable format. The ability to tell the district's story with visual analytics has improved understanding among stakeholders and enhanced transparency initiatives. Beyond this project, the team has produced a District Overview Report which focuses on revenue sources, expenditure items, staffing, enrollment, and student performance. This report has been valuable in creating a full picture of the district's situation. The ability to seamlessly access data in a timely manner and drill into key areas has been a game changer for this district. For those considering Forecast5 Analytics, she says “Whether you're a huge district or a tiny district, you will benefit from using the tools! Sign up and just have fun!”