Success Story

Becoming an Innovative and Cutting-Edge District

RSU 73, a new school district in lower Maine, was recently created through the consolidation of two districts. The staff of the new district saw an opportunity with this fresh start to become an innovative and cutting-edge district. In an effort to follow their commitment toward improvement, Dr. Robert Wall, the Superintendent of Schools of RSU 73, began searching for a curriculum management system to update their current paper-based system. However, Dr. Wall was not willing to settle—he was in pursuit of a system that would allow the district curriculum to be created around teacher input, analyze the curriculum's standard alignment, and build off the strong curriculum being created around them. He found the solution to his search requirements in School Software Group's curriculum management system, BuildYourOwnCurriculum (BYOC).

> *"Even during the beginning stages of using BYOC, the staff of RSU 73 is already impressed with the ease of use and comprehensive characteristics of BYOC"*
>
> — Dr. Robert Wall,
> Superintendent of Schools, Regional School Unit #73

Ultimately, RSU 73 chose BYOC because, according to Dr. Wall, "the research showed that school districts that used BYOC were able to build and maintain a real and authentic curriculum base." This curriculum base will become a living curriculum teachers can use and adjust year-after-year, encouraging more teacher engagement and a more consistent use of the curriculum. "I was really searching for a curriculum that was living and breathing," explained Dr. Wall. "I wanted something that was dynamic and could be revised and worked on by all." Dr. Wall and his staff also chose BYOC over other management systems, because of its easy-to-use nature, the ability to connect with other district's curriculum, and the comprehensive package that BYOC supports.

The Whole Package

For Dr. Wall and the staff at RSU 73, BYOC will serve as more than just your average curriculum management system. According to Dr. Wall, "The system includes everything." BYOC will enable the district to track what standards students have mastered across departments, serve as a basis for a standards-based report card, help track student performance, and allow them to access the curriculum of other districts, both locally and across the country. Most importantly though, BYOC will give RSU 73 the ability to create "authentic reports of what students are learning and achieving." Based on these reports, RSU 73 will be able to direct and focus their efforts to ensure that all students are receiving an education that prepares them for life after their K-12 education.

Despite just beginning to work with the system, the staff at RSU 73 is already taking advantage of BYOC's ability to connect with other schools—another major selling point

build your own curriculum
The Framework for K-12 Success

Regional School Unit #73
Jay, Livermore, Livermore Falls, Maine

- Enrollment (1,650 Students)
- Newly Created Consolidated District

for the district. One example of a way they used this feature is to search for Everyday Math curriculum. By looking at how other districts are teaching Everyday Math, RSU 73 has been able to focus and guide their own Everyday Math Curriculum in a direction they know to be successful. "Being able to look at other district's curriculum gives us experience because we know what systems work and what systems do not," said Dr. Wall. Through this BYOC capability, RSU 73 is gaining ideas on how to improve their own curriculum.

Intentional Implementation

The goal for RSU 73, as they begin to work with BYOC, is to "establish a comprehensive standards-based curriculum for all subject areas." To help the RSU 73 staff stay on track, "there will be milestone goals established by the administration and staff" and they have already created a "comprehensive-teacher driven model" to help guide their implementation process. Even during the beginning stages of using BYOC, the staff of RSU 73 is already "impressed with the ease of use and comprehensive characteristics of BYOC." All teachers in the district, approximately 100, have received basic training for BYOC and have started entering and creating curriculum in BYOC.

The district expects the full implementation to take approximately five years. Although they are still working out a complete implementation plan, they do already have some courses in the system. "We have quite a few high school standards and courses already in BYOC," explained Dr. Wall. To complete the rest of the high school and middle school courses, departments will work together to improve the paper curriculum before uploading it into BYOC. At the elementary level, staff is going to focus on Mathematics and English Language Arts curriculum before moving to the other subjects. The thought process behind this approach is because "ELA and Math are the basis for all learning," RSU 73 will start

with these subjects and expand from there. Although it may seem like a long implementation timeline, RSU 73 believes that by taking their time they can ensure their teachers have the resources and time to create quality curriculum that provides an accurate view of what is happening in the classroom.

Dr. Wall and his staff spent quite a bit of time looking at and evaluating various curriculum management systems before choosing BYOC. As newcomers to the field of curriculum management, the district wanted to be sure they were getting the best system for their district's needs at a competitive price. As RSU 73 moves forward in their quest to become more innovative and dynamic, BYOC will continue to be a critical element as they create and build curriculum that can serve as the basis of their school district.

About BuildYourOwnCurriculum

BuildYourOwnCurriculum was created as both a curriculum development tool and a 'living' dynamic curriculum repository that is accessible, meets the requirements of new standards and legislation, can be easily updated, and provides genuine value to teachers, administrators, parents and students preK-12.

School Software Group

School Software Group (SSG) is an online solution provider of district curriculum and assessment management systems. At SSG, we believe that a well-articulated and viable curriculum ensures standards-aligned, rigorous, and effective classroom instruction. We create the tools to systematically document a district's curriculum—turning it into a viable, living document that can be easily improved.