Located close to the Virginia border of North Carolina, Elkin City Schools (ECS) is a district ensuring all students receive the necessary skills and knowledge to meet or exceed their academic potential. ECS consistently prioritizes hands-on and one-on-one learning experiences for its students.

To meet their goals, ECS staff and teachers work to make sure that the edtech products students use achieve the desired outcomes. Nearly 75 percent of the ECS district teachers have more than 10 years of experience in the classroom. Having implemented and used edtech with hundreds of students, these veteran educators understand the value in leveraging instructional tools to personalize learning.

“If we are going to use technology in the classroom, then we need to know if we are getting the results we expect!”

Cynthia Altemueller
Chief Academic Officer, Elkin City Schools
“The goal is to allow our staff to get the most out of their edtech and ensure that tools are relevant to content standards in classrooms. We want to help them make informed decisions when they try, buy and measure education technology.”

Cynthia Altemueller

Questions like these were put forth by ECS administrators and served as the impetus to better understand the edtech in their schools.

ECS is a close-knit community where teachers, staff and administrators work together as a team. Edtech conversations are not unusual and have been used to gather helpful feedback about which edtech tools are working. But, before implementing LearnPlatform, it was always a challenge to keep everyone up to date. ECS's software requests were primarily handled in-house via email or other informal means. ECS wanted to gain a deeper understanding of the software its educators were using and create more efficient processes for software requests to ensure that enough resources were being dedicated to the implementation and evaluation of those products.

5 Challenges of K-12 EdTech for Small Districts and Schools

- Difficult to consistently solicit and capture teacher input on the growing number of edtech products.
- Absence of appropriate data to properly analyze or allocate spending on digital tools.
- Hard to align edtech usage with school improvement plan goals.
- Inconsistent and siloed collection of product utilization and student outcome data.
- Lack of control and knowledge sharing of rapidly-growing edtech product libraries within schools.
After exploring a number of potential solutions to develop its edtech management processes, ECS selected LearnPlatform to better understand which products were being used and the efficacy of those products. Early in the process, ECS decided to utilize LearnPlatform to get the most value out of its edtech.

This included:

- Soliciting teacher feedback on products through the platform to empower teacher voice and leverage user insights to inform decision making.
- Curating and using a centralized product library to simplify the edtech management process.
- Utilizing free, real-time edtech usage dashboards via the LearnPlatform Google integration to understand which tools are being accessed and how often.
- Running IMPACT™ Analyses to understand how digital learning tools are used, if they meet predetermined objectives and how best to improve student outcomes.
- Planning to engage vendors via LearnPlatform to streamline agreement to ECS terms and conditions in one place, creating efficiencies for district administrators.

"LearnPlatform is not another program to raise test scores, rather it is a management system that will allow us to organize, streamline and analyze the validity of all tech tools being used."

Cynthia Altemueller
IMPLEMENTATION

To kick off the work with ECS, the Lea(R)n implementation team set up a customized single sign on entry portal for teachers and staff, making it easy for users to log into their accounts with district credentials. In the ECS portal, teachers could access reviews on more than 5,000 edtech products, a district-specific product library and a centralized place to provide feedback on products they were using in the classroom.

Administrators received access to dashboards populated with analytics from the Chrome Extensions and detailed IMPACT Analyses, as well as comprehensive edtech management functionality including their district product library. After a walkthrough from the Lea(R)n team, ECS administrators set up their own software feedback request processes for ongoing management, and conducted a district-wide training session for school leaders to familiarize them with LearnPlatform and encourage participation.

RESULTS

Within 90 days of their initial implementation call, ECS administrators had a wealth of actionable data and comprehensive analytics to help them begin to understand which edtech was being used across the district, how educators felt about what they were using, and IMPACT Analysis results on key edtech products, including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of tools accessed based on Chrome always-on inventory</th>
<th>Percentage of ECS students meeting or exceeding the recommended fidelity levels for a core reading program based on initial IMPACT Analysis results</th>
<th>Number of separate data points teachers provided from first feedback request</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>42.8%</td>
<td>1,110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on these initial findings, ECS is further evaluating and improving edtech vetting, purchasing and implementation workflows, and providing training to give teachers a more prominent role in the software request and selection process.