

Spotlight

Case Study: Kansas Dept. of Education

Kansas Department of Education Implements eScholar Uniq-ID® for Students and Staff

Kansas Identified the Need for a Student and Staff Identification System

In 2004, the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) developed a plan to collect student level data as part of its Kansas Individual Data on Students (KIDS) program. The KIDS project would become part of an initiative to build an enterprise data system. It became apparent to Kathy Gosa, KSDE's Director of Information Technology, that a critical part of KIDS would be the ability to assign and track unique student identification numbers (IDs) for all of the Department's K-12 students. Ms. Gosa recognized that aside from being critical, this would be the most challenging part of the task.

Additionally, the KSDE faced another daunting task: protecting its teachers from identity theft. Accordingly, the Department needed to improve security measures and discontinue its use of social security numbers to identify teachers and other professional and paraprofessional staff.

Kansas Selected eScholar Uniq-ID® for Students

In addition to simply assigning unique IDs, KSDE wanted the ability to (i) assign IDs in batches based on data from central sources; (ii) provide its administrators the ability to have, on one screen, all information necessary to resolve "near matches"; and (iii) link the unique identification system to other systems housed at KSDE, such as special education, career and technical education, migrant education, and discipline, as well as systems at school districts and potentially other locations (like universities). In addition, KSDE planned to implement and host the system internally and integrate the system seamlessly with the KSDE portal. Finally, KSDE wanted to link to those other sources in the most contemporary yet simplest way possible – Web Services.

KSDE staff did not want to build a product from scratch, but the market was devoid of many quality products able to satisfy all of the Department's requirements. After learning that eScholar Uniq-ID® for Students was successfully implemented in Iowa, staff at KSDE began to look closer. "We liked the open-mindedness and forward thinking of the company," says Kathy Gosa. "The eScholar staff understood what we wanted and didn't try to put obstacles in our way."

The software was purchased in November 2004 and the roll-out process announced the following January. By August 2005, KSDE had collected data for more than 470,000 students in the state. Kathy Gosa indicates that one of the keys to success was tying state funding to the assignment of student ID's.

Kansas Continued Its Success by Selecting eScholar Uniq-ID® for Staff

Continuing its comprehensive plan for enterprise data management, KSDE wanted to make sure that it selected a solution that was architected to play the role of "master data management" for the unique identification of the approximately 168,000 local and state education agency staff members. In addition, KSDE has a .NET environment and needed a solution that would work seamlessly with it.

KSDE chose to deploy the eScholar Uniq-ID® for Staff system to address this requirement. "We chose eScholar Uniq-ID® for Staff because of our successful implementation of eScholar Uniq-ID® for Students," said Ms. Gosa. "eScholar is one of the best vendors we have worked with. They have been very responsive to our needs and are constantly working to improve their product."

KSDE has assigned IDs to students and staff statewide. They will use Web Services to integrate data from the eScholar Uniq-ID® for Students and Staff with other systems, including special education, career and technical education, migrant education, and discipline.

Highlights:

- The Kansas Department of Education's implementation of an eScholar solution to assign and track unique student and staff identification numbers was crucial to the success of the Kansas Individual Data on Students (KIDS) enterprise data system.
- Although KSDE had very specific requirements, they did not want to build a system from scratch and were able to take advantage of the commercial-off-the-shelf eScholar Uniq-ID® products to meet their needs.
- KSDE chose to work with eScholar because of the open-mindedness and forward thinking of the company, as well as their understanding of the requirements.
- In order to protect its teachers from identity theft through the use of social security numbers, KSDE chose to deploy the eScholar Uniq-ID® for Staff.
- KSDE uses Web Services to integrate data from the eScholar Uniq-ID® for Students and Staff with their other systems, including special education, career and technical education, migrant education, and discipline.

About eScholar

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