



Maine Department of Education/Transportation Case Study – February 2016

RSU 60/MSAD 60

Serving towns of Berwick, North Berwick, and Lebanon

District Profile

RSU 60/MSAD 60 is a rural District in southern Maine that serves the towns of Berwick, North Berwick and Lebanon. Students are transported to 8 schools in the district. In this district 52%, 1,735 of the 3,300 students, are transported by school transportation. The District manages its own fleet of 52 school buses: 42 full size school buses and 10 mini school buses.

Solution

Kathy “Kitty” Roberts is the Director of Transportation for the RSU 60/MSAD 60 school district. Kathy began using Transfinder about ten years ago. This was before the State of Maine’s free offering for a Student Routing and Transportation Management System (SRTMS) which is the Transfinder transportation software. Prior to RSU 60/MSAD 60 using Transfinder, the district had been using Tyler Technologies, Versatrans solution.

When Kathy arrived at RSU 60/MSAD 60 she completed a review of transportation operations. It became clear to Kathy that the district would benefit by changing transportation data systems. Kathy developed a transition plan for the district to shift from using Versatrans to the Transfinder system. The change delivered an immediate savings of \$2,500 per year in annual maintenance fees and avoided an initial outlay of about \$20,000 that was needed to update the existing Versatrans system. In addition, the district would benefit from access to additional transportation modules that are included at no additional cost with the Transfinder state transportation software program, such as: Routefinder Pro, Infofinder LE that would help them on the effort to go paperless and Servicefinder to help manage the fleet and be proactive in preventative maintenance.

The first step of Kathy’s transition plan was to upload student data. That was implemented by working with the district information technology staff and Transfinder Maine account executive. The second step was to help the transportation team learn how to use Transfinder while motivating them to use data to make safe and efficient transportation decisions. Kathy’s team used the online 24/7 training webinars and the state classroom training to learn the system. Brenda Cravens, the district transportation coordinator, embraced the change by attending several online webinars, learning from Kathy’s knowledge, receiving help from Transfinder’s support team who quickly responded to her calls, and attending the annual classroom training at the state school transportation conference. The third step was to collect data that could be used to develop transportation budgets and make daily transportation operations decisions.



Now, with student data uploaded, team member training initiated, the first full year (fiscal year 2015) of data collection complete and the second year of data collection in progress the District is fully operational with Transfinder software. The RSU 60/MSAD 60 transportation team uses Routefinder Pro, Transfinder's flagship routing software, and is in the process of implementing Infofinder 1e, in an effort to go paperless across the district, request and bill all field trips, and communicate with student parents. In addition, the district will soon be implementing Servicefinder to help manage the fleet safety and initiate a data driven preventative maintenance plan.

Benefits

Changing from Versatrans to Transfinder saved the district \$2,500 per year by eliminating the Versatran contract fee plus avoided the cost of a \$20,000 update fee. The next step is to work with Transfinder to develop customized transportation reports that will track transportation operations to analyze annual savings. In addition, Kathy has easy access to important operations information she can share with the business manager, superintendent, and school board.

Most recently, in preparation of the next budget year, Kathy was able to share with the superintendent and business manager accurate vehicle mileage and hours of operation in order to prepare budget projections for the next school year. For example mileage was broken down into specific categories, which is the first step to develop maintenance, fuel, and field trip cost projections and analysis. The district 2015 transportation operations data revealed:

- 663,425 miles traveled per year for regular education
- 6,382 miles traveled per year for school field trips
- 10,394 miles traveled per year for sports trips
- Over 39,000 miles traveled for vocational education
- 117,075 miles traveled per year for special needs transportation in District
- 72,774 miles traveled per year for special needs transportation out of District

Using this information, Kathy's initial projected transportation savings for RSU 60/MSAD 60 during the 2016 school year are \$72,000. When fiscal year 2016 (FY16) closes and using the customized Transfinder reports Kathy will be able to track and confirm the projected FY16 year savings. The district will then be positioned to look for ways to improve transportation efficiency while retaining quality and safety in district school transportation services.

Testimonial

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RSU 60/MSAD 60 serves 3,300 students in the towns of Berwick, North Berwick and Lebanon