Case Study

Large, Urban Utah Elementary School Addresses Challenges with Educator Effectiveness System (EES)

Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, Granite School District, Utah

“PD 360 has a positive impact on teacher growth with the availability of a large library of quality programs and good materials. As they become more aware of teaching methods and learning styles, teachers are better equipped to shape student success. At Woodrow Wilson, we face many challenges such as poverty and non-English speaking students and PD 360 is helping us address them. It is a valuable support to teachers of every level and ability.”

Lynette Eichers
Professional Development/Title I Specialist
Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, Granite School District, Utah

Profile

Woodrow Wilson Elementary School began its practice of community education in 1925. Eighty-seven years later, the beloved South Salt Lake institution has an enduring legacy and a newly built residence. This large, urban, Title I and Utah Focus school encourages its 750 culturally varied students to learn from and draw on each other's differences.

Though the organization is over eighty years old, its modern-day educators are supplying a 21st century education to every student. Woodrow Wilson distinctions include the following:

• It is a National Family Literacy site offering English language learner (ELL) classes for adults and side-by-side learning with their children.

• It provides computers for class work and testing in two 34-station labs and all classrooms. Programs for ELLs are available and eMINTS is used in grades 3-6.

• Art and dance programs help students gain confidence and language skills, which transfer to achievement in language arts, math, science, and social studies.

• Tutoring, study hall, technology, crafts, music, art, sports, Boy Scouts, and Learning for Life programs are offered before and after school.

Focuses

Top primary concerns of Woodrow Wilson educators consist of the following:

• Teaching strategies for the 58% ELL students speaking 19 languages.

• Differentiated instruction for the student population of 79% minority, 86% economically disadvantaged, plus students and refugees from over twenty-five countries.

• Common Core Standards implementation for teachers and administrators.
Solutions
Woodrow Wilson Professional Development and Title I Specialist Lynette Eichers is a committed and highly-focused educator whose goal is to make a genuine difference in student lives. She is keenly aware that providing systemic professional development builds outstanding teachers and successful students.

Ms. Eichers and Principal Lynda Hart are pleased with the contribution School Improvement Network’s Educator Effectiveness System has made to Woodrow Wilson’s professional learning program since 2010. PD 360, Observation 360, and Common Core 360 are valuable components of EES, supplying solid solutions to the school’s concerns.

• Teachers become skilled at ELL instructional strategies with PD 360 programs such as Every Teacher – A Teacher of English Language Learners and Helping Students of Limited English Skills. Other programs indirectly address ELLs such as those on differentiation, minority student achievement, and inclusion.

• Because students have a variety of backgrounds, skills, strengths, and learning styles, teachers cannot use only one instructional approach. With PD 360 programs such as Differentiating Instruction for All Students and Differentiated Instruction Applied, teachers are taught to reach all students by creating lesson plans that ensure learning opportunities for everyone.

“I have always been concerned about challenging every student and providing appropriate learning for all student levels, so I have enjoyed the PD 360 segments of multiple ways to differentiate instruction.”

Pamela Johnson
Sixth Grade Teacher
Woodrow Wilson Elementary School,
Granite School District, UT

“Common Core 360 is a remarkable tool. Making it accessible to our teachers has made it much easier for them to understand and implement the new standards.”

Lynette Eichers
Professional Development/Title I Specialist
Woodrow Wilson Elementary School,
Granite School District, Utah

Implementation and Driving Usage
“We use PD 360 at Woodrow Wilson to provide professional learning for our teachers and staff. We all enjoy the versatility that enables individuals to focus on areas of curriculum or practices that impact us or grade level groups to choose segments to watch and discuss. Most of our teachers have chosen to work on PD 360 as part of their professional growth and evaluation process, finding it very beneficial.”

Lynda Hart
Principal
Woodrow Wilson Elementary School,
Granite School District, UT

• Teacher Training
Woodrow Wilson administrators use PD 360 in three training situations:

• Staff trainings show segments to illustrate best practices in focus areas such as differentiated instruction and ELL stratagem.

• New teacher training includes how to use PD 360 to develop successful strategies.

• Grade level teams watch segments to understand proven practices and provide discussion starters.

• Professional Development Plans
All Woodrow Wilson teachers have Professional Growth and Evaluation Plans and are required to include relevant PD 360 programs in their action strategies.
Benefits

• Differentiated Learning for Teachers
  Teacher education, like classroom instruction, should match a diversity of abilities and changing needs. With 2,000+ video segments on 125 topics from 120 experts, PD 360 ensures that teachers of every experience level can find individualized support.

• Interactive Communities
  Woodrow Wilson teachers are digging into PD 360’s interactive communities and focus groups, collaborating with nearly 1,000,000 peers in educators-only online PLCs.

• Reflection Questions
  Ms. Eichers finds the reflection questions at the end of each segment very beneficial, enabling teachers and administrators to follow growth curves.

  “I have used PD 360 as a journal and to provide evidence for classroom goals. It is a nice feature to add your thoughts about what you are applying and to reflect on ways to make it more meaningful.”

  Robin Farnsworth
  Third Grade Teacher
  Woodrow Wilson Elementary School,
  Granite School District, UT

• Capacity/Accessibility
  Ms. Eichers feels it is a bonus that teachers are able to access PD 360 anytime and anywhere. Able to log on at home as well as at work, teachers are encouraged to take charge of their own learning, and view segments and programs as many times as needed.

  “I enjoy being able to search PD 360 by topic or by school, district, or state focus areas. I recently downloaded the app for my iPad and appreciate the increased mobility. I love being able to choose my topics, on my time, and revisit them as often as I feel will be beneficial. Challenges change as different groups of students move through my classroom, and I have instant access to professional learning that is specific to my current issues.”

  Pamela Johnson
  Sixth Grade Teacher
  Woodrow Wilson Elementary School,
  Granite School District, UT

• Real Classroom Examples
  PD 360 programs feature a variety of actual classroom examples to illustrate strategy implementation and incorporation of the practices into real teaching.

• Teacher Enthusiasm
  High usage numbers for years 2011 and 2012 show Woodrow Wilson educators are enjoying PD 360.

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Conclusion

Ms. Eichers and Principal Hart are delighted with the positive results the Educator Effectiveness System has brought to the Woodrow Wilson professional learning program, as many teachers find answers to individual needs and student proficiency scores improve.

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“Talking with other teachers about PD 360, I say it is worth the time investment to stay at the top of your teaching game. The strategies and skills you learn are tried and true. It will improve your teaching skills if you use it and reflect upon your own practices.”

Robin Farnsworth
Third Grade Teacher
Woodrow Wilson Elementary School,
Granite School District, UT
“As a National Board Certified Teacher, I look for ways to more effectively monitor, assess, and instruct students to maximize experiences. Learning more about specific areas has caused me to look closely at my students to determine where I require more knowledge to meet their needs. I have seen increased participation in personal learning, plus a positive energy and sense of community. Students are becoming more confident in their own ability to learn and master concepts.”

Pamela Johnson
Sixth Grade Teacher
Woodrow Wilson Elementary School,
Granite School District, UT

About School Improvement Network
Founded in 1991 by teachers, School Improvement Network has spent decades researching and documenting the best practices in education. From this research, School Improvement Network has developed the Educator Effectiveness System. This system delivers a process to improve teacher practice, and arms educators with a set of powerful tools to drive the process. Research shows that districts and schools that use the tools in the Educator Effectiveness System produce better teachers, and as a result experience dramatic increases in student achievement, driving up student test scores by as much as 30 percent in a single year. School Improvement Network works with thousands of schools and districts in every state and around the world and has visited over 3,500 classrooms to document best practices in action. Learn more at www.schoolimprovement.com.

About PD 360
PD 360 is the multi-award winning, online, on-demand professional learning resource within School Improvement Network’s Educator Effectiveness System. With 2,000+ videos on 125 topics from 120 experts, PD 360 has the largest online community of nearly one million educators. It is the most comprehensive web-based library of professional development resources available. Educators can instantly find the help they need on nearly every topic, including differentiation, assessment, English language learners, leadership, and more. It can create a structured learning experience for an individual teacher, a PLC, or even an entire school. PD 360 and all the tools within School improvement Network’s Educator Effectiveness System bridge the gap between training and classroom implementation with job-embedded follow-up, tracking, and reflection tools. See a demonstration at www.pd360.com.

About Common Core 360
Common Core 360 is education’s most relevant learning tool for the new Common Core Standards and can lead an educator from the most basic understanding to mastery-level implementation. With an ever-growing library that extends to almost 300 training videos, this resource includes 70 real in-class examples that place the viewer in the middle of classrooms with teachers who are actively navigating the day-to-day realization of the state standards. Learn more at www.schoolimprovement.com.

About Observation 360
Observation 360 is a vital piece of School Improvement Network’s Educator Effectiveness System. With full compliance to even the strictest of state observation requirements, it is the only tool that integrates on-demand training resources and a wide array of reporting capabilities into the observation process. The all-new, fully redesigned Observation 360 provides the resources, data, and personalized training to prepare teachers to ready 100% of students for college and career. Learn more at www.schoolimprovement.com.