

Grande Yellowhead Regional Division

No. 35
Canada

Survey and Data Collection Software



THE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION, GRANDE YELLOWHEAD REGIONAL DIVISION NO. 35 (GYRD), IN ALBERTA, CANADA USES THE WEB-BASED eLISTEN SURVEY SOFTWARE TOOLS TO EASILY AND EFFICIENTLY SURVEY TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND PARENTS TO GET THE INFORMATION NEEDED TO DRIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Challenge

- Rural but high-tech area needed online solution to serve 18 schools, 5,800 students and 800 staff members, spanning 211 miles
- Needed flexibility to create surveys on demand

GYRD has 18 schools, three off campus centers, one central office and two sub-offices. It includes approximately 5,800 students and 800 staff members. The division spans 340 kilometers (211 miles), stretching from Jasper National Park, east to Evansburg, and north to the Town of Grande Cache. The area's diversity poses challenges, as the jurisdiction attempts to preserve the attributes of each community while creating the regional consistency required to operate smoothly and with fiscal responsibility.

“Our area is rural but we're very high tech,” said John Percevault, director of system planning and technology services for GYRD. “We wanted a survey tool that would give us maximum flexibility to create and deploy surveys on an on-demand basis. Because of our division's distance, we also needed a tool that would allow us to administer surveys using our own web server.”

After evaluating several products, the district selected Scantron's eListen survey software for its robust tool set which allows the district to easily create, deploy, collect and analyze survey data. By allowing respondents to electronically complete questionnaires, eListen eliminates manual data entry, improves accuracy and reduces response time.

“We chose eListen for a number of reasons: the feature sets, the design, the ease of use, and the reporting,” said Percevault.

“The visual quality of the surveys was another deciding factor,” said Cindy Brown, a support analyst for GYRD. “Compared to the other products, eListen is simply the only choice. It is outstanding.”

Solution

- Online process eases use for administrators and respondents
- Data accuracy improved over manual data entry
- Use for Annual Education Plan survey

Prior to using eListen, the division administered paper-based surveys using a very time-intensive process.

“We've had fewer headaches since we began using eListen,” said Percevault. “To administer and collect paper surveys, we had to provide detailed guides and have many conversations

with schools to make sure they didn't use the wrong weight of paper, or the wrong type of pencil, or fold, staple or mutilate the surveys. For us, a web-based deployment is infinitely more flexible and has a lot less overhead."

Today, GYRD uses eListen to conduct surveys on its Annual Education Plan and professional development programs.

"Our Annual Education Plan is very much like a business plan with goals, outcomes, strategies and performance measures," said Percevault. "Several measures are survey-based satisfaction questions."

GYRD uses eListen to survey teachers, parents and students in fourth, seventh and 10th grade, as well as the board of trustees and the division leadership team to measure satisfaction levels across several areas of the Annual Education Plan. Survey topics include satisfaction with the program of studies, quality of education, access and timeliness of services, and parental involvement, among others.

In addition, GYRD uses eListen to survey K-12 teachers about professional development programs and supports to determine if teachers' ongoing needs are met and to contribute to teachers' professional growth. Survey topics include student learning, organization of work, professional development opportunities, school leadership support and school district support.

As the surveys are deployed, eListen automatically collects and stores the survey answers in Microsoft® Access. When the survey administration is complete, GYRD then uses the eListen Analyzer to tabulate and analyze data, and generate reports.

"We've had a great response rate. I'm impressed with all the people who wanted to do the surveys," said Brown. "In addition, because the results are stored in an Access database, I can customize or design my own reports. That's another nice feature."

While GYRD administrators are still reviewing the survey results, they look forward to using the data to update the Annual Education Plan.

"Right now, we're working with principals to review what the survey results mean for their schools and their stakeholders," said Percevault. "We're a data-informed decision making group. Professional growth, for example, is one element within our planning and reporting cycle. eListen provides data we can use to improve that cycle."

Results

What has GYRD learned since it implemented eListen just one year ago? "We learned that we made the right choice in software," said Percevault. The survey data for the division's Annual

Education Plan showed positive and significant growth in all areas over the previous surveys administered to teachers, students and parents. The division is proud of the growth made to date and is eager to expand its eListen implementation. Looking ahead, in addition to the Annual Education Plan and professional development surveys, GYRD plans to administer surveys to curriculum implementation teams to measure teachers' satisfaction with the resources and services provided by the division's Learning Services Center.

"We're currently finishing our first year with eListen. We've done the technical research and evaluation. We've implemented the technology and know where it can go. We know this is a tool that works well, with minimal overhead," said Percevault.

"With eListen we have the capability to administer surveys, with board approval, on an on-demand basis," he said. "We live in a world where we have an accountability framework. We know that each year we're going to implement survey-based performance measures across a variety of areas. eListen is a very powerful and very flexible tool. It allows us to be in control of our own environment. It's affordable, it works and works well."

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John Percevault
Director of System Planning and Technology Services
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Please visit us at www.scantron.com for a complete overview of eListen's system requirements or call us at (800) 722-6876 for more information.