



Talladega County, Alabama, Meets Student Growth Targets

Using Scantron Assessment Solutions

Teachers and administrators now view student achievement in terms of how well they are meeting growth targets and moving up in ability. Student investment in results increased motivation and delivered higher performance.

Talladega County Schools comprises 17 schools, serving more than 7,500 students at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. Talladega characteristics include:

- U.S. Department of Education (DOE) Green Ribbon School System
- Implementing a 1:1 digital-device-to-student program entitled iLearn: 1:1 Student to World Initiative
- 70% of students participate in free and reduced school lunch programs

This rural school district is committed to continued improvement and to supporting the technology needs of today's educational environment.

Yesterday..

Talladega County Schools required a comprehensive diagnostic assessment to assist their educators in placing students and serving individual student needs. The assessment needed to:

- Address multiple grade levels and provide longitudinal measurement across their 17 schools.
- Provide reliable results to help predict end-of-course assessment scores.

- Deliver a growth model educators could use to identify and enhance student growth throughout the year.
- Support their digital-device program, an outgrowth of their US DOE Green Ribbon award.

They struggled to identify a solution that would do it all.

Enter Scantron Assessment Solutions.

Today..

For the 2012–2013 school year, Talladega County Schools focused on using Scantron's computer-adaptive growth test to diagnose student progress toward educational goals and establish current benchmark expectations.

They faced—and overcame—some challenges. Since many schools in this rural district had a limited number of computer labs available, testing had to be carefully scheduled to accommodate all students.

But they approached these challenges with energy and dedication. School principals supported the concept and served as program champions. Teachers ensured that students understood the significance of results, supporting both self-motivated students and those who needed additional encouragement.

“...Test questions went beyond grade-level standards. This exposed students to new, challenging questions, which opened the curiosity door and allowed them to search the depths of their knowledge.”

*Meighan Lewis,
Teacher, Munford High School*





Their efforts paid off:

- **Most of their previously lower-performing students saw what one teacher described as “huge,” unexpected gains.**
- **For their higher-performing students, a review of the growth reports revealed to educators that these students may need a more challenging advanced curriculum—a discovery that many teachers viewed as a significant success.**
- **End-of-course tests revealed that a substantial portion of Talladega students surpassed the scores of more than half the other students in the state.**

“I can’t help but think [Scantron] contributed to these results because I used it to do all my planning,” says Meighan Lewis, a teacher at Munford High School.

In the 2013–2014 school year, Talladega County added Scantron’s fixed-form, on-grade assessments, encouraging teachers to create standards-based measurements of recently taught material. From there, they can immediately access results that can inform their instruction, allowing them to modify their teaching and learning activities as needed.

The district is also using the fixed-form solution to create district-wide benchmarks, administered to students in high school courses. These benchmarks will gather useful data from measurements modeled after the ACT® QualityCore® assessments students will be taking in the spring of 2014 and 2015.

Tomorrow...

Talladega County Schools plan to continue using the Scantron Assessment Solution. They intend to continue to improve their technology infrastructure and to implement their digital device initiative, in part so they can take fuller advantage of the complete Scantron® assessment solution.

The first year of implementation informed instructional planning. Next, the schools plan to expand the use of computer-adaptive growth scores to adjust classroom instruction and tailor the curriculum to their students, particularly in the area of Reading.

The district’s middle schools piloted a creative “growth wall” initiative to communicate and track growth toward educational targets. The initiative increased alignment between teachers and students as they identified goals and student progress. The district plans to expand this initiative throughout Talladega County.

Now that teachers have common benchmarks and better growth target information, the district hopes the newly available data will spark an increased level of cross-classroom and even cross-school collaboration.

Scantron is proud to have helped these dedicated educators with the assessment tools they needed to improve student achievement.



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