

How Kennewick School District Put HR in the Fast Lane

WITH POWERSCHOOL TALENT PRODUCTS AND POWERSCHOOL FINANCE AND HR SOFTWARE



Kennewick School District needed a sustainable way to continue hiring great teachers despite tightening budgets.

They found it when they streamlined their budgeting, hiring, and payroll processes by combining PowerSchool Employee Records and Applicant Tracking with PowerSchool BusinessPlus.

The district now benefits from more transparent workflows and more automated processes, allowing them to make hiring decisions faster and keep budget and payroll data in one place.

With 1,200-1,500 new hires needed in each of the last few years, Kennewick has optimized their budgets to maximize how hiring funds are allocated while keeping the hiring process running smoothly. That allows them to work quickly to make offers to the most qualified talent and build stronger relationships with new employees faster, which improves both hiring and retention.

This streamlined process allows them to "not focus on paperwork [but] focus on the people," says Levi Martin, HR Manager at the district.



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Finding and recruiting quality staff during teacher shortages
- Manual, time-consuming processes for current staff as well as recruits
- Inaccurate data from poor communication between budget and recruiting systems

Solution

- PowerSchool BusinessPlus
- PowerSchool Employee Records
- PowerSchool Applicant Tracking

Results

- Clear budgets that speed up the hiring process
- Increased integration that reduces duplicate work and data errors
- Less time spent on paperwork and more time spent on addressing employee needs

Boosted efficiency saves them time and money

Kennewick has experienced significant time savings from their unified HR and finance systems.

"As far as efficiency, we've probably saved between 200 and 300 hours every year," Martin says. "I mean, that may sound like a small number, but imagine your people who handle your hires and [being able to say to them], 'Okay...you don't have to work 200 to 300 extra hours in a year.' That's a big thing for them."

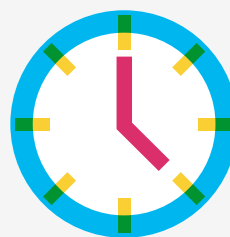
Instead, "those people get to focus on doing other things that are not as monotonous and time-consuming."

Martin says the efficiency and time savings align with the district's productive culture.

"We're focusing on spending our time focusing on the people's needs, being able to spend time with them and answer their questions that they need answered and give them the attention that they want."

Streamlined communication through more visible and shareable data has also helped them make more informed business decisions.

"We're able to look in the system, build a report, and send out info on where we're at on something fairly quickly," Martin says. "That is super helpful to make business decisions in a timely manner, so you're not falling behind and [making] lagging business decisions that you're like, 'Okay, we've already discovered that we're in a problem,' as opposed to saying, 'Yeah, I see something, an issue developing here,' because I have a report built and I'm able to monitor this in a proactive way."



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Less time on paper, more time welcoming new hires

Martin says the district was "behind the times" when he first came on board four years ago.

"We had a tight budget, but we were growing and needed to meet the demand and continue hiring at an increased pace every year," he says. "And all of that manual processing was just not sustainable."

The relatively small HR office at Kennewick is responsible for managing in-person onboarding. Before adopting PowerSchool BusinessPlus, Employee Records, and Applicant Tracking, much of this precious face time was being spent manually processing repetitive paperwork, when it could have been better spent introducing new colleagues and providing important information about the district.

"We pride ourselves on being efficient with our time, but we also want to provide good customer service, so that meant freeing up [staff] time from these manual processes and focusing on value-adding activities where you can focus on your employees and what they need," Martin says.

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Hiring qualified talent and building stronger relationships improves retention

Thanks to the integration between Kennewick's finance and HR systems, the teams now have a simplified budgeting, hiring, and payroll process. The HR department knows approved hiring budgets in advance, which allows them to make offers without going back and forth with the finance team. And in a competitive teacher job market, this means they can secure top talent more quickly than neighboring districts.

Once a candidate has accepted an offer, the district's onboarding process is optimized. That means the new hire spends less time on paperwork and more time getting to know the district. Their information is shared with payroll automatically, and their employee record is ready for them at any time—allowing them to complete online forms like benefit selections and add personal banking information for direct deposits quickly and securely.

"It's a huge win to not focus on the paperwork but instead focus on the people," Martin says.

Martin believes minimizing paperwork and having an HR system for the modern age sends an important message to new staff members.

"It sends a message that you care about how things are done and that it's important," he says. "If the little details are important, the big details will be important. So, I think it's important to send a message that you value their time as well."

A secondary benefit of reducing paperwork and redundant data entry is that the district can build relationships with their new hires faster. "We have more time for questions and their particular issues that might arise as opposed to rushing them through a packet," Martin says. In turn, recent hires feel more valued, and they build a stronger bond with the district from day one.

Increased integration makes data transfers and custom reporting easier

Because PowerSchool Talent Products and PowerSchool Finance and HR Software connect Kennewick's HR and Finance offices, they can easily share budgets, payroll data, and employee documentation to get a more holistic view for budgeting or custom reports. This reduces data-entry inaccuracies and eliminates extra time spent by staff pulling reports from separate systems.

"What I like about PowerSchool products is that we can access the data," Martin says. "We like to build a

lot of custom integrations, or at least being able to run reports and look at things, and the systems are...all easily integrated. So, it speeds things up quite a bit."

The unified workflows and automated data exchanges get the district's teams on the same page without additional work.

"Since we have a whole ecosystem of products that work together, it's easier for us to manage the data, and it looks the same when we're looking at it from place to place," Martin says.

This is especially helpful when they are competing with other districts for top teaching candidates.

"You can keep things moving along and not have the applicants fall behind," Martin says. "Maybe for some reason, things are getting held up in our payroll office, and we need to give them some help so that they can move some hires through faster. Being able to look in and quickly assess the problem helps us keep the hiring season moving quickly, and make the employee not rethink their decision to choose us as a district."

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Learn more about streamlining budgeting, hiring, and payroll with PowerSchool Talent Products and Finance & HR Software.

Visit www.PowerSchool.com or call 1-877-873-1550 to learn more.

