

TORRINGTON

Public Schools

The \$360,000 Annual Savings Plan

How cloud hosting is saving Torrington Public Schools money and time, and improving security and state reporting



Does your IT team ever feel understaffed and overwhelmed in meeting your infrastructure needs? With nearly 4,800 students and just four full-time technology staff, Connecticut's Torrington Public School District was feeling the pressure.

The district had been handling on-premise deployment of its student information system and online student registration products since 2009. Since that time, the small IT team found itself constantly managing the system. They struggled to keep up with SIS updates, server maintenance, licensing updates, firewall protection, and other tasks.

But keeping up with the on-premise deployment had a domino effect: other departments and functions suffered. Because Torrington Public Schools didn't have the resources to make its SIS updates in time, the district's state reporting capabilities were outdated - delaying important funding from the Connecticut State Department of Education.

"We were always 'behind the eight ball,'" says Sarah Coolidge, Integrated Tech Specialist, "When we were self-hosted, we weren't getting any of the important SIS updates we needed, so we weren't current with what was going on. The state couldn't update our reports in our SIS and told us we needed to take action to fix the situation."

AT A GLANCE



Challenge

Outdated server infrastructure;
Unsuccessful state reporting;
Overwhelmed IT staff



Decision

PowerSchool Cloud Hosting



Results

83% 5-year savings (\$366,000)
from infrastructure and staff costs;
State reporting/funding success;
More IT time for district needs



“It all happened over a weekend and when we came in on Monday morning, everything was switched over.”

DEBBI SCHAPP

Student Database Administrator,
Torrington Public Schools, CT

Big Cloud Benefits For A Small IT Team

Since moving to the cloud for hosting of its SIS and student registration information, Torrington Public Schools has reaped the rewards of a smart technical investment.

MORE IT TIME

"Our team now has time to take care of our other school, staff, and student technology needs. It eases our minds to know that we've got our PowerSchool SIS hosting in the care of the people who know the product and technical requirements inside and out," says Fimbers.

SMOOTH STATE REPORTING

"State reporting is 100% better," Schapp says, "PowerSchool Hosting handles all of the upgrades and I do the reports right in PowerSchool SIS. Before, we had to add our own fields to make it work, but now, it just works perfectly fine without our additions!"

IMPROVED SECURITY

"As stated, we're a small team and we don't have a person working specifically on security," Fimbers says, "If something bad were to happen, you're already pulled in so many different directions, so you don't have the time and resources to quickly address the issue. But now it's all being handled by professionals with the right equipment and security systems in place. It's very comforting."

The Debate: Update Servers or Make the Switch

Eric Fimbers, Director of Information Technology, was new to Torrington Public Schools. In fact, his entire team was new to managing on-premise deployment. They had been handed the job after it had been outsourced for several years. Fimbers says his small team found itself spending too much time on things like maintenance and system restarts.

"It was kind of a mess because our predecessors who had been hosting left us with no technical information," Fimbers says, "We found out that our servers were outdated, and to update our SIS we would also need to update the server, which was a big cost."

To update or not - that's the tough question Fimbers and the district faced, which is a common dilemma facing schools and districts of all sizes. As an organization driven by budgets, Torrington Public Schools made cost a primary factor.

"We looked at the numbers. What would it cost for a new server and the accompanying infrastructure like cooling and power? Then we looked at the cost of cloud hosting with PowerSchool - turning everything over to their team to manage, update servers, and handle the technical administration of the SIS," Fimbers says.

After running a cost analysis with PowerSchool's hosting team, Torrington Public Schools discovered that it would not only cost less, it would save a staggering 83 percent over a five-year period.

PowerSchool determined that the district could see as much as a \$366,000 ROI over five years, when factoring in the cost of a new server, plus recurring costs for the operating system, licensing, firewall, DDoS protection, antivirus subscription, SSL/TLS certificate, internet costs, cooling, and power. An additional cost to consider was the time it took to maintain the infrastructure, update the SIS, back up data, and complete other administrative duties – all of which essentially adds up to a full-time IT network/systems engineer.

All in all, Torrington Public Schools is thrilled – and relieved – to switch from on-premise deployment to the security, scalability, and cost-effectiveness of the cloud. It's gone from feeling understaffed and overwhelmed to overwhelmingly gratified.

"If it saves you money, do it!" Coolidge says of the advice she'd give to fellow districts considering making the switch. "It's such a nice feeling to see the email communicating about new updates, and knowing we don't have to do that anymore! We also like that we still have the choice to either have updates done automatically or to do them when it's more convenient with what we have going on at that specific time."

“When we realized it would actually cost us less to move to a fully hosted environment, it was an easy decision.”

ERIC FIMBERS

Director, Information Technology,
Torrington Public Schools, CT

▶ [Learn more about Cloud Hosting](#)

Is a switch to cloud hosting right for your school or district? Find out how you can reduce risk, increase data security, and decrease your total cost of ownership by moving to the cloud.



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That's why our mission is to power the education ecosystem with unified technology that helps educators and students realize their potential, in their way. From the back office to the classroom to the home, PowerSchool helps schools and districts efficiently manage instruction, learning, grading, attendance, assessment, analytics, state reporting, special education, student registration, and Finance/HR/ERP. Today, we're proud to be the leading provider of K-12 education application technology supporting over 30 million students in over 70 countries.

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