



Hampton City Schools



At A Glance:

- **Company:** Hampton City Schools
- **Location:** Hampton, VA
- **Industry:** Education
- **Challenges:**
 - The school system needed an easy-to-use, Web-based solution to allow officials from the central office to monitor and troubleshoot bookkeeping at 36 outlying school systems
- **Software switched from:** Manatee, TRA School Funds
- **Results with NetSuite:**
 - NetSuite allows officials to easily monitor the books via a Web browser to proactively correct any problems before audits



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— Lisa Deanhoffer, Assistant Director of Budgeting

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The Results:

Lisa Deanhoffer, assistant director of budgeting for Hampton City Schools, is putting a lot less mileage on her car since NetSuite was deployed to the 35 schools in the system to track student activity finances. Before leveraging NetSuite, Deanhoffer had to drive to a school that was having a bookkeeping problem because she had no consolidated access to school accounting systems. Now, she simply logs into NetSuite to monitor the student activity accounting of the 35 schools from her own office.

“I can log into a school's account, and I can see everything they have done for a year,” Deanhoffer said. “I can review that account for accuracy. We can nip future audit problems before they become audit problems.”

The Challenge:

Before turning to NetSuite for its activity fund accounting, the schools were struggling with a system designed for schools called Manatee, according to Deanhoffer. However, the DOS-based system was not routinely updated, and as a result offered antiquated tools.

In addition, the support offered with the technology was abysmal, she added.

“I'd place a support call from the site, and two days later I would get a phone call back,” she said.

In addition to the struggles with support, Deanhoffer was desperate to find an alternative to her having to physically visit a school to address an accounting problem.

“I am the only budgeting person that we have,” she said. “I needed to be in the office instead of running around.”

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Schools officials evaluated another product designed especially for schools called TRA School Funds, which did offer a consolidated accounting feature. However, because it was not Web-based, it would not give Deanhoffer the real-time view into each school's books.

"We were really interested in something that was Web-based. Before what we had to do is require the schools each month to send a paper package over here and a backup diskette. In most cases, the diskette was bad."

The Solution:

NetSuite has met and exceeded all Deanhoffer's requirements. The transition to NetSuite has been seamless—even for many of the school's older bookkeepers who might have resisted other software, she noted. Bookkeepers from the schools are using NetSuite for cash accounting and expenditure tracking to run reports, print checks and reconcile bank statements.

Even though NetSuite is primarily designed for traditional businesses with inventory and sales—areas that don't apply to a school system—the schools have been able to use the system with very little customization, Deanhoffer said.

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