



## CASE STUDY

### STRATEGIC PLANNING DEVELOPMENT

## HOW ALIGNMENT AND COMMUNICATION HELP ONE SCHOOL DISTRICT KEEP ITS FOCUS



### USER

Carroll County Schools

# of Students: 14,500

# of Schools: 23



### CHALLENGE

Ensure the district's improvement plans are living documents that encourage responsibility and enable accountability and transparency.



### SOLUTION

Simbli's strategic planning software helps districts eliminate strategic plans on the shelf (SPOTS) by making it easy for the leadership teams to align, measure, monitor and communicate their process for improvement at both the district and school levels.

Experiencing what the school district referred to as "SPOTS" (strategic plans on the shelf), Carroll County Schools turned to eBOARDsolutions to help them streamline strategic plan development and ultimately improve transparency and accountability.

### ALIGNMENT IS KEY TO SUCCESS

Given the tough times in today's economy, Carroll County Schools felt it was important to invest in and effectively use technology tools to help the school system and individual schools manage the work of the district. They wanted to ensure that the resource and personnel allocations, as well as decision-making, were based on a common set of directions agreed upon by key stakeholders.

The board, district administrators and school administrators use the four strategic goal areas outlined in the district strategic improvement plan as the guiding direction for all work in the district. All school improvement plans, meeting agendas, strategic discussions, and superintendent and principal performance evaluations are aligned around these areas.

Carroll County Schools uses Simbli's Planning software to manage both the district's strategic improvement plan as well as the local school improvement plans for each of their 23 schools. Additionally, Simbli allows the district and each school to post their Balanced Scorecard.

The plan can be filtered by department, individual, due date or status by all stakeholders. Everyone can see how the team or individual is performing, allowing for concrete evaluations of personnel, and ensuring transparency and accountability.

### IMPROVING GOVERNANCE WITH STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

In order to ensure transparency with all stakeholders, Carroll County also uses Simbli to post and share board meeting agendas and information, and board policies. Board agendas and attachments not only help internal and external stakeholders keep abreast of what the board is discussing at each meeting, but also allows stakeholders to view the same data that board members use to make decisions.

All stakeholders also have instant access to the policies that govern the school system. Board members can also refer to these policies as they prepare for meetings or answer stakeholder inquiries.

According to Scott Cowart, superintendent of Carroll County Schools, the most important way that Simbli contributes to transparency is by allowing the school system to post improvement plans for all to see.

# CASE STUDY

## STRATEGIC PLANNING DEVELOPMENT



### AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Carroll County Schools

2015

GSBA Distinguished School Board

2012

2nd Place Best Use of Evaluations software

2nd Place Best Use of Planning software

"Simbli puts the power of strategic improvement planning at the fingertips of school administrators in a way that was never before possible," he said.

The ability to post materials online has also helped the district control costs, said Cowart. However, he added, it's important that school systems effectively use Simbli in order to realize the most benefit.



"School systems using Simbli have at their disposal a powerful array of options to improve their school district," he said. "Failure to fully use these tools in an effort to align and focus district and school improvement is akin to having at your disposal a nuclear aircraft carrier and using it like a tugboat. It is the most powerful electronic suite of tools available to school districts."

### ABOUT CARROLL COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

As the 24th largest school system in the state of Georgia, Carroll County School System is home to approximately 14,500 students who attend one of 23 schools in the county system. In Carroll County, the school system has developed a comprehensive facility plan in conjunction with the district strategic improvement plan to provide state-of-the-art facilities within the school communities.

With over 1,850 employees, the Carroll County School System is the largest employer in Carroll County. Carroll County schools have an annual \$200 million impact on the economic development of Carroll County. Currently, over \$66 million in SPLOST and capital outlay projects are underway throughout the county.

The school system works closely with the local Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority and government entities to ensure that strategic decisions made by the district support the overall effort to improve the quality of life in Carroll County.

**"SIMBLI'S STRATEGIC PLANNING SOFTWARE IS A STATE-OF-THE-ART TOOL THAT WILL STRATEGICALLY CONNECT PLAN MANAGEMENT, PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND COMMUNICATION IN A POWERFUL PACKAGE TO HELP SCHOOL SYSTEMS IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT. IT IS THE MOST POWERFUL ELECTRONIC SUITE OF IMPROVEMENT TOOLS AVAILABLE TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS."**

Scott Cowart, superintendent of Carroll County Schools

