

TestHound Success Story:

Transforming Testing Coordination and Minimizing Invalidations

In Fort Myers, Florida, the School District of Lee County stands committed to educational excellence. However, Kimberly Sass and Erin Groeneveld, Coordinators of Continuous Improvement, faced challenges in managing diverse student accommodations and adapting to Florida's evolving testing landscape — from extended testing windows to fluctuating test coordinators.

In their search for continuity and efficiency, Sass and Groeneveld sought a transformative solution that would streamline testing coordination and offer clarity in student accommodations.

TestHound quickly emerged as a comprehensive platform with the capabilities to meet Lee County's unique testing coordination needs.

The Challenge

Before implementing TestHound, Lee County faced difficulties in effectively managing testing procedures, where coordinators were forced to deal with an overwhelming amount of spreadsheets, digital records, and physical paper. This process took an inordinate amount of time and had a high potential for errors.

“It was lots of spreadsheets, lots of Google documents, and lots and lots of paper. Not to mention digging into files and pulling from 10 different locations to find the same information.”

Some of the other hurdles Sass and Groeneveld encountered included the tedious task of ensuring student accommodations were administered correctly, tracking accommodations, and knowing who exactly needed to be tested. Any errors in the process could lead to test invalidations that could impact students' academic progress.

Unexpected disruptions caused by turnover of the test coordinator position also caused challenges and inconsistencies.

“Fluctuation is perhaps the right term to describe the changes in our test coordinator position. We required a solution so that when a test coordinator left unexpectedly, even in the middle of a testing day, someone else could seamlessly take over and say, ‘Okay, I can handle this.’”

Sass and Groeneveld also recognized the necessity for a solution capable of handling student accommodation changes, ensuring continuity, and streamlining the testing process for coordinators. This need became increasingly apparent amid changes in testing procedures in Florida, which placed additional pressure on the entire school district to effectively manage testing.

“We’re basically in a perpetual testing window all year long. Maybe we have a few weeks off now, whereas the previous structure had accountability attached to the end of the year; That’s not the case anymore, especially at the secondary level,” explains Groeneveld.

The Solution

Given this culmination of obstacles, Lee County sought support from TestHound. Their initial vision for success throughout adoption was clear: to have all district schools follow the guidelines provided and ensure the correct implementation of the new testing procedures. The goal was simply for things to be clean and completed correctly, and for everyone to use the recommended tools and processes.

“Growing pains are hard, right?” Groeneveld asks. “With anything new and different, some people won’t like it and won’t want to do it. So, we’re coaching people through that.”

However, the implementation phase posed a unique set of difficulties, particularly in mapping student accommodations for 118 schools with over 200,000 accommodations written in different ways. Fortunately, the Education Advanced team provided comprehensive support along the way, ensuring the district could overcome adoption challenges and benefit from the value of the test enablement solution faster.

“They were there for us every step of the way. If we reached out to the wrong person, they made sure to connect us with the right person. They’ve bent over backward to try to help us solve our problems.”

Ultimately, Sass and Groeneveld saw a marked improvement in their procedures, recognizing the utility of TestHound. This became particularly apparent in training sessions where newcomers expressed relief from the burden of managing numerous spreadsheets, coupled with an influx of emails from satisfied users — confirming the positive influence of the solution.

“We are finally mitigating mistakes,” says Groeneveld. “It’s about the rosters and state requirements for our paperwork. When we can monitor this information before it’s submitted, or we can assist them in getting what they need, it’s very helpful.”

The Results

As the test coordinators in Lee County became adept at using TestHound, the district experienced enhanced tracking of accommodations, improved organization of testing procedures, and a decrease in anxiety for teachers and students alike. Additionally, the solution's capability to monitor absent students has played a crucial role in ensuring accurate accountability for all learners during testing.

“When you're dealing with a district our size, it's a big deal, because you could be talking about a student's ability to graduate or not graduate,” explains Groeneveld.

Lee County has also seen significant benefits in the form of saved time for staff. Test coordinators, who are also full-time teachers, regained valuable time as the cumbersome task of managing complex spreadsheets and manual tracking was eliminated.

“The focus is always student success and doing what's right for the student, and we think that TestHound is going to help this. But, it also mitigates some of the noise that becomes overwhelming to staff at times.

The implementation of TestHound brought substantial improvements to testing coordination and management in Florida's Lee County School District, helping schools avoid accommodation issues and complex testing procedures.

The platform not only saved valuable time for staff but also streamlined documentation, reducing the risk of errors and ensuring compliance with state requirements. This lightened the load off of burdened team members while simultaneously setting up students for long-term academic success in the district.

The Product

TestHound is a comprehensive K-12 testing software and the only test coordination solution that integrates data from disparate systems into a single platform for efficient assessment coordination. By utilizing the efficiencies provided through the platform, tasks that could take several days to accomplish using alternative methods can be done within a matter of hours. TestHound empowers overextended school staff to efficiently and accurately coordinate K-12 assessments, allowing them to spend their valuable time on other priorities.



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