Private School Network Monitors Student Needs and Progress Across Multiple Campuses

Fairmont is a private school network serving students in preschool through grade 12. Based in Orange County, California, Fairmont manages six separate sites, including an international campus. Fairmont first began using the Children's Progress Academic Assessment™ (CPAA™) in 2009 and currently uses it at all four of its primary schools to ensure a tailored, high-quality early education for all students. CPAA data is applied by teachers in the classroom to differentiate instruction and by administrators at the central office to ensure that teachers are supplied with all of the curricular resources they need.

Challenge
Before using CPAA, Fairmont’s early educators employed a series of one-on-one observational and diagnostic tools to check up on student performance. “We didn’t have a universal way to track progress in the early grades across all of our campuses,” says senior education coordinator Kelly Robinette. “We were looking for a tool that would allow us to balance observational methods with an objective, consistent measure that we could use with students from the time they enter our schools.”

In the spirit of ongoing innovation, Fairmont’s team put together an early childhood taskforce to explore different ways to continually enhance its early childhood practices. Composed of educators from each campus and members of the central office, the group meets regularly to discuss program features and potential new developments. It was this taskforce that initially came across CPAA and decided to try it. “It was very important for us to find a program that would be developmentally appropriate. We did not want to put our students through unnecessary stress. When we saw the format and content of the CPAA, we just fell in love with it,” says Robinette.

Solution
Since 2009, Fairmont educators have been using CPAA three times a year for early literacy and mathematics screening in pre-kindergarten through first grade across all four of its primary school campuses.

“It has given our teachers a better picture of what it is they do that really helps in the classroom. With the instant reports, they can immediately see the value of their instructional methods,” Robinette says. She mentions that CPAA “has helped teachers to correctly place students into instructional groups and work stations to ensure that they can thrive. The great thing is that those groupings are fluid, and we can adjust them as we see changes in performance.”

If students are flagged in an initial CPAA screening as having additional learning needs, they are recommended
for Fairmont’s “Assist” program and re-assessed after teachers work with them on specific skills. Robinette explains, “Thanks to CPAA, we know exactly which skills those students need to work on.”

Aside from being referenced by teachers to inform instruction, CPAA data is also reviewed at each campus and the central office for a broader perspective on student performance. Reviewing assessment trends at this level has helped Fairmont administrators reflect on the scope and sequence of their curriculum and identify resource needs across its multiple campuses. Robinette adds that CPAA has also been a great way to bring technology into Fairmont’s early childhood classrooms.

“Our love CPAA. It is engaging for our students and informative for our teachers and administrators. But it’s not just about the assessment. What we really appreciate is the service. The support team is always so efficient and accommodating. Having worked with other companies, I can tell you that this isn’t always the case, and it makes a big difference.”

Kelly Robinette, Senior Education Coordinator
Fairmont Schools, CA

Impact

STRESS-FREE INFORMATIVE ASSESSMENT
Robinette shares, “Several preschool directors have told me that with CPAA, students are more engaged in the assessment process. We feel the results are more authentic because the students don’t experience test anxiety.”

BIG-PICTURE CENTRAL OFFICE BENEFITS
“Using our reports, we can clearly see the big picture and drill down to the granular student level when we need to,” says Robinette. Administrators are excited to be able to use CPAA data to track performance and progress in a consistent way across several campuses. Robinette mentions that this has helped them provide teachers with additional curriculum materials or professional development when necessary.

“We like to be very transparent with our stakeholders and share what we are doing to keep our program premier. We share our academic outcomes with teachers, parents, and our board. It has been great to be able to include CPAA data in our presentations. We are very proud of our students’ performance.”

PARENT COMMUNICATION
Fairmont’s educators send parent reports home and discuss additional details at parent conferences to keep everyone on the same page. This open communication helps ensure that all parties are working together to guarantee the best outcomes for each student.