



Aventa Learning CASE STUDY

SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION:

Northeast Service Cooperative

LOCATION:

Mount Iron, Minnesota

ENROLLMENT:

400 students

EDUCATIONAL NEED

Established by the legislature in 1976 as a nonprofit public corporation, the Northeast Service Cooperative in Minnesota has met the needs of its regional membership for more than 25 years. Today, the Northeast Service Cooperative serves 32 school districts and 79 cities, counties and other governmental agencies throughout Northeast Minnesota.

In 2004, several Superintendents in northeastern Minnesota were interested in finding out if a collaborative, regional model might work for providing cost effective online learning to high school students. Working with these school districts, the Northeast Service Cooperative (NESC) conducted a review of existing products, delivery models and best practices in online learning. The resulting recommendations and a one-year start-up grant through the Enhancing Education Through Technology program and the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) launched a pilot project that involved five districts in the region served by NESC.

From the beginning, the goal of the program has always been to assist districts in building their own capacity and ability to offer online learning options to their students.

In 2008, the NE Online Learning Project became Minnesota Service Cooperative (MSC) Online as several other regional Service Cooperatives and their member districts joined the program. There are currently four regional Service Cooperatives and twenty-three districts involved in the project (and it's still growing!). Through all the changes and growth that has occurred, the core mission of the MSC Online program remains to provide a collaborative program that builds capacity, knowledge and expertise in online and distance learning for member districts.

AVENTA LEARNING'S CREDIT RECOVERY SOLUTION

Enrollment in online learning at the Northeast Service Cooperative in Minnesota has skyrocketed since the program began in 2004. The program enrollment for the first two years was less than 10 students, but now the Aventa program already has more than 400 students this school year.

"It's only the third week of the school year," says James Pavlek, Director of Distance Learning. "Our enrollment numbers have increased so much. It's amazing!"

The Northeast Service Cooperative uses the Aventa platform both for students looking to take accelerated classes and Credit Recovery students. The program has been successful for both groups because instruction can be customized for each student. Schools and teachers have come to embrace the program.

RESULTS

Among the success stories from students in the Aventa program, Pavlek remembers one mother, a public librarian, who called to thank him and the program for how it helped her daughter. She had tried many other programs for her daughter, but none had worked as well as online learning from Aventa. Her daughter is now in college.

“Here is this mother crying on the phone while people are waiting in line to check out their books,” says Pavlek. “She was so grateful for the opportunity for her daughter. She said without it she wouldn’t have graduated.”

Parents love that Aventa can be individualized for their child. Pavlek says that in addition to the great feedback he has received from teachers and parents, students have also demonstrated excellent success rates.

In the years since the pilot program, teacher and student use of the online resources provided by the NE Online Learning Project has increased enormously as students, parents and school district personnel came to realize the value of online options for students who needed courses for credit recovery and for scheduling conflicts or needed courses not offered by their own districts, as well as courses for enrichment and college preparation.

Enrollment in fully-online courses has grown from a few students in 2005-06 to over 400 enrollments in 2008-09. In addition, well over 1,000 teachers and students use the online system to enhance their classroom learning and to offer blended online classes each year, and other district staff use the online resources to streamline work processes and provide professional development.



“Teachers and schools now see that online learning isn’t going away. They now see how it can supplement what they are doing in the classroom and help make students successful.”

James Pavlek, Director of Distance Learning



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