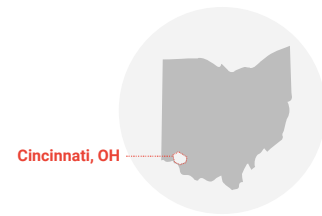# Oak Hills Local School District

Cincinnati, OH

Oak Hills Local School District is located in a western suburb of Cincinnati and is home to the second largest high school in Ohio. The district wanted to make lessons more accessible for all students, motivate and inspire them to take ownership of their learning, and give them tools to prepare for the future. Oak Hills started using G Suite in 2009 and invested more and more in Chromebooks and Google technology because of their popularity and valuable contributions to classrooms.

District facts

Public school district

Total district enrollment

7,844 Students

416 Teachers

Grades served

Pre-K ❯ 12

Number of schools

9

5 Elementary schools
3 Middle schools
1 High schools

Google tools

7,750 Chromebooks
3 Years using Chromebooks
7 Years using G Suite for Education
100% Students using G Suite for Education

Free/reduced price lunch

14%
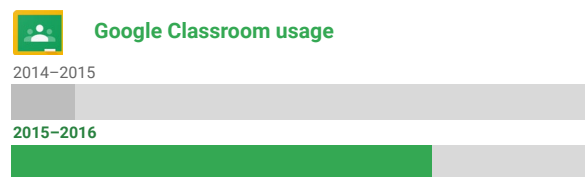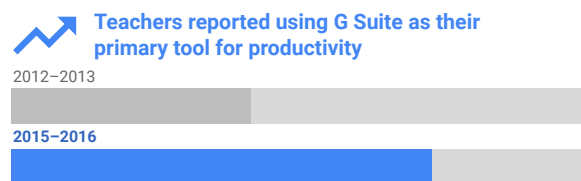of students qualify

G Suite for Education tools used

Why Chromebooks

- The district saved over $100,000 per year by switching to Google technology.
- Chromebooks increased student motivation, allowed students to learn at their own pace, and made lessons easily accessible.
- Google technology helped special education teachers track student goals and share progress with parents.
- Google Chrome Extensions provided accessibility tools to help students with disabilities thrive in general education classrooms.
- The district launched an online health education course open to students from outside schools.
- Google Forms gave teachers the chance to share teaching methods and give input on district professional development.

Results

Because of Chromebooks and G Suite, Oak Hills has been able to go beyond 1:1 for their students and even allow them to take the devices home. One middle school student started doing homework for the first time after getting her Chromebook. When her teacher asked why, the student said, "I have my own Chromebook at home now. I don't have to wait until my brothers and sisters are finished with the computer anymore. I can do my homework whenever I want now!" In addition to high satisfaction from students, teachers also got more excited to use Google technology. Teachers who had been hesitant early in the process changed their tune when they saw what their peers could do with Chromebooks and G Suite. Teachers found that having Google technology in the classroom motivated students and made classes accessible to students with disabilities. They also saw that steady Chromebook use prepared students for Ohio state testing, which is now done completely online.

Teachers reported using G Suite as their primary tool for productivity

2012–2013

2015–2016

Google Classroom usage

2014–2015

2015–2016

Teacher satisfaction

2012–2013

2015–2016

Students using a Chromebook every day

100%

"I have my own Chromebook at home now. I don't have to wait until my brothers and sisters are finished with the computer anymore. I can do my homework whenever I want now!"

Student at Oak Hills Local School District

Moving beyond 1:1

Oak Hills Local School District first used G Suite in 2009, saving them over $100,000 a year by erasing the need for software licenses and a support server. Based on these benefits, Chromebooks were given to each student at the district's three middle schools over the next three years. Other teachers immediately asked for Chromebooks for their classrooms. By the end of the 2015–16 school year, the district provided a Chromebook for every student in grades 2–8. When the 2016–17 school year started, all students in grades 1–12 received a Chromebook while Kindergarten classes were given shared Chromebook carts. Because Chromebooks cost less than some of the textbooks they use, district leaders were more comfortable with letting the technology leave school. Students were able to take their Chromebooks home, making sure learning didn't end once they stepped out of the door.

How much for the district to go 1:1?

26%
lower cost to provide students with Chromebooks compared to similar devices

Setting goals, sharing growth

Oak Hills special education teachers needed more efficient ways to track their students progress and share their growth with parents. Following along with each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) was extremely time consuming, and the language on traditional forms for IEP tended to be confusing for everyone. Google Forms simplified the process and gave teachers a single place to record student progress. Responses get tracked and reported in easy-to-read, shareable summary graphs. Parents love the clear look at their child's progress, and teachers love being able to closely follow growth and set new learning goals.
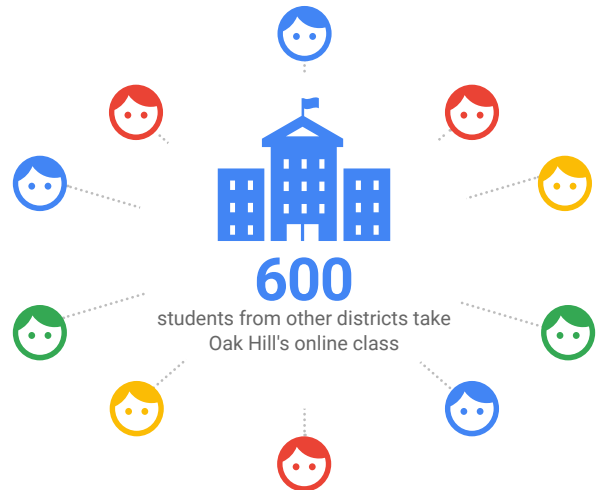
Breaking classroom barriers

Studies show that students with disabilities learn better in general education classrooms, but it becomes difficult to meet the needs of their IEP. Oak Hills found that several Google Chrome Extensions were perfect tools to give these students access. Special education teachers lend support to general education teachers and help them use this technology in their classrooms. Voice Note II, Read & Write for Google Chrome, and Speech Recognition & Translation give students with disabilities and their teachers added support in the classroom. Before, if students needed to have a test read out loud, they would often be taken out of the class by an intervention specialist (IVS). Now those accommodations are provided by Chromebooks and the Google Chrome Extensions and let those students stay in their classrooms. Students are also prepared for life outside of school. "They are not always going to have a human teacher to read an article for them. They are not always going to have a human scribe who will write for them when they aren't feeling up to it. However, they will always have access to Google and the tools that it provides," says Special Programs Team leader Cassie Raabe.

Health Education goes online

After making their Health Education Program more accessible using G Suite, Oak Hills began collaborating with schools around Cincinnati. Smaller districts without their own programs offered Oak Hill's Health Education course in their schools. Now, over 600 students from other school districts take Oak Hill's online class. The program could not run without G Suite because it spans multiple districts. Students use G Suite to access class materials, submit some work, and communicate with the teachers at Oak Hills. The district is working to move the course to Google Classroom to better meet their students' needs.

600
students from other districts take
Oak Hill's online class

Giving teachers a voice

Oak Hills believes that collaboration leads to growth for both students and teachers. The district wanted teachers to be able to learn from their peers and voice their desires for professional development. Teachers visit each other's classrooms to learn creative and innovative teaching methods.

They use Google Forms to give non-evaluative feedback that administrators collect and use to plan activities for professional development days. Also, district administrators collect feedback on each development session to make sure future sessions cater to teachers' specific needs.

Conclusion

With Chromebooks and G Suite, Oak Hills Local School District created more inclusive classrooms and simplified communication and collaboration. Google technology went beyond saving money.

It helped more students learn, more teachers engage classrooms, and more parents connect to the education process.