

## Success Story:

### Lone Pine Unified School District

Inyo County, CA

## Family of District Superintendent Finds Success with Online Speech Therapy

### The Challenge

As a toddler, Rocco, the son of a school superintendent, spoke very little, yet his family did not realize anything was particularly amiss until he entered preschool. There, his teachers noticed he was not pronouncing the beginning letters of his words, which suggested he could benefit from speech therapy.

So when Superintendent Dr. Sean A. Cianfarano moved his family to Inyo County and the Lone Pine Unified School District (LPUSD) at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year for his new job, they knew their son Rocco, now in kindergarten, would need speech therapy services. When the Cianfarano family arrived at LPUSD, they were told that the district used online speech therapy, something they had not yet experienced.

"I was confused about how that would work," said Toni Cianfarano, Rocco's mother, and a teacher herself. "I wasn't sure he was going to get the help he needed."

### Choosing PresenceLearning

LPUSD is located in Inyo County, a rural county located near the California-Nevada state line. Despite being home to beautiful national parks, including both the highest and lowest points in the Continental United States, the remoteness of the area makes it hard to attract and retain speech-language pathologists.

To combat the local shortage of therapists and serve students with speech-language therapy needs, LPUSD began using PresenceLearning's online speech therapy during the 2012-2013 school year.

"I was skeptical at first," said Dr. Cianfarano. "But over a short period of time, I was sold on PresenceLearning. In fact, our students had very high achievement in speech therapy."

### Benefits & Outcomes

"Research shows that socioeconomic status is the number one statistic in predicting overall student and school district underachievement, and approximately 70 percent of our students are socioeconomically disadvantaged," said Dr. Cianfarano. "However, with PresenceLearning and our pre-academic early intervention efforts spearheaded by our excellent educators and support staff, we are now beating the odds at LPUSD."

*(continued...)*



*"I wouldn't choose a service option for our school district that we wouldn't choose for our own child. Early literacy is so important for young learners, but if the student can't speak, it's really hard for them to be literate because it's all tied together. PresenceLearning empowers students to speak, but it's more than that. It empowers students to be successful."*

**Dr. Sean A. Cianfarano,**  
Superintendent,  
Lone Pine Unified  
School District

#### PresenceLearning

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After the 2013-2014 school year, LPUSD was one of ten districts to receive PresenceLearning's Award of Excellence. Of the nearly 1,000 schools PresenceLearning served that year, the distinction was awarded to the districts with the highest percentage of students who improved one level or more in spoken language production and spoken language comprehension on the Functional Communication Measures (FCMs) scales during the school year.

And after just one school year using online speech therapy, Rocco has flourished both in therapy and class.

"As a mom, I was relieved knowing we have a program like this available for our kids," said Toni Cianfarano. "It makes the weight we hold as parents so much easier. He likes it, his therapist is great, and he is learning."

"I wouldn't choose a service option for our school district that we wouldn't choose for our own child," said Dr. Cianfarano. "Early literacy is so important for young learners, but if the student can't speak, it's really hard for them to be literate because it's all tied together. PresenceLearning empowers students to speak, but it's more than that. It empowers students to be successful."

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