

Success Story:

River Springs Charter School

River Springs, CA

Large CA Charter School Uses Online Speech Therapy to Bridge the Services Gap Across Three Counties and Improve Administrative Processes

The Challenge

Springs Charter Schools (SCS) is the largest network of free, K-12 public charter schools in Southern California, offering a wide range of educational opportunities and programs for its 6,100 students. SCS consists of three individual charter schools; Empire Springs Charter School (ESCS), Harbor Springs Charter School (HSCS) and River Springs Charter School (RSCS). However, RSCS' Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dictated that it should provide special education services to its students in addition to the students at ESCS and HSCS.

With the mission of helping each student achieve his or her highest potential, SCS' innovative schooling model gives students the opportunity to pursue their individualized learning paths in a classroom, online or at home. However, this blended model made it difficult for RSCS to provide special education services, especially speech-language therapy. Since students who choose to attend the charter's vast network of academies have the choice of attending one of 12 sites across Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties, it was difficult to find speech-language pathologists (SLPs) to accommodate SCS' large geographic area. If just one student needed minimal therapy, for example, the special education department was forced to hire an SLP to accommodate that student. This resulted in a very fragmented SLP network.

"Hiring piecemeal work, although sometimes necessary, is very difficult," said Glendora Tremper, the lead SLP at RSCS. "It is hard for our finance department to track and the supervision is difficult."

Growing caseloads and a high number of independent study students requiring therapy also motivated RSCS to look for different therapy delivery models.

Choosing PresenceLearning

While researching therapy solutions, River Springs Charter School learned about PresenceLearning from numerous sources, including:

- The California Charter Schools Association (CCSA)
- The regional intermediate service unit (called a Special Education Local Plan Area or SELPA in CA)
- The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)

(continued...)



District Profile: River Springs Charter Schools River Springs, CA

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"Having the capability to search through a large bank of therapists to find specialized expertise in a particular area is definitely a strong point."

**Glendora Tremper,
Speech Language Pathologist
Lead at River Springs
Charter School**

PresenceLearning

580 Market Street, Sixth Floor
San Francisco, CA 94104-5417
Phone: 415.512.9000
Toll Free: 877.410.5418
Fax: 415.520.5444
schools@presencelearning.com

Tremper gathered further feedback from another colleague who was using PresenceLearning before reaching out to the company.

"I first experienced online speech therapy while doing volunteer work treating children with cleft palate in Mexico. So I knew online delivery works. My vision from the very beginning of my work at River Springs was to bring in online delivery for speech services and use it on a large scale," said Tremper.

Benefits & Outcomes

Implementing PresenceLearning not only improved RSCS' ability to serve all SCS students in need of speech-language therapy but solved some persistent administrative challenges, including:

- More balanced caseloads.
- Less fragmentation of services.
- Finding highly specialized therapists for students with rarer speech-language issues.

"With my background as an SLP, I firmly believe in the IEP process and serving the individual needs of the student. That's why they call it an Individualized Education Plan," said Tremper. "PresenceLearning's online delivery model is a solid option for meeting our students' individualized needs."

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