

Kodiak Island Borough School District

Executive Summary

Community Partner

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Background

The Kodiak Island Borough School District, KIBSD, is a rural public-school system located in the Gulf of Alaska. The district serves the island's only city, Kodiak, and several outlying Alaska Native rural villages through its four elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, seven isolated rural schools, and its distance education programs. Educating about 2,500 students in grades K-12, the district strives to provide them with exceptional educational opportunities and experiences while giving back to the local community.

Project Description

Project Opportunity

KIBSD's student information systems currently lack the tools they desire for analyzing the large amount of data they have, resulting in it being highly underutilized. The largest shortcomings of the system are that the district's information is decentralized and found in separate databases, there is a severe lack of ready-to-use tools that can be used to analyze the information to determine important insights, and there is no way to regularly create reports and visualizations of the data to assist in the district's decision making. While they are exploring Performance Matters, an analytics package from the same company as their primary student information system, it is unclear if this will meet their needs.

Project Vision

Through additional research and interviews, we have sought to develop a shared understanding of the types of information and insights that teachers, principals, and administrators are looking to discover from their students' information. From these interviews and secondary research we have developed use-cases and looked into potential vendors and student data analytics software that can satisfy the district needs. Finally, we created a competitive analysis and supporting documents detailing our research and laid out the advantages and disadvantages of each system according to our use-cases.

Project Outcomes

Our project outcomes detail our understanding of KIBSD's users and their problems, the strengths and weaknesses of their current student data analytics program, and our vendor

research and demo analysis. These outcomes are documented within our deliverables and within the plethora of meeting notes, summary documents, and asynchronous communications with our client, all of which have been made available through a shared online directory. Through our interviews, secondary research, and meetings with student data analytic companies, we have been able to establish points of contacts for the district for several potential vendors. Additionally, we have been able to provide in-depth evaluations of each commercial data analytics system we worked with to give the district clear and concise insights into which platform would best suit their needs. The information here will assist the district, and those they work with, in moving forward to implement a technical solution.

Project Deliverables

Our deliverables will include a competitive analysis of each of the vendors we vetted that's specifically designed to address the district's primary concerns. This is accompanied with use-case narratives to help demonstrate some of these platforms' features and interfaces. Finally, we will also include documentation of demos and points of contact for each of the competitors so that the district can explore these options on their own and work with them to implement one of the systems in the future.

Recommendations

We recommend that KIBSD transition away from Performance Matters as it fails to provide many of the essential features that they are looking for. Using our documentation, the client can form a solid understanding of the different stakeholders' exact needs and priorities from a data analytics platform. They can reference our research and analysis to further evaluate how well the alternative solutions that we studied and presented in-depth fulfill their needs. The client should then review our deliverables to gain insight into the process of selecting and implementing the solution that best meets their needs.

Student Consulting Team

JY Park served as the project manager. He is a senior student double-majoring in Information Systems and Human-Computer Interaction. He will continue pursuing his passion in front-end software engineering for customer facing products after graduation.

Bradley Chen served as the client liaison. He is a third-year student majoring in Information Systems with minors in Business Administration and Global Systems and Management. He will be interning at Accenture as a Digital Analyst this summer and is looking forward to a career in technology consulting.

Justin Britton served as the data lead. He is a third-year student-athlete majoring in Information Systems with a minor in Human-Computer Interaction. This summer, he will be working as a software engineering intern.

Daniel Kim served as the quality assurance lead. He is a third-year student majoring in Information Systems with a minor in Software Engineering. This summer he will be working as an undergraduate intern at PNC and is broadly pursuing a career in software engineering.