

# Spotlight

Case Study: Cumberland County Schools

## Cumberland County Schools Use the Power of the eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® to Integrate Data

When Cumberland County Schools (CCS) in North Carolina went looking for a data warehouse, they knew exactly what they wanted. “When we looked at the products that were being marketed as a data warehouse, we found that most products were either a glorified student information system, or a fancy reporting tool,” said Dr. Terry Williams, Executive Director of Technology. “eScholar was the only solution that was a true data warehouse, with the greatest breadth of data and the strongest ETL.”

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction was implementing North Carolina Window of Information on Student Education (NC WISE), a statewide student information system. CCS needed the ability to download the data stored in NCWISE for any given year and store it in a centralized data warehouse where they could track data for any given student across all years that the student was enrolled in the school system. They also needed to merge assessment and other types of data with the NCWISE data. They were able to use the powerful extract, transform, and load (ETL) capabilities of the eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® solution to cleanse and integrate data from these disparate sources and turn them into meaningful information.

### **eScholar’s ETL Tools Integrate Data from Many Sources**

CCS began to populate their eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® solution by working with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to build extracts from NCWISE. Using the eScholar system, they were able to identify errors in the source data and correct them so that the data could be accurately analyzed. CCS initially loaded student demographic data followed by data from the NC End of Course and End of Grade tests. Today, their eScholar data warehouse includes school enrollment, staff demographics and certification, attendance, and

discipline data. Most recently, they have added item level assessment data for individual students. Educators are now able to track student performance on skills and objectives. Teachers are able to use these data to provide targeted instruction to students in the areas where it is most needed.

### **eScholar’s Open Architecture Works with Multiple Reporting Tools**

CCS also selected eScholar because they realized the district had multiple reporting needs and wanted to use both pre-existing and new reporting tools. They recognized that eScholar’s open architecture would allow this. District staff use both sophisticated industry standard business intelligence tools and a broadly deployed web portal. Scott McLeod, Senior Developer and Manager, developed the web portal internally using Java script. The tool provides drop down menus to build queries, set filters, and define data aggregation and viewing options through the Web. Scott built reports using data from such domains as student demographics, assessments, accountability, attendance, and discipline. While other business intelligence tools are being used to build custom analytical requests, their internally developed portal provides easy-to-use reports for administrators and teachers.

### **Cumberland County Schools Use eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® to Support Troops**

Not only has CCS made data available to administration and staff, but the district has also built a web-based reporting tool for parents. With Fort Bragg located in Cumberland County, there are many children of military parents in CCS. Many of the students have parents who have been deployed to Iraq and other places around the world. CCS wanted to make student reports available to

their parents where ever they were stationed. Not only would this help parents track their child's progress, but also provide an important emotional link with the family from thousands of miles away. Today, any parent with Internet access from anywhere around the world can log into the CCS website and view reports of their child's grades and school attendance. The district has received several letters from military personnel thanking them for this service and indicating how much it has helped to stay connected to the family.

## What's Next?

Now that CCS has loaded four years of data, they are seeing the benefits of having a data warehouse:

- By using the Student Groups capability in their eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® solution, the district can track student participation in Federal Programs. They can identify which students participated in which program and, by comparing program participation with assessment results, determine which programs were most effective.
- CCS is developing a Comprehensive Accountability Program which will examine organizational effectiveness by identifying schools which are underachieving or overachieving. Using data from the warehouse, they can then compare other indicators such as attendance, discipline, staff development, and item level assessment data to determine any patterns for success or failure.
- During the coming year, CCS will use their data warehouse to compare Advanced Placement course enrollment with state End of Course exam results. This will help administrators determine whether students should take the Advanced Placement courses, the validity of the tests, and the effectiveness of the courses.

CCS in North Carolina is clearly realizing the value of their eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® solution.

## About eScholar

eScholar is the nation's leading educational data system company. eScholar clients have achieved phenomenal success using our data management and analysis solutions to track and improve pre-K through postsecondary student achievement. Relied on by over 3,400 school districts across the country, eScholar transforms the way educators use and understand the data collected through a myriad of sources. For more information about eScholar, visit [www.escholar.com](http://www.escholar.com).

Cumberland County Schools 20071010

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## Highlights:

- Cumberland County Schools selected the eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® solution as its data warehouse because it was the only solution that was a true data warehouse, with the greatest breadth of data and the strongest ETL.
- Cumberland County Schools uses the eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® solution to collect, analyze and report on a multitude of data domains including NC End of Course and End of Grade tests, school enrollment, staff demographics and certification, attendance, discipline, and item level assessment data for individual students.
- Cumberland County Schools had developed its own portal and reporting tool to work seamlessly with their eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® solution.
- The openness of the eScholar solution has allowed Cumberland County Schools to meet some of their unique and important needs. They have built a web-based reporting tool for parents, including those in the military deployed overseas. This tool allows parents to view reports of their child's grades and attendance, enabling them to track their child's progress and maintain an important emotional link to the family from thousands of miles away.



Expand Knowledge — Improve the Future

222 Bloomingdale Road, Suite 107  
White Plains, NY 10605

914.989.2900 Tel  
914.989.2990 Fax

[www.escholar.com](http://www.escholar.com)