HARRIS
School Solutions

Case Study:
Coweta County School System

Background

In a given year, about 22,500 students attend the Coweta County School System (CCSS) in Newnan, Georgia. Comptroller Chris Latimer, a CPA, had been with CCSS for 11 years as Assistant Comptroller before his recent promotion.

The Challenge

According to Chris, his primary concern was ensuring the accuracy of CCSS' reporting. As he puts it, "We were using an older system. As we were evolving to new reporting standards in the state, we needed a new financial package that could meet our needs and help us meet deadlines. We are very cognizant that we have a duty to the taxpayer and to our system to make sure that our financial reporting is very sound and solid and to make sure that we report to all of our stakeholders in the way they need it to be reported."

However, as we learned, his worries ran deeper than any single financial function. Chris says of his previous software solution, "The thing that was keeping us up at night is actually the support that we were receiving at that time in our old system. It was a smaller company that we were using, so we were really concerned about continuity if something were to happen to that support system."

The Solution

"To come up with a permanent solution," Chris explains, "we decided that we would demo different products. An easier solution to the reporting requirements is what we w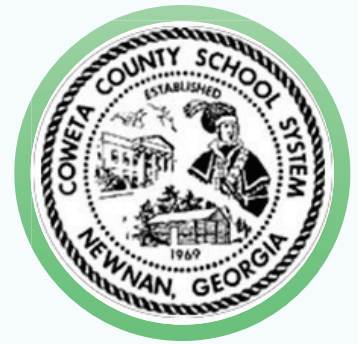anted. We wanted a product that could be easy to use, a product that had a support system, that we could get solutions to problems quick. We didn't want to have to put in a service ticket for our problem and have maybe a 24-hour or a 48-hour wait. We wanted a team that could support us at all times."

"SmartFusion was good for our system, and I felt like it met our needs. The SmartFusion programmers work with different groups, whether it's the Georgia Department of Education, Department of Labor, all these external entities."

"They go the extra mile to get the file layouts to these agencies. They go ahead and create that file layout and make it work in SmartFusion so that when I get ready to do my reporting I can easily do that function very easily."

The Results

Now, Chris is able not only to get his work done more efficiently, but also to help other schools that may be facing similar challenges. "The best thing about SmartFusion is the ease of use," he says, "and we've actually talked to other systems that were interested in going to a new product. Other school systems will call us from time to time and ask us questions about our SmartFusion. They'll ask specific questions because maybe they're deciding to go to a new ERP system. The first thing I say is if you need a product that you can implement and really go with it, then SmartFusion is the way to go.

Snapshot

District
Coweta County School System

Size
22,500 students

Challenge
Meeting reporting requirements with confidence

Solution

SmartFusion

Results
Efficient, fully-customized reporting

"SmartFusion programmers... go the extra mile to get the file layouts to these [external entities]... and make it work in SmartFusion so that when I get ready to do my reporting I can easily do that function very easily."

— Chris Latimer, CPA
Comptroller