



No District Left Behind

How the Alabama State Department of Education ensures that each district gets the resources they need, regardless of their size.

Alabama State Department of Education



Across the country, English Language Learner populations are rapidly growing. Districts and schools with budgets already stretched painfully thin are grappling to meet the expanding needs of their diverse families. The Alabama State Department of Education recognizes the vital importance

of including each and every parent in their child's education. The ALSDE stepped up to the challenge and provided a statewide solution in the form of a TransACT® subscription. Now every LEA in the state has access to an online collection of parent notices translated in multiple languages.

Help for rural districts

In the past, English Language Learner families generally lived in urban areas. The concentration made it easier to provide translation resources. This is no longer the case. Now, these populations are spreading out across the state, making it harder to provide centralized support.

Dely Velez-Roberts, ELL Coordinator for the Alabama

State Department of Education explained, "Our ELL population is rapidly growing. Just five years ago our ELL population numbered between 8,000 and 10,000. Now we have approximately 19,500 ELL students. The growth used to be in the cities, but now is occurring in more rural areas. This is a challenge because one area may have 1,000 ELL students, and another just 2 or 3. It's very difficult

The Challenge

An expanding ELL population requiring more support from LEAs with limited resources.

The Solution

A statewide subscription to TransACT® NCLB and GenEd Parent Notifications.

The Result

Families across Alabama receive school-to-home communications in a language they can understand. Alabama passes the parent notification portion of their Title III monitoring.

for our rural LEAs to get support for these kids when they're so few. That was the difficulty we faced – getting support across the state for this particular group of students.”

Unwilling to let the LEAs struggle on their own with inadequate resources and risk marginalizing these families, the Alabama State Department of Education stepped in to provide every LEA in the state with a subscription to TransACT® NCLB and GenEd Parent Notifications.

“This tool is very helpful to our LEAs. They can go online and get the documents they need in the various languages they require,” said Velez-Roberts.

Road tour

To kick off the statewide subscription, Velez-Roberts teamed with TransACT President/CEO Rick Passovoy and embarked on a road tour. They went to three different locations in the state to personally conduct TransACT training. Additional training is provided online by the TransACT Customer Care team, as well as at gatherings such as the annual Federal Programs Coordinators Conference.

“Anytime I speak anywhere, I make sure administrators know about TransACT,” said Velez-Roberts.

RoadMaps provide expert guidance

Giving every principal and administrator in the state access to a powerful parent communication compliance tool is just the beginning. The legalities of our education mandates are often complex and ever-changing. It is difficult for individuals at the LEA

and school level to stay on top of every change and modification to mandate requirements. That is why TransACT bundles parent notification collections with RoadMaps.

RoadMaps provide the expert guidance LEAs need to make decisions with confidence. A principal need only answer a series of short questions pertaining to her situation and then receives a recommendation of the required parent notifications.

Velez-Roberts said, “The RoadMaps show principals the documents they need to send home to make sure they're covered for NCLB.”

This guidance proved so successful that Alabama

was able to prove parent communication compliance during recent Title III monitoring.

“Using TransACT enabled us to fulfill the requirements of communicating with parents in a language they can understand. We just showed the monitors our TransACT subscription and we were covered,” said Velez-Roberts.

A statewide solution

Subscribing at the statewide level not only locks in incredible cost savings, but also ensures that smaller districts that would be unable to subscribe on their own still get the same level of support as their urban counterparts.

“We thought this was a wonderful thing for the state as a gesture to the LEAs who are not so big. The state provides the assistance for the LEAs so they can get the documents they need in the languages they need,” said Velez-Roberts.

“TransACT is a great tool for LEAs to be able to communicate with parents of various languages. There are parents that are still apprehensive about coming into schools. It makes them feel a little more at home when they receive something in their own language.”

- Dely Velez-Roberts
*ELL Coordinator
Alabama State DOE*

Products

Alabama State Department of Education subscribes to the following **TransACT® subscriptions:**

- NCLB Parent Notifications (in 5 languages)
- GenEd Parent Notifications (in 21 languages)
- EduPortal® eLibrary

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