

## Student Information System School Board Report

### History

Mineola ISD chose a local company in 1985 to manage student information. The company was called EDP. It was located in Longview, Texas. This company specialized in student information and financial management software only for school districts exclusively in Texas. The software was coded using the Cobalt programming language. The interface consisted of numbered menus for the end user to choose to complete their daily work from a "dumb" terminal. This system was robust and very stable having nearly no down time. End users printed reports to get information from the system. Printing relied on large scale dot matrix printers (one at each campus). This system functioned very well until the late 1990s.

Technology began evolving very quickly with a windows based operating system computer being placed on every desk. The old terminals could not complete the daily task of office staff. EDP adjusted to a windows based computer still using the menu driven Cobalt language. School districts' needs changed to more application needs such as student nutrition, grading and electronic attendance. Mineola I.S.D. also had to keep up with state reporting requirements. To keep up, EDP created windows based software that would integrate with the Cobalt system. This model became very difficult to manage separate systems trying to integrate, and it was difficult to maintain several pieces of the hardware. The need for data to be extracted from the student information system became important as the State of Texas began to require curriculum data integration with demographic information. The Cobalt System made this extraction very difficult and cumbersome.

Tyler Technologies, a nationwide software company specializing in taxing software and municipality software, purchased EDP in 2009. The company wanted to expand into the school software market and did not want to start from the ground up. From 2009 until 2012 very few changes were made to the Mineola ISD (MISD) software structure. The only noticeable change was a difference in support.

In October of 2012 Mineola ISD received a letter from Tyler Technologies announcing preparations were being made to migrate the current solution to their next generation of software, **Tyler Student Information System (Tyler SIS). This product was browser based and hosted at the Tyler Tech network operations center. The solution utilized Microsoft's latest technology and was engineered to be flexible with the changes in state requirements, technology and hardware. MISD was given no choice in the change. A financial incentive amounting to a savings of approximately \$70,000 on the migration to the new product was given to MISD. MISD did have the option of keeping the financial side in place for a few more years and chose to keep EDP Classic Financial. The only cost was for training staff members which was estimated to be \$10,000. The implementation calendar was received in December of 2012 along with the schedule of conversion and dates for a "Kick Off Meeting" in January.**

The "Kick Off" meeting was very exciting. MISD personnel got their first look at Tyler SIS and some of the features it offered. The conversion timeline was reviewed along with the requirements at each phase.

Many decisions had to be made. Types of report cards, staff roles and responsibilities, and a core training team had to be identified. Many training hours took place during the summer in preparation for school starting in August. In addition, all data had to be "pre- conversion" ready and then "post-conversion" checked. Many, many hours have been spent moving data into the new system and checking it.

MISD staff has given outstanding effort during the change to Tyler SIS. There have been obstacles to overcome, long hours of training and many headaches. Everyone continues to work very hard to learn the new system, support their campus needs, complete state reporting, and deal with problems.

The change has presented MISD many challenges. After a recent implementation review, the MISD Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Technology Director met with Tyler SIS representatives. This group concluded the migration to the new system needed to be better understood by staff, trustees, parents, and the general public. MISD and Tyler SIS will increase our transparency with all stake-holders, and accelerate the migration. This will allow both staff and parents a chance to see more of the opportunities offered to MISD students and parents. We will also communicate more with our staff and public by releasing the full implementation schedule.