



## Case Study

### Providing a Shared Curriculum Supplement to Enhance Teacher Onboarding with Fully Aligned K-12 Educational Resources

The Gratiot-Isabella RESD is a state-funded education service agency that provides support for several school districts across two counties. The RESD sought a technology solution to support professional development, fill curriculum gaps, support a variety of educational philosophies, and unify supplemental materials, allowing the RESD to better service its school districts.

Dr. Kathy Peasley is the Associate Superintendent of Instruction for the RESD, and her department provides professional development and curriculum support throughout the school districts. She worked with Boardworks to address these gaps and to support teachers during a time of significant transition.

#### THE CHALLENGE

Each district within the Gratiot-Isabella RESD has historically maintained its own curriculum, but because these districts are relatively small, they often lack curriculum support at individual schools, and the textbooks with which teachers work are often out-of-date.

When Dr. Peasley's department trained new teachers, there wasn't a shared curriculum or resource to work from, leaving many teachers without the tools they needed. These issues were particularly impactful in 2020 when the RESD had 45 new teachers working with Dr. Peasley's department.

"One of the things I've always wanted to do is gradually move districts toward similar textbooks or similar resources that allow us, through economies of scale, to better support our districts. When I first saw Boardworks, a light went on, because it was exactly how we could offer common supplemental resources."

"We're really looking for the opportunity to collaborate across grade levels. I might only have across the whole region 30 teachers at a grade level. But it's really hard to collaborate when there are nine districts, and you bring all the second-grade teachers together, and they're using nine different text series. And so Boardworks allows us to have curriculum conversations, looking at resources that we all had in common."

#### THE SOLUTION

Dr. Peasley summarized three specific reasons Boardworks was a strong match for the districts the RESD serves:

"Boardworks being a common supplemental tool that supports consistent training for all teachers was a big selling point."

"It was also huge to have a one-time purchase that each school district actually owns because as soon as there's a new principal, a new superintendent, or a new direction from the board, there's the risk that a license isn't renewed and all the hard work teachers have done is gone."



**Gratiot-Isabella Regional Education Service District (RESD)**

#### SCHOOL DISTRICT PROFILE

Gratiot-Isabella Regional Education Service District (RESD) consists of nine school districts, two parochial schools, and one public school academy in central Michigan, serving 13,000 students.

#### SCHOOL DISTRICT STATS

- 11 schools
- 8,000 students
- 522 certified teachers
- 14:1 Student teacher ratio

#### STUDENT STATS

- 52.9% of the students are Economically Disadvantaged.
- 15.7% of the students qualify for Special Education

#### ABOUT BOARDWORKS

Boardworks provides interactive teaching & learning resources that empower teachers to optimize existing classroom technology.

Boardworks products are created by and for teachers and are aligned to state standards. Each product contains hundreds of sequential, editable lessons filled with interactive animations, games, and activities.

#### CONTACT US

Schedule a demonstration to learn how Boardworks resources can benefit your teachers and students.

Reach one of our education consultants by phone at **855-405-7939** or by email at **inquiries@boardworkseducation.com**

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“Another big selling point for us was the ability to edit the content. This removed any question about philosophical alignment, making Boardworks a wonderful teaching tool. A teacher can pull up an online resource or a PowerPoint and maybe it’s not fully aligned with what they’re working on, but they can now tweak it and align it to fit. The editable component is huge for us.”

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## IMPLEMENTATION

Boardworks has worked closely with Dr. Peasley to support implementation, onboarding, and ongoing training for administrators and teachers. A member of the Boardworks team presented to principals and teachers in-person at several school districts to highlight the practical value of the platform in addition to providing hands-on professional development support for teachers. In addition, Boardworks provided virtual rollouts and recordings for administrators. These have become a valuable resource for Dr. Peasley in communicating with principals throughout the RESD.

Dr. Peasley has seen a grassroots swell of engagement with Boardworks from teachers. As teachers approach her department requesting digital curriculum resources, she directs them to Boardworks. Those teachers have actively shared their results with one another, collaborating and helping each other to leverage the new tools, and usage has increased dramatically.

“Boardworks and I had a lot of conversations about our structure and the overall unique structure of ISDs and Michigan schools, and our Account Manager has come back many times to support our efforts, which has been extremely helpful. Beyond that, the tech support has been phenomenal. Boardworks provides exceptional customer service, among the best I’ve ever experienced.”

“I remember in our smallest rural district, the principal who’s also the superintendent was ecstatic. She had brought her department chairs to the initial meetings and was thrilled to be able to provide them with resources. It’s made a big difference.”

## RESULTS

Boardworks provides Gratiot-Isabella RESD the flexibility and resources needed to align training and development across the school districts it serves. This has allowed Dr. Peasley’s department to bring 45 new teachers up to speed quickly with immediate access to high-quality, readymade, editable lessons.

In individual schools, principals are eagerly integrating Boardworks for their teachers, including putting Boardworks into individual development plans for teachers, all in a way that meets the educational philosophy and instructional models being used by individual school districts.

“When teachers are new to a district, sometimes they walk into a classroom and inherit file cabinets full of resources, which can certainly be overwhelming, and sometimes they walk into an expansion classroom and they have nothing. For us to be able to provide these teachers with ready-made materials that are aligned to standards is immensely valuable.”

“We have a literacy consultant with several literacy networks, and she is able to use Boardworks as a common resource. I love the fact that the content is fully editable because it addresses a common concern in these situations where the content isn’t aligned with what they are doing philosophically. They can now adjust so everything is fully aligned.”

“If my early literacy coach is working with a group of kindergarten teachers that want to look at phonemic awareness, and another group of kindergarten teachers wants to look at phonics, they can now divide and conquer, because they’ve all purchased the resource. Instead of just one or two teachers in one building working on it, we have teachers from across the region that can collaborate, tweak, and align the materials with things like the ‘Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy.’ Boardworks provides an opportunity for us to have curriculum conversations, looking at resources that we all have in common while remaining flexible enough to meet existing instructional models.”

“We have to hang on to the teachers we have and the best way to do that is to provide the tools they need to do their job. The commitment to continued development, the one-time fee ensuring we don’t have to worry about future turnover in the license, and the tremendous customer service we have received all support us in that effort.”