

# NAIKU CASE STUDY



## CASE STUDY: PUTNAM COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM PATH TO SUCCESS

Putnam County School System serves over 11,000 students across 18 schools in northern Tennessee. To measure and improve student achievement, the district develops and administers district-wide benchmark assessments in ELA and Mathematics across grades 2 – 8. For the past two years, the district has used Naiku to deliver and score their district benchmark assessments. Their teachers have now started to use Naiku for everyday classroom assessment. This case study provides a look at their successful path to better assessments and better achievement.



### 2012: The Journey Begins

In 2012, the Tennessee State Board of Education adopted new academic standards in ELA and Mathematics. The ELA standards emphasized critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity. The Mathematics standards focused on fewer topics, specified coherence across grade levels, and increased rigor.

To prepare their students for the new standards, the district implemented new K-8 district benchmark assessments in ELA and Mathematics to help teachers identify students' strengths, whether students attained a desired level of success, and the teaching methods that were most successful. In the new benchmark process, students were asked to set goals for each benchmark, to determine whether their results showed movement towards or away from their goals, and whether their behavior mirrored what they sought to accomplish.

Six benchmarks were created at each grade level. Each benchmark was to be given in a 2-week window. The benchmarks were not meant to be a check-up or monitoring tool; rather they were stressed that they were tools for teachers to help them adjust their instruction based on the data.

#### Early Struggles

At the annual grade level PLC meetings, teachers expressed that too many standards were being assessed with too many items. This took too much instructional time away from the teachers. This also impacted their ability to keep up with the district's pacing guidelines because the benchmarks were not tied to any particular unit of instruction.

With the district's old online benchmark assessment platform, each teacher's class roster had to be uploaded manually, which was a burden on district staff that had set up the classes. The benchmark assessment items were also hard to create on the platform. On top of that, assessment results were not returned until two weeks later, making them less useful to impact instruction in the current class and year. The district sought to do something different and better.

#### Putnam County School System Fast Facts

- Public school district
- Located in Cookeville, TN
- 11,000 students
- 10 elementary schools
- 5 middle schools
- 3 high schools



#### Successes Measured

- Started with only grades 2-8 district benchmark assessments
- 31,635 Naiku Tests Taken in 2014-15
- Expanded to all assessments in all subjects and grades
- 37,394 Naiku Tests Taken in 2015-16 (as of Feb 4, 2016)

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## 2014: A New Initiative

In the summer of 2014, the district decided to move to a new online assessment platform. After reviewing several options, the district chose Naiku. Additionally, the district created new educational specialist positions to help improve the district's benchmark process and to further improve student achievement.

Now, grade 2-8 benchmarks by unit are created and delivered in Naiku. Each benchmark assesses major standards only, with 3 questions per standard. Class rosters are automatically synced with PowerSchool, the district's SIS, making it easy for teachers to assign the benchmarks to their classes.

Teachers are asked to follow the new district pacing guide and set goals with students in each class. The benchmarks are taken after each unit of study and results are returned immediately to each teacher, allowing them to readily adjust their instruction as appropriate, particularly those where students score less than 65%. Parents are notified of student progress.

## 2015: The Path Forward

With the success of the district's benchmark assessment program in Naiku (more than 31,000 tests were taken in the '14-15 school year), Putnam moved forward with an initiative to have teachers create and deliver all their classroom assessments in Naiku. The district found that the student-centric assessment features of Naiku (i.e., test prediction, confidence ratings, and reflection) were great ways to engage students to improve achievement.

Teachers are now trained to use Naiku in all subjects and grade levels. Students are instructed to set goals, predict their scores, and to reflect on their performance to increase student engagement.

Half way into the current school year, Putnam students have taken more than 37,000 tests in Naiku. That's more tests taken so far this year than all of last year. Students are also more engaged and confident with the exams as evidenced by the higher rate of exam score prediction and the higher predicted scores. More importantly, more students are actually scoring better than 65%. Putnam County students are well on their way to success.

### ***Benchmarks and Classroom Assessments Taken on Naiku by Putnam County Students***

Year	Tests Taken	# of Tests Predicted	% Tests Predicted	Prediction > 65%	% of Tests Predicted > 65%	% of Test Scores > 65%
2014-2015	31,635	2,991	9.5%	1,991	70.8%	51.5%
2015-2016	37,394	14,074	37.6%	10,191	77.6%	53.8%

## TRANSFORMATIVE

### Naiku Educator Spotlight

Tabitha Savage has 11 years of service to Putnam County Schools. She began as a general education elementary teacher. She currently serves as the Math Specialist for the district, serving all K-8 schools. She led the transition and transformation of her district's benchmark and classroom assessment practice. "With Naiku, we have successfully transitioned our Grade 2-8 benchmark assessments on-line. Teachers and students receive results quickly. Parents are then notified of their students' progress. Our teachers are now creating and administering every day classroom assessments in Naiku. They particularly love the student engagement features." Ms. Savage was the 2011 Prescott South Elementary School Teacher of the Year.



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