

CASE STUDY **DELIVERING A SEAMLESS EXPERIENCE SCHOOLWIDE: DEERFIELD-WINDSOR SCHOOL**



> **OVERVIEW**

In 1977, Deerfield School and Windsor Park Academy merged to form a premier college preparatory school — Deerfield-Windsor School. The elite, Albany, Georgia-based K-12 institution serves nearly 600 students from 12 surrounding counties with a focus on STEM subjects. Even with a sizeable student body, the school maintains an average class size of 15 students. Deerfield-Windsor prides itself on strong academics, and also offers Spanish classes, rigorous physical education curriculum, and fine arts offerings. The Performing and Visual Arts are offered to even the youngest Deerfield-Windsor students, allowing them to pursue a variety of programs. Deerfield-Windsor School is a member of the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS)/SACS AdvancED, and is accredited by the Georgia Accrediting Commission.

> **CHALLENGES**

Deerfield-Windsor faced a mandatory upgrade from the company that had provided their student information system (SIS) and their learning management system (LMS) for 20 years. With that vendor, the school had been forced to pay for numerous features they didn't need or use. Director of Finance and Operations Adrienne Hill brainstormed about what to do. "We didn't need it all, but we were paying for it all," she said. "On top of which, the software wasn't user-friendly." Those features were barriers to efficient training of new employees — not to mention a source of unnecessary expense the school wanted to remove from their budget.

> **GOALS:**

With the cost of an upgrade to their current system as well as the ongoing cost of unused features, Deerfield-Windsor looked at all of their available options. FACTS® had been in contact with the school for years, so the administration was familiar with how FACTS' products and services could improve the user experience for families, faculty, and staff.

> **THE SOLUTION:**

It didn't take long for the administration at Deerfield-Windsor to understand the financial, technological, and day-to-day benefits of switching to FACTS from their old vendor. As the 2017-2018 school year came to an end, Deerfield-Windsor began the implementation process to move off their old system to FACTS.

One of the most daunting processes for schools after switching to a new vendor is ensuring a smooth data conversion. "Our conversion was smooth and very straightforward," said Hill. "Our team loved staff training on the new platform. It was so easy, teachers were ready to go by the time they were doing their pre-planning," continued Hill.

After a successful SIS implementation, the accounting and technology offices began onboarding with FACTS' financial products, including FACTS Tuition Management and Premier Billing. "The implementation process was smooth enough that we were able to begin the 2018-2019 school year with the FACTS financial products fully deployed," said Hill.

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One of the primary beneficiaries of the move to FACTS has been the families at Deerfield-Windsor. Seeking a better experience for them was a key instigator to the move to FACTS. “With our old vendor, the parents had such a fragmented experience. They went to one place to do something, and another place to do something else,” said Hill. “With FACTS, everything for parents is one place.”

> **RESULTS:**

Only a few months after implementation, everyone seems to be happy with the results. “Everything’s been very positive,” said Hill. “Our registrar has been singing the praises. Our parents are happy with their experience. The faculty and staff love it.”

As for Hill herself, her job is much easier than it was just a few months ago: “The reporting and everything I do is very user-friendly. With our previous vendor, we had to be on campus or in the system if we were remote. Now I can do everything from my phone or at home.”



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