Washington’s Special Education Department Now Has Intuitive Technology To Spot Trends

Business Challenges: OSPI Needed Powerful Reporting

Due to increasing regulations, special education complaints from parents and attorneys are on the rise: OSPI is on track to field nearly 50% more complaints.

But the system the team used to process these complaints, FileMaker Pro, was woefully out of date. The system only provided a way to track the complaints. It couldn’t analyze data, run reports, or have multiple people assigned to tasks. One person had to administer the entire system, causing potential workflow bottlenecks.

And if the team wanted to analyze data, it had to be done manually.

Bottom line, OSPI needed a user-friendly case management system that could help the non-technical team:

1. Easily analyze trends.
2. Proactively spot issues before they became problems.
3. Take ownership of cases without relying on one person.

I never imagined that building a Salesforce system would be this good of an experience. I was super happy with how smoothly it went, how we kept the implementation to such a short timeline, and the willingness of the EightCloud team to answer every question we had.

— Alyssa I. Fairbanks
Dispute Resolution Team Lead & Investigator
Special Education, OSPI

The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) oversees K–12 education in the state. Part of that role includes investigating complaints regarding special education programs in Washington which has 165,000 students with disabilities.

The lead investigator of these complaints, attorney Alyssa Fairbanks of the Special Education Dispute Resolution Team, says she loves her job, as her work directly impacts the lives of the kids who need it most.
What We Did: Part Educator, Part Implementor

Made sure investigators and administrators had the knowledge and context they needed in addition to building a custom case management solution on the Salesforce platform.

- Conducted a thorough assessment and evaluation of OSPI’s existing FileMaker Pro solution, business naming conventions and workflow to provide guidance to maximize productivity.
- Interviewed key stakeholders and conducted a needs assessment to identify critical functionalities and uncover pain points.
- Developed a custom case management solution on the Salesforce platform.
- Ensured the investigators and administrators had the knowledge and context to full utilize the solution.

Results: Efficiency, Visibility, Ownership

The work started in March 2020 and ended just two months later. Results included:

Maximizing efficiency. Auto-population into templates and reporting functionality are already saving countless hours of manual data entry.

Improving visibility. OSPI is enjoying the ability to quickly parse data and run reports — on issues ranging from demographics and disability categories to geography — without having to be Salesforce experts.

Facilitating ownership. More than 4 investigators and administrators from multiple departments now can interact with the system, allowing for better collaboration.

Key projects completed by EightCloud:

- Complex case management and workflow functionality.
- Advanced reporting capabilities.
- Data interoperability, sharing and migration.
- A Salesforce Conga add-on solution for templates.
- System training.

“I didn’t know anything about building a system like this. EightCloud did a great job explaining things to us but didn’t make us feel ignorant.”

— Alyssa I. Fairbanks
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