

▶▶ District Profile



Spencerport Central School District

The **Spencerport Central School District** is ten miles west of Rochester, New York in an area described as “rural-suburban,” and serves the Town of Ogden and parts of three other towns in Monroe County.

The district covers about 37 square miles and provides transportation for approximately 4,500 public and non-public school students in a multitude of programs throughout the county and its own four elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Transportation services are also provided to support the athletic and cultural field trips, logging over a million miles during the school year.

After implementing a redistricting plan in 2003 the transportation department now utilizes a multi-tier routing system. This routing system serves all the high school, middle school and elementary students who attend more than 60 programs throughout the county.

The high school, middle school and two of the elementary schools are located in a campus setting with the district’s administration and transportation offices also located there. The other two elementary schools are located off campus.

Situation

- ▶ **Construction of a new elementary school**
- ▶ **Relocation of 6th grade students to middle school**
- ▶ **Creation of a multi-tier routing system**

Prior to the transportation department making the necessary changes required for redistricting students for the four elementary schools and expanded middle school, the district’s committee on redistricting formulated criteria to ensure the least possible disruption:

- All students in Grade 6 would be transferred from the three elementary schools to the Middle School, which would now serve Grades 6-7-8. This would serve educational purposes, allowing for smaller populations in the district’s elementary schools and expanding opportunities for students in the sixth grade.
- The transportation department, using Routefinder Pro, established a boundary for the new elementary school. All elementary students affected by the change would attend the new school.
- A multi-tier routing system would be considered to control costs, improve efficiency, and provide for greater student safety.

Asked whether the changes required, presented a logistical nightmare, Michael Proukou, Spencerport’s transportation director, said, “Not at all! While it’s been work-intensive, we have had easy access to the information we need through Routefinder Pro. This has greatly simplified the process, especially in terms of pinpointing students in specific grade levels and geographic areas, and allowing us to do a series of queries to establish optimal routes and bus stops that adhere to our transportation guidelines.”

The district’s transportation guidelines include adherence to general student safety measures. For example, they attempt to place no more than ten students at each bus stop. In addition, bus stops in suburban areas must be between 500-1,000 feet of student homes, and in rural areas no more than 300 feet from their homes. Bus stops are placed centrally within a cluster of homes or at the first home along rural routes so students will approach at the front of the bus.

Solution

Using Routefinder Pro for redistricting was of great benefit to Michael Proukou, who has been a Transfinder user for about twelve years, first at the Rush Henrietta School District (also in Monroe County), where an older system was replaced with Transfinder's, and for the past eight years at Spencerport. According to Proukou, "I find Routefinder Pro to be user friendly and very helpful in extracting information. I can look at student populations in various neighborhoods and in the various grades. This not only helps us establish the best routes and transport students more efficiently and safely, it also enables us to help the district staff the schools more effectively."

Former communications specialist and ad hoc member of the redistricting committee, Mary Kay Glazer reported, "Michael was able to use Routefinder Pro to show the committee several boundary options during our initial meetings. This saved lots of time and enabled us to quickly eliminate boundaries that did not meet our criteria and narrow down the options to about three that gave us the numbers we needed."

Besides a series of written communications to parents, the committee also held two public forums. At each forum, Michael Proukou demonstrated each of the boundary options recommended by the committee and demonstrated each by using Transfinder. Mary Kay Glazer, said, "This was very helpful. It gave the parents a visual of how we arrived at the recommended boundaries and how we were able to arrive at the right numbers for each of the schools."

Once the plan was reviewed, the Superintendent submitted it to the Board for approval and final communications to students and parents were initiated. With a full semester to finalize all logistics for the redistricting plan, the transportation department believed the opening of the September 2003 school year would be as smooth as possible, and it was the case.

Benefits

This year Michael Proukou was asked to do a study comparing their previous two tier system to their current multi-tier system implemented six years ago. Michael found that the multi-tier routing system still offers the safest and most efficient option for pupil transportation. Since the redistricting, Michael has been able to implement, with the help of Transfinder solutions, stricter regulations on historical record keeping of routes and bus stops in order to maintain the highest level of quality for transporting students, so it is certain that these arrangements are the safest and most efficient for the students.

Also, Spencerport Central School District, since redistricting, has purchased other solutions from Transfinder's suite of software products. Michael Proukou is now using Tripfinder. Previously they used an excel spreadsheet system to schedule and track athletic and academic field trips. The new system, Tripfinder, is "very user friendly and has lessened administrative office labor. It eliminates work that doesn't have to be done by multiple staff members and allows for greater efficiency and return on investment for its capability to generate invoices. Often we provide field trip service for authorized non-profit organizations for student related programs and the information we need to be able to invoice these organizations for this service is now organized and centrally located, letting the system do it for us so we are no longer researching through data and trying to calculate each resource."

Proukou also uses Tripfinder to generate authorization forms for his drivers, which detail where they are going, who they are driving and their departure times so there is always a clear communication. Michael hopes to eventually have the system implemented into their athletic building and schools making the field trip request process more streamlined. For now, he uses the system to schedule his buses and drivers.

For the past three years, Spencerport also has been using Servicefinder for the district's fleet maintenance needs. Terry Swanger, who heads the service department, said that it has saved them invaluable time for state reporting. This has become an essential part of their operation as it keeps all of the information on parts inventory and equipment maintenance for their state reports organized and easily accessible, which keeps them prepared for auditing. Terry has recommended Servicefinder to neighboring districts for those same reasons.

