

# Case Study

## Sweetwater County Teachers and Students Learn Collaboratively with My Big Campus

### Overview

Sweetwater County School District faces a lot of the challenges other districts face: students dispersed across 13 schools (including 2 rural buildings); increasing demands for access and collaboration combined with mounting pressure for safety and security; the need to make sure students are leaving school prepared for the digital world that exists beyond the campus; and the need to provide teachers with the resources and connections to enhance their own professional development.

Instructional facilitator Dr. Cristy Magagna is always looking for new tools to improve instruction and to bring technology into the classroom. “I want to raise the bar so that our students can do more than normal,” Magagna states. “We’re giving students the tools to excel.”

My Big Campus gives the district access to resources and tools to improve education for the students and professional development for the staff, promoting learning in a digital age without giving up safety and security.

### Challenges

With a dispersed student body and staff, the IT team wanted a place for users to communicate across buildings, across districts, and ultimately across the nation for improved professional development and learning.

Looking ahead, the Future Technology Committee also realized that students needed a collaborative solution to stay competitive in the 21st century and gain the skills to be successful within the digital environment that would dominate their futures, both in college and in the workplace.

### Solution

The Sweetwater team chose My Big Campus, which provides a solution to all their needs with online collaboration, easy access to educational resources across the Web, an online environment perfect for teaching the skills of digital citizenry, and unlimited storage of and access to files. And My Big Campus provides all this through a platform designed specifically for schools—all within a safe, monitored environment.

To streamline adoption, the IT team got My Big Campus set up with all the user accounts and Groups for classes, grades, clubs, and more—all through an easy SIS integration. “These groups are the foundation of online communication across the district,” Magagna says. “Change isn’t always easy,” Magagna admits. “But when teachers saw how engaged students were they became believers.”

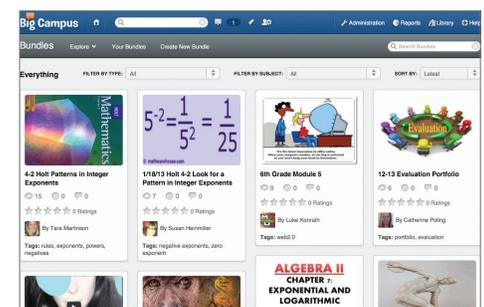
Now everyone across the district is using My Big Campus as the main means of communication. “Using My Big Campus isn’t optional. It’s a must for all teachers, students, and staff. If they want to



School: Sweetwater County  
State: Wyoming  
District Size: 5,000 +students

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*Dr. Cristy Magagna, Instructional Facilitator,  
Sweetwater County*



*With Bundles, educators can create and share media-rich online lessons.*

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access any district documents, assessments, or curriculum, they do it through My Big Campus,” shares Magagna. “Students must use My Big Campus as a portal to turn in assignments and communicate between classes. And principals had to request budgets through My Big Campus. We envision getting rid of student lockers and relying on My Big Campus file storage as more classes go paperless and textbook publishers offer more ebooks.”

Sweetwater uses My Big Campus to create a blended learning environment that maximizes learning opportunities. “My Big Campus will be the virtual classroom to complement the traditional classroom. Teachers are the hands-on learning facilitators, but they can also use online learning to continue education. My Big Campus is the portal to tie it all together,” says Magagna.

With more time spent online it’s more important than ever to teach internet citizenry. “Teachers and media specialists are discussing things like how to research online and discern between factual content and opinion, how to construct a proper message or wall post or email, how to use wikis and blogs, how to deal with cyberbullying, and more. Ultimately, we are getting students ready to use technology and be successful in the workforce,” states Magagna.

Enhancing learning for both teachers and students, the Educational Resource Library in My Big Campus has allowed users to access educational resources that are normally blocked. By integrating My Big Campus with the Lightspeed Web Filter, the district has addressed the overblocking problem many districts face. Magagna says, “In the past, if teachers tried to access videos from YouTube they were blocked; now they can access all sorts of media with no fear of inappropriate content getting to students. They can get video clips, documents, photos, and more straight from My Big Campus.” With tens of thousands of new educational resources added to the Library each month by other districts, the Educational Resource Library is a rich resource for teaching and learning. “Our teachers browse the Library to see what new videos and content have been uploaded to see if they want to use it in their classes,” Magagna shares.

Sweetwater County is a huge proponent of Professional Development and uses My Big Campus to give teachers a way to connect, share, collaborate, and learn from each other. They have created Professional Learning Community groups, as well as grade groups and subject area groups. “We’ve built the shell for our teachers and it’s there for the taking,” Magagna says. “We give them training, and then they use it in their own ways.” One of the things Magagna is pleased with is the way teachers are sharing resources. Through the Bundle Exchange, lessons with content, assignments, apps, and assessments can be tied to standards and shared with other educators. “By sharing resources in My Big Campus, teachers don’t have to reinvent the wheel; they are saving so much time and energy—as well as learning from each other,” Magagna shares.

Magagna admits that some people were hesitant at first, “Some parents were a bit concerned when they first heard about My Big Campus, thinking it sounded too much like Facebook. But when they learned that it’s a monitored and safe environment that teaches students how to use the Internet properly, they became excited for their kids.”

### Conclusion

My Big Campus is giving the district an engaging and collaborative—but safe and easy-to-use—place for teachers to improve their craft and for students to learn about core subjects as well as technology.

“When parents and teachers see how safe My Big Campus is and see how kids are using it to learn, they get excited too,” shares Magagna. “My Big Campus allows for true 24/7 learning across our district. It has helped our teachers develop their skills and share ideas and resources; and it keeps the kids engaged so they can continue to love learning,” Magagna concludes.

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### About Lightspeed Systems

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