

# Case Study:

## Oceanside School District

### Long Island, New York

## Overview

### PROFILE

Oceanside School District is a public school district headquartered in Oceanside, New York and has a total student enrollment of 6,000 across 10 schools, spanning Pre-K to 12th grades.

### CHALLENGE

At Oceanside School District, integrating a program that emphasized higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills to meet the needs of newly adopted learning standards was a priority. District leaders recognized the need to provide a platform that was usable across all grade levels and authentically embedded rigorous and challenging problem-solving tasks. After realizing a necessity for a differentiated resource, an adaptive program that encouraged multiple ways of thinking and learning became the preference for the district.

### SOLUTION

Exemplars cache of standards-aligned resources gained Oceanside School District's attention through its differentiated approach which encouraged students to show their learning autonomy by thinking through multiple ways of solving rigorous problems. Exemplars was so beneficial to the district, in fact, that teachers continued to use problem-solving tasks from the platform to encourage student engagement during remote and in-person teaching and learning, throughout the pandemic.

## *Exemplars is a Natural Differentiated Product Where One Problem Serves Multiple Learning Styles*



### Project leads:

Tara Mauer  
Director of Math K-12



Jessica Keegan  
Director of Elementary  
Teaching & Learning

### District Profile

- Population Density: Suburban\*
- Size: 2,500 K-5 Enrollment
- Math Proficiency: 70%\*
- Free & Reduced Lunch: 13%\*

\*Source: niche.com

## Read the full study



## The Challenge

Leaders at Oceanside School District knew that with the incorporation of newly adopted learning standards, there would be a need to provide resources to teachers and students that embedded genuine practice of rigorous problems requiring higher-order thinking skills. Oceanside School District already had an abundance of test preparation books and programs, but leaders knew students required practice with challenging real-world tasks throughout the year that could authentically be incorporated within the curriculum. Providing students with a standards-aligned differentiated program that focused on building higher-order thinking skills by solving multi-step problems became a vital problem to solve.

## Choosing Exemplars

Understanding that the district had previously invested in other test preparatory resources and applications, it was imperative for Oceanside School District to find a program that aligned to state standards while offering differentiated approaches to solving problems that would cater to multiple learning styles. Exemplars easy-to-use investigatory approach through problem solving provided the district with a platform that combined several beneficial aspects of all other mathematics-based programs. Teachers emphasized the use of Exemplars because of the way it facilitated student collaboration in approaching the thought processes behind problem solving via the usage of different effective strategies.

## The Outcome

After implementation, teachers appreciated how well students responded to Exemplars rigorous tasks. Students looked forward to working together, and teachers were amazed at how students were applying what they had learned in order to solve the challenging problems. Soon, learners were becoming increasingly independent and flexible in choosing and using problem-solving approaches to master each task. Exemplars paved the way for students to learn and adapt problem-solving steps that became a part of their daily practice. Students taking pride in their work, a cornerstone of the Oceanside School District philosophy, became an all-time high after incorporating Exemplars as a supplementary resource. The district continues to be surprised with how the implementation plan used to support learners has led to full investment as a district-wide practice.

“ I don't know what other product does quite the same thing as Exemplars! ”

Jessica Keegan, Director of Elementary Teaching & Learning