

Positive Attendance and Nicolet High School



Positive Attendance
Who. Where. When.®



Back in 2012 John Reiels, Director of Technology at Nicolet High School in Wisconsin, was looking for a better and more efficient way to take attendance at his school, particularly for their resource period for

students. "The resource period is 35 minutes long so we wanted to make sure the students get 35 minutes of time out of it instead of needing to go someplace, sit for attendance, then get a pass, then wander the hallway again," said John. At a Skyward User Group that year, while explaining his needs with Dan Hoerl of School Technology Associates, John joined the beginning discussions of developing Positive Attendance.

A year later Nicolet had Positive Attendance installed and tied to classrooms throughout the school and were utilizing it one period a day during their student's resource period. John explained, "So, I'm a student and I know I have a quiz in math this afternoon and there is still something about that concept we're working on that I don't quite understand, I want to go see my math teacher during my resource period, that's what I do. Now kids go where they need to go to get the help they need and they get accounted for there and they get marked present there... it's awesome, our kids love it."

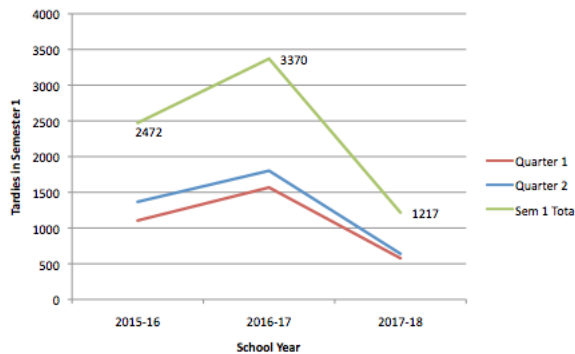
This school year Nicolet High School took the leap and started using Positive Attendance PASS+™ scanners to keep track of the attendance for all class periods. Before, John said, "teachers would use Skyward Educator Access and most of them would use a seating chart where they would click one time if the student was absent, and click again if student was a little late or tardy, and do nothing if the student was there... If teachers got busy or overlooked a student, a student would inadvertently be left as marked present by default." Positive Attendance on the other hand has everyone marked as absent by default and the moment they scan into a room they are checked in as present. Now Nicolet's attendance records are more accurate than ever before.

With the use of Positive Attendance and PASS+™ scanners they are also increasing the amount of instructional time, "when the bell rings the teacher is ready to start class as opposed to the past when the bell rang the teacher would close the door, go over to their computer, look around, then take attendance,

and so on." With the new system teachers no longer need to take that time out of their class period, "we can actually go down our hallways now and we'll hear teachers who have started teaching before the bell even sounds to start the period cause they know all their students are in class and they've all scanned in." With an automated system John says, "we're not taking a minute or two minutes to take attendance where nobody's learning anything, we're using those one or two minutes to teach or to learn and by eliminating those minutes each student gets an additional 21 hours of instruction annually with no schedule change, additional personnel, or cost to the district."

Nicolet has even improved their attendance, "students are the ones having to be responsible for their attendance now, where before it was up to the teachers... we also changed our tardy policy so students by and large are making it to class on time." In fact, statistics show they have achieved a 13% increase in attendance and 65% reduction in tardies the first year of using Positive Attendance and Tardy Kiosk. "It's been a part of a culture change...they've grown accustomed to it, they know it is their responsibility."

Total Semester 1 Tardies During The School Day



Having PASS+™ scanners has also cut down on work for the office staff when substitute teachers cover a class. Before they would need to print the class roster and seating chart to give to the substitute teacher. When the class was over someone would have to go pick the rosters up and manually enter the attendance. "It was a pain, it took personnel, and it took time. Now, the student walks in and scans their ID card. So, the whole process of printing the rosters and seating charts and walking those rosters back down to the office and doing manual attendance is gone."

To make this shift happen Nicolet created a communication plan to take place through the course of the summer to prepare staff, students, and

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parents by sending out information on the changes, expectations, and policies that would be implemented in the new year. They also set up a demo station of the PASS+™ scanner and test ID badges at their summer registration day. "We had students and parents try scanning the ID, see how easy it was, and see how the student's name would

appear, then show as checked in when the green light went on, the whole deal. I think that helped us a great deal from the standpoint that we had parents with concerns... parents could see how easy it was for the students to do and how fast it processed the scan."

On top of being easy, saving time, and creating accurate attendance information, Positive Attendance provides a higher amount of security for the school. "Because students are scanning in the room that they report to, if they're in a class where the teacher has scheduled the class to be in the library for instance, if we need to find a student we see that in the attendance they're in the library. We don't have to go down to the classroom and then see a sign on the door that says 'Hey, we're in the library!' From an emergency standpoint if we need to be able to account for where a student is or was during a specific time we have much better data for that than what we've had in the past."

Looking at the changes in their school environment since implementing the new hardware and expectations John said "We're extremely happy with how the technology has supported our culture change and our focus on making every minute of class time matter. None of this would have been possible without the PASS+™ scanners and without the Tardy Kiosks. This is the technology that helps us deliver on maximizing instructional time."

[Watch Nicolet's iCon presentation here](#)



Connected via Computer running Skywards' Educator Access



Connected via Network WiFi or Ethernet

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