CASE STUDY · REEDS SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT

Case Study: Reeds Spring School District

Improving the 'Pain Point' of Teacher Evaluations

DISTRICT	LOCATION	PRODUCT	PUBLISHED	UPDATED
Reeds Spring School District	Reeds Spring, Missouri	Lebra Ascend	February 2026	April 2026



Reeds Spring School District serves 1,850 students from pre-K through grade 12 in the Ozark region of southwestern Missouri. The rural, economically diverse district is located on the picturesque north shore of Table Rock Lake near the entertainment and tourism hub of Branson.

The district's 2025–2030 Comprehensive School Improvement Plan includes an operational strategy to "research, develop, and implement plans to recruit, attract, retain, and grow high-quality district employees." Making this happen is the responsibility of Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Travis Kite.

"We went into the year with a culture centered on growing and supporting teachers," Kite said. "We came up with our own competencies and created a Portrait of an Educator, and we wanted to use that as our evaluation tool so it would be relevant."

The Challenge

Finding the Time and Tools to Strengthen Evaluations

Superintendent Dr. Cody Hirschi knew the district's principals were short on time. "Administrators have a whirlwind of a job," Hirschi said. "Getting into the classroom to do the observation and then write up the evaluation is a challenge."


Dr. Cody Hirschi

In addition, Kite added, principals would often take their notes back to their offices to draft summaries, only to be bombarded with other responsibilities that prevented them from composing and sending feedback in a timely manner. When they finally sat down with teachers to discuss their observations, it could be weeks after the classroom visit. Reeds Spring also wanted to move beyond an evaluation process focused largely on classroom observation.

"There are so many things that make a quality teacher, and they are not always seen in the classroom," Kite explained. "It may be how they are collaborating with their team, how they are using data, or the professional qualities they bring to our staff.

Our old platform was so focused on classroom observations that it left some holes."

> *"A group of teachers helped us recognize that with our current evaluation system, we were not providing the structure for the feedback necessary to do what we wanted to do," Kite said.*

- **Limited time for observations and feedback**
- **Delayed, inconsistent teacher feedback**
- **Evaluation focused too narrowly on classroom observations**

The Solution

Piloting a New AI-Powered Platform from a Familiar Company

Realizing the platform could not achieve the level of customization the district needed, Hirschi explored other options. Hirschi was familiar with Lebra because he was already in its second year of using the company's AI-powered tools to build relationships with staff.

Rather than imposing a single evaluation model, the platform enables districts to align state-mandated compliance requirements with the competencies and priorities they already use.

Whether a state requires specific educator standards, documentation, or reporting, or a district has its own portrait of an educator, like Reeds Spring, those frameworks can be fully integrated into the system.

When Reeds Spring rolled out Lebra Ascend, Hirschi said, they were still developing their own portrait of an educator and making other changes to their evaluations. However, they embraced the opportunity because they felt they were already familiar with the Lebra platform anc felt it could support a robust organizational culture of teacher growth.

Over the previous year, Hirschi established a cadence of connection through Lebra by sending greetings for milestones such as birthdays and work anniversaries. Lebra's AI functionality had already proven beneficial. "I could use AI to make the messages meaningful-and to make them happen super quick," Hirschi said. "I realized Lebra Ascend could be an efficient way for our administrators to give authentic feedback."

PROBLEM	SOLUTION	IMPACT
Limited time for observations & feedback	AI-powered connection tools	Stronger leader–teacher relationships
Delayed, inconsistent teacher feedback	Personalized message with timely delivery	More authentic feedback
Evaluations focused narrowly on classroom observations	Custom, district-aligned competencies	Culture centered on teacher growth

The Result

Using Ascend has led to a significant increase in the number of data points gathered during observations and has helped administrators provide more authentic, timely feedback—in many cases by the end of the observation rather than hours or days later.

Kite explained that Ascend's AI capabilities allow principals to generate real-time evaluation summaries aligned with the district's competencies based on their observation notes. After a quick review to catch any errors or inconsistencies, administrators can send the feedback directly to teachers before leaving the classroom.

> ***Teachers have responded positively to the clearer, more robust feedback.***

"The amount of information, suggestions, and ideas given to teachers is so much more in depth than what administrators could have done before in the same amount of time," Kite said. Teachers are also able to use AI to assist in drafting professional development plans, creating another time savings directly attributable to Ascend.

"One of the features that intrigued me was the idea that you can use AI technologies to pull data from all these points we have entered and use that to give teachers feedback on an annual, summative basis," Hirschi said. "An administrator might forget what they saw back in September, but Lebra remembers."

He also praised the platform for freeing administrators to focus follow-up meetings on relationships rather than paperwork. "They are able to have more authentic conversations around teaching and learning," he said.

Both Hirschi and Kite expect Ascend to make a long-term difference as well.

"Every administrator has completed considerably more observations and collected more data points than they had at this time last year," Kite said.

To learn more, go to www.lebrahq.com

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