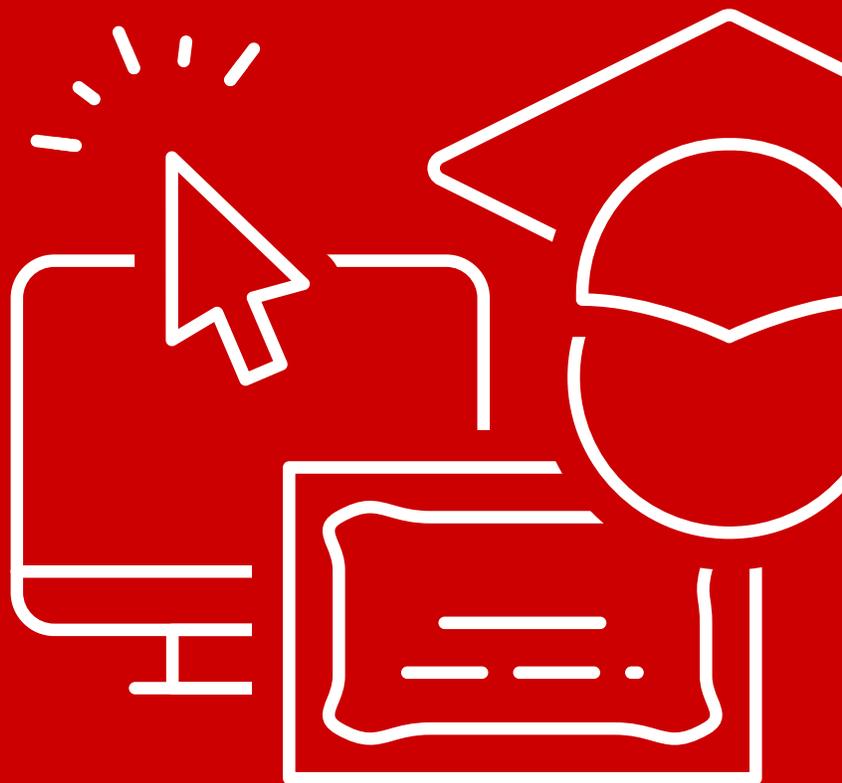


PeerPaper™ Report 2024

How CDW Education Helps IT Admins Secure and Manage Google for Education Domains

Based on Real User Experiences with
CDW Amplified for Education Services



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Introduction

Schools benefit greatly from technology, but managing education technology can be a challenge, especially for institutions and districts with finite resources. CDW Education makes school IT admins using the Google environment more successful. CDW helps IT admins get more out of their Google environments—improving teaching and learning outcomes in the process. CDW Education customer reviewers credit CDW with helping schools improve the management of their teaching and learning environments. Users mention key success factors that include empowering teachers, flexibility and customization, diagnosing problems, and support for student information system (SIS) features, audits, and more.

An Overview of Education Technology Management Challenges

IT teams in education settings face a unique range of challenges, including helping to support teachers with classroom technology under tight time and resource constraints.

As depicted in Figure 1, specific areas of challenge include:

- ✔ Managing curricula
- ✔ Tracking student attendance
- ✔ Tracking assignments and grading
- ✔ Supporting specific classroom technologies, e.g., Google Workspace for Education, Chrome, etc.
- ✔ Staying secure and compliant

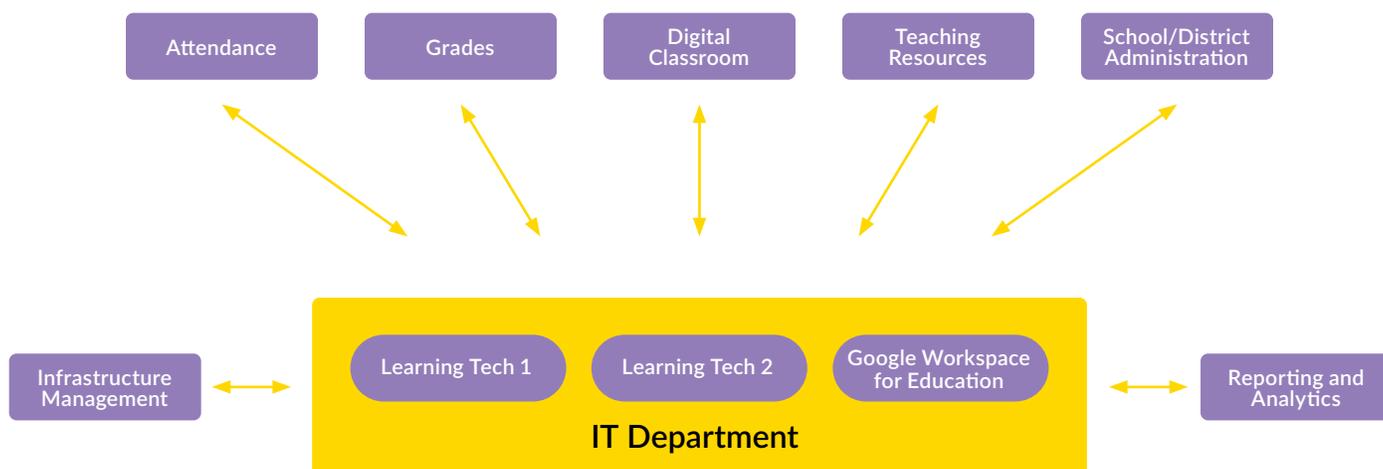


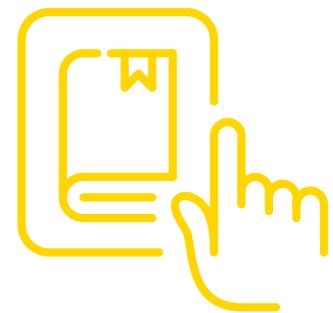
Figure 1 - Example of education technology workloads.

How CDW Education Helps With the Management of Learning Environments

Reviewers highlighted a range of ways that CDW Education helps them manage their learning environments. They felt that CDW was a time saver, a valuable service that empowered their teachers to do more, while improving collaboration. With knowledgeable expert support, CDW enabled stakeholders to customize learning environments. The audit services diagnosed problems and CDW advised on solutions. For student information systems, Little SIS was useful for bulk updates and infrastructure management. With CDW, users were also better able to work with and maximize the benefits of Google Workspace for Education, an essential classroom technology tool for many schools and districts.

Empowering Teachers

Reviewers felt that CDW empowered the teachers in their schools to do more. A Director of Technology at Montclair Kimberley Academy shared that CDW is [empowering their teachers](#) because “it’s giving us, on the IT side of the house, the tools that we need to make their lives easier.” He added, “We have been able to simplify the toolset that they’re being asked to use. We’re able to make sure that everything is working as they need in the classroom so that they don’t even have to think about it. They can just use the tools for instructional purposes and not have to worry about anything else.”



Easy to Manage

A Technology Director at the Eden Valley-Watkins school district put it this way: [“Our teachers would be lost without it.”](#) CDW is their provider of Google Workspace for Education Plus. A System Specialist / Tech 3 concurred, saying, “It empowers the teachers by creating an infrastructure that they can count on and don’t have to worry about. Everything is built on that.”

When asked how CDW empowers teachers, a Network Analyst at St. Charles Community Unity school District 303 shared that it [“helps ensure the process is managed,](#) smooth and working for them. Teachers don’t have to worry about management because we take care of that for them.”

For a user at Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified School District, teacher empowerment arose because [“the solution is essential in the backend.”](#) He then said, “The teachers may not know why everything is working the way it is, but we do, as we get it up and running smoothly in the backend.”

Customers pointed out that CDW empowered teachers by freeing them to focus on non-technical tasks. [“They don’t have to manage their classroom rosters](#) and their classrooms are already built for them,” said the District Systems Administrator. “I manage them twice a day on a daily basis, which means they don’t have to focus on that part. It just works for them and they can do other things that are more important to their teaching.” A District Systems Administrator similarly remarked, [“It gives the teachers more time to focus on what they’re doing.”](#)



Steven S.
System Specialist / Tech 3 at
a Educational Organization
with 11-50 Employees



“It empowers the teachers by creating an infrastructure that they can count on and don’t have to worry about. Everything is built on that.”

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Improving Collaboration

Creating a thriving educational environment involves not only collaboration within a school, but between schools. People and organizations learn from each other. An IT Tech at West Des Moines Community Schools spoke to this capability when he said, “For [somebody who wants to collaborate](#) with other schools on how they do things and get recommendations for how things are set up in the Google environment, it’s absolutely something I would recommend.” He then declared, “The biggest benefit has really been around the connection to other schools that have been using Google.”



Carl S.
IT Tech at West Des Moines
Community Schools

★★★★★

“The biggest benefit has really been around the connection to other schools that have been using Google.”

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Customizing Learning Environments

Learning environments vary by teacher, as well as by school and school system. For this reason, flexibility and the ability to customize learning environments is critical for success with learning technologies. To this point, St. Charles Community Unit School District 303’s Network Analyst praised CDW [flexibility and customizability](#). She said, “We can make feature requests, and they’re usually very open to our suggestions.”



Flexible and Customizable

Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified School District's user remarked, "[The product's flexibility](#) and customizability are excellent and CDW has great support. We have significant turnover in our tech area, so we currently have a group in training to help them acclimate to their new positions." A Director of Educational Technology at Westhill Central School District likewise noted, "The customizability is great. [It has filled all the holes that we had](#), things that we had been missing in a premier management tool."

Diagnosing Problems and Recommending Solutions With Audits

CDW provides audit services, which customers appreciate for their ability to diagnose problems and suggest resolutions. Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified School District's user said: "The [Google for Education Audit](#) feature [service] is beneficial for diagnosing problems and recommending solutions, and it's comprehensive."

This customer went on to say, "We used the audit service twice before and intend to use it again soon. Tech changes fast, and an audit can help us catch up with new features we may not even know are part of the admin console. It will also help our new staff get acclimated to each area."

"We use the Google for Education Audit feature," said St. Charles Community Unit School District 303's Network Analyst. She added, "[It's a beneficial service for diagnosing problems](#) and recommending solutions. We aim to conduct an audit every two years."



Mark P.
TOA - Technology at
Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint
Unified School District



"The Google for Education Audit [service] is beneficial for diagnosing problems and recommending solutions, and it's comprehensive."

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In-Depth & Thorough Audits

A Network Specialist at a non-tech company offered some detail on how his audits work, explaining that his team uses CDW's Google for Education Audit service with Gopher for Chrome to [pull information from the admin console and manipulate data](#). They can add serial numbers, device IDs, student IDs, and more, pushing all the changes back to the console with "a couple of clicks rather than going one by one." To him, the Google for Education Audit service is "excellent for diagnosing problems and recommending solutions; it provides a 50–60-page report on all the present features."

Other notable comments about the audits include:

✔ ["We can use it as an investigative tool.](#) For example, if someone accidentally sent out an email with sensitive information, we can find out who received it and pull it from those inboxes." - System Specialist / Tech 3

✔ "The Google for Education Audit feature [service] is [extremely thorough](#) and we've greatly benefited from having that knowledge. So much so, that we are in the process of revisiting it. A lot of things got tacked on or adjusted in rapid fashion over the past couple of years and we're ready to revisit the audit to make sure that, as things settle down, we continue to do the best we can for our users." - Coordinator of Educational Technology at Parkland School District

✔ ["The audit is very in-depth](#) and can help pinpoint problems and issues even before they happen." - District Systems Administrator



Steven S.
System Specialist / Tech 3 at
a Educational Organization
with 11-50 Employees



"We can use it as an investigative tool. For example, if someone accidentally sent out an email with sensitive information, we can find out who received it and pull it from those inboxes."

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Performing Bulk Updates and Managing Infrastructure with Little SIS

CDW Education and its Little SIS tool help users with infrastructure management and bulk updates. “The Little SIS Premium feature is a very helpful tool for [helping IT admins manage their infrastructure](#),” said St. Charles Community Unit School District 303’s Network Analyst. She elaborated, saying, “It simplified the process a little and is better than relying on the admin console. We also use Little SIS to perform bulk updates with Gopher for Chrome; it’s very straightforward to use, pulls excellent information, and the Gopher [for Chrome] component is handy too.” Figure 2 shows some examples of Little SIS workloads and the levels of access it supports.

For Eden Valley-Watkins’ Technology Director, Little SIS “helps admins do a lot of work in Google Classroom.” For example, [her team can archive a class](#) if a teacher forgets. “We can dive a little deeper than what the admin control allows,” she added.

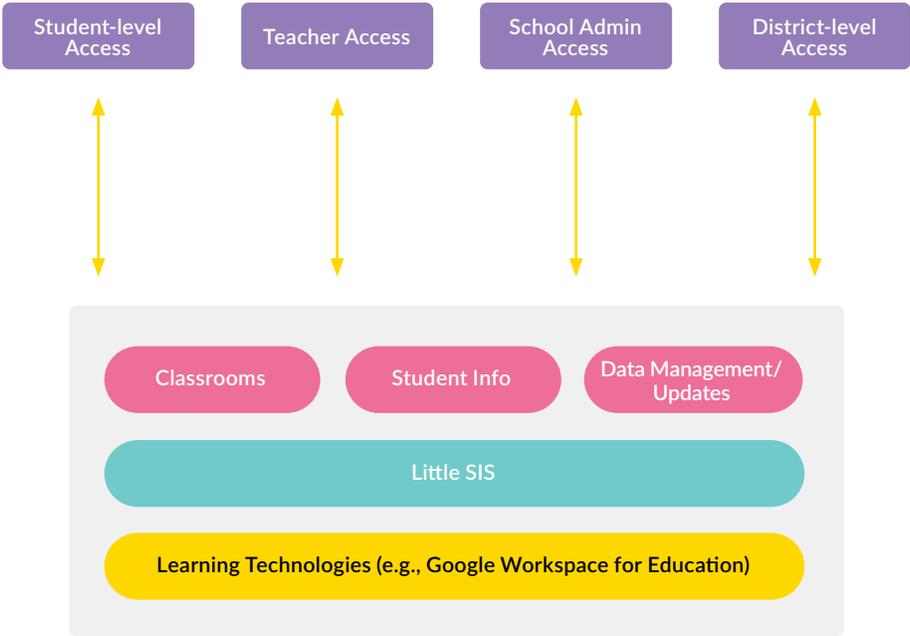


Figure 2 - A sampling of Little SIS workloads and the levels of access it supports.

Bulk updates of systems have typically been a time-consuming chore for educational IT managers. With Little SIS, such updates now go more smoothly, as the Network Specialist commented. He said, “One of the product’s best-selling points is how the Little SIS Premium feature [helps IT admins perform bulk updates](#), so I rate them ten out of ten for that one.” He further shared, “Little SIS is excellent for helping IT admins manage their infrastructure; this is the solution’s bread and butter, and it does it very well.”

A Director of Technology found the ability to [bulk-upload users into Google Classrooms](#) using Little SIS has been “lifesaving.” “Otherwise,” he said, “we would have had to upload them one at a time or use a product called Gam, but the Little SIS interface is very user-friendly and allows other people on our team to assist in the process.”




Network Specialist
at a Non Tech Company

★★★★★

“Little SIS is excellent for helping IT admins manage their infrastructure; this is the solution’s bread and butter, and it does it very well.”

[Read review »](#)

Being Able to Work With Google Workspace for Education

CDW customers appreciate the service support for Google Workspace for Education. For example, the Network Specialist declared, “I rate the product ten out of ten for [helping us work with Google Workspace for Education](#). If anyone called me and asked me what I would recommend, I’d highly recommend CDW.”

“[CDW] helped us [utilize Google Workspace for Education more effectively](#),” shared a Director of Technology and Data Management. “It was a phenomenal experience.” CDW stood out for its understanding of the solution’s backend, and “created opportunities for us to provide feedback to Google about bugs and feature requests.” He also observed, “Their connection to Google was powerful, and many things changed as a result.” CDW has a strong partnership with Google that facilitates bug fixes and allows customers to help influence future product enhancements.

St. Charles Community Unit School District 303’s Network Analyst described CDW Education as a “precious resource for helping us work with Google Workspace for Education,” adding, “I would find it difficult to manage that without its tools and assistance....we implemented the product to [make management easier](#).”

Offering Knowledgeable Technical Support

CDW Education customers praised CDW for their highly knowledgeable technical support team, which they consider an essential element for success with an educational technology solution. According to St. Charles Community Unit School District 303's Network Analyst, "[The tech support is very responsive](#), and we've never had an issue where we needed to hound them; they generally find the problem and fix it."

The System Specialist / Tech 3 concurred, saying, "[I rate \[CDW\] support a ten out of ten](#). I regularly contact [CDW] because they're a great source of information."

"The CDW team's [ability to support and maintain Google Workspace](#) and Chrome OS is tremendous," said a Technology Director at Kewaskum School District. "Their knowledge is top-notch, and I don't envision a world in our future without [CDW]. They're gifted at what they do and invest time in maintaining their level of expertise so that they can relay key changes to us effectively."

For Westhill Central School District's Director of Educational Technology, what mattered was never having to be "passed off to anybody else." She stated, "[Their tech support was very helpful and very knowledgeable](#). I was pretty impressed with how quickly my questions were answered and how quickly my issues were resolved by the same person."



Jason S.
Director of Technology
and Data Management



"[CDW] helped us utilize Google Workspace for Education more effectively...It was a phenomenal experience."

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Expert Support

Saving Time and Money

Educational technology should enable time savings, which translates into cost savings. Eden Valley-Watkins' Technology Director spoke to this need when she said, "The return on investment is my time. [I can implement things more quickly](#) instead of trying to find the needle in the haystack." A Coordinator of Educational Technology at Parkland School District framed the issue as: "Our ROI comes through the fact that [we don't have to hire another person](#) and train them to be experts in Google."

St. Charles Community Unit School District 303's Network Analyst had a similar experience, noting that the [solution provided a return on investment \(ROI\)](#), "especially in terms of [saved time](#)." She explained, "What now takes me five or even fifteen minutes, could previously have taken all day."

"Our ROI is in the [time saved, bulk changes, intricate settings, and security research](#)," said Kewaskum School District's Technology Director. She went on to say, "The [CDW] tools have paid dividends; we had an email panic that needed to be pulled back out of user inboxes, and without the tools, it would have taken much longer. We accessed a training video on the tool, which we had never used before. We could help ourselves and resolve the situation in 20 minutes."



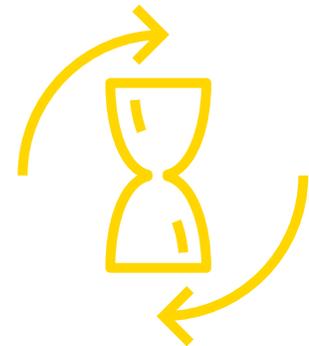
Tiffany W.

Technology Director at Kewaskum School District



"Our ROI is in the time saved, bulk changes, intricate settings, and security research."

[Read review »](#)



Saves Time

Conclusion

Managing educational technologies can be stressful, given resource constraints and varying levels of stakeholder commitment and familiarity with available tools. CDW Education offers a solution, especially for schools that run Google environments. Reviewers praised CDW's ability to enable them to do more with their Google environments and achieve better outcomes. CDW empowers IT admins and educators. It provides flexibility and customization, along with the ability to diagnose problems and become more efficient at tasks like bulk uploads. The services save time, while also providing expert support and knowledge.

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About CDW Education

CDW Education provides education-focused technology solutions that enhance teaching, impact learning, and inspire active collaboration in schools. A premiere Google for Education partner, CDW offers a full catalog of software, services, proprietary tools and training to help empower administrative staff, and students to effectively leverage and get more out of their Google for Education environments.

To learn more, visit <https://www.cdwg.com/content/cdwg/en/services/education.html>