

With the limitless lessons and constantly changing maps and graphs, LOLMS has discovered unlimited ways to exceed both the State of Connecticut and the national NCLB ("No Child Left Behind") standards for education. WeatherBug Achieve meets all 50 U.S. state standards, as well as Connecticut's.

Case Study

Connecticut Middle School Students and WeatherBug Achieve® Gain Local Celebrity Status and Greater School Performance via Interactive, Standards-Based Program

Students at Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School (LOLMS) of Region 18 in Connecticut have become local celebrities - broadcasting weather forecasts daily to families and the entire community of 50,000 on local AM radio, with their WeatherBug Achieve predictions. The citizens of Lyme and Old Lyme have embraced the childrens' efforts and the broadcast has become the high point of their day. Barry Betlinski, Production Director at AM 1420 WLIS in Old Saybrook / Middletown CT, says this public service has been a rousing success, "For two years now it has been our pleasure to feature students from the Lyme/Old Lyme Middle School reporting the weather as part of our weekday at noon local news program... At 1420 WLIS Old Saybrook and 1150 WMRD Middletown we're involved in the local communities we serve. So the work that David Fowler (the lead teacher of the program) and the students put into each day's forecast is a great fit, and the listeners love it!"

These middle school media stars may not realize it, but while they craft their daily weather forecasts, they are also learning about math, science, technology and more through the "limitless lessons" of WeatherBug Achieve. Students learn more with less effort because they are excited about learning. Teachers and administrators love the students' enthusiasm, but they love the results even more. Students at LOLMS are learning state-mandated lessons and mastering skills necessary for a successful life while they are having fun.

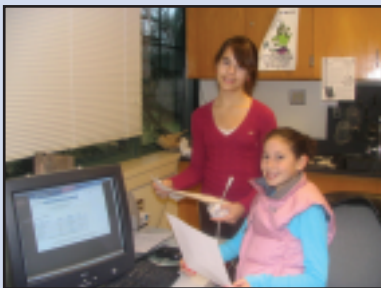
The Situation

Teachers at Region 18's Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School (LOLMS) must deliver Connecticut standards-based lessons. Students are then tested on what they learn using the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT). The CMT tests student and school - with schools and districts then earning their own "report card." A good grade for a school district means additional funding via grants - and funding equates to better programs for the students.

Dave Fowler, teacher, says, "Our district is always updating our curriculum. Our school district purchased WeatherBug Achieve because it accomplishes everything we wanted to do with our weather curriculum. We have state standards to meet, and we found that they were all covered very nicely with one program. We particularly like the lesson plans that are a big help because they are available... right there online. We never have to reinvent the wheel..."

The Solution

To their surprise and amazement, Region 18's LOLMS found that WeatherBug Achieve not only met but exceeded their expectations. LOLMS discovered a curriculum aligned with Connecticut state standards - and one that would keep the students involved no matter how many times they used it. The original goal was to fulfill Connecticut standards for meteorology - but Region 18 soon discovered that WeatherBug Achieve touched almost every part of the school's curriculum (and CMT requirements).



Local celebrities Shannon Duff, and Taylor Miker prepare to broadcast their weather forecast over the radio.

Teacher Dave Fowler explains, "Especially nice are the interactive lessons that are available online with WeatherBug Achieve. They incorporate all of the current local weather data, no matter what time of year it is, to teach concepts like air pressure, dew point, and barometric pressure. I can take my whole class down to the computer lab and have them focus on one of the lessons, or I can have small groups or even individuals work on them. I like to use these lessons for enrichment groups, too, and sometimes they lend themselves nicely for the students who need some background knowledge on reports in other classes. It's set up so that they can even log on at home."

Dave's comments are echoed by his students. Sarah Behringer, fifth grader, says, "At the beginning of the year I thought it would be real difficult finding information to put into our reports, but with the template and the WeatherBug equipment, it was all right there. It brings our forecasting skills to a whole new level."



Many educational software products "get old." The kids get bored using them a few times, and the effectiveness is lost. Not so with WeatherBug Achieve! It has limitless lessons. Each new weather forecast is unique and different, because WeatherBug Achieve brings live conditions from the roof of their own school into the LOLMS classroom.

The students use live and historical weather data - all in colorful computer animation using Flash technology. The kids use the same WeatherBug Achieve lesson plans over and over again, yet they are new every time. Each change of season and even time of day generate a completely different set of data.

Along with "limitless lessons", Region 18 soon realized that WeatherBug Achieve also has limitless usage. There are no "software license" restrictions to limit the number of students who can log in at one time. Once LOLMS purchased WeatherBug Achieve they found students could use it at home, or at school - as many times as needed and by as many students as are enrolled. This is a great cost saving feature - as new students come to LOLMS, the cost stays the same.

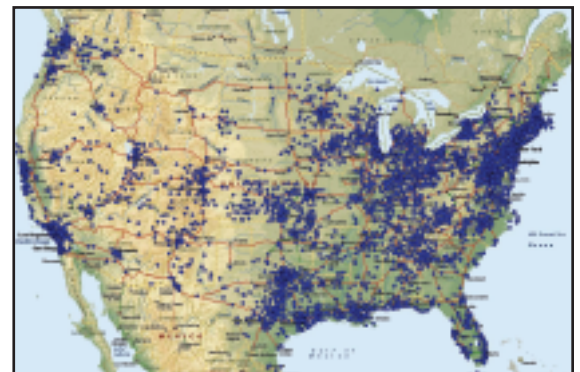
How it Works

The WeatherBug Achieve program all starts with the installation of a WeatherBug Tracking Station atop the roof of the middle school building. Once installed and linked up to the Internet through a desktop computer, the school automatically joined the WeatherBug Network of over 8,000 Stations across the U.S., the largest weather network in the world. Nearly 75 percent of US citizens live within 15 miles of a WeatherBug Tracking Station, mostly located at area schools.

The rooftop WeatherBug Tracking Station at LOLMS is constantly collecting and measuring data on wind speed and direction, temperature, humidity, and 25 other real-time parameters. All this is constantly transmitted to WeatherBug in Germantown, Maryland. (To see the live current weather conditions at LOLMS simply go to http://www.aws.com/aws_2001/asp/obsforecast.asp?id=OLYME).

Each morning the students log in to WeatherBug Achieve. First they take online interactive lessons that teach them how to forecast the weather. The lessons include an online test. The test scores give them instant feedback - and the results are automatically emailed to Dave Fowler, their teacher.

Once the student is comfortable that they've learned how to use their new skills, they move on to forecasting the weather themselves. The students view and compare the weather at LOLMS with weather from nearby Weather Tracking Stations, using the same stations daily - learning about patterns and how to track them day by day. The students then interpret their data and put together a complete and accurate weather prediction.



While they study meteorology (a state mandated requirement) the students learn geography, science, and math, too. Students at LOLMS create weather maps using WeatherBug Achieve - maps fall under Geography. As they observe temperature changes, and how wind and water impacts our world, they are learning Science. Interpreting temperature data invokes math skills - as does comparing those figures using graphs and tables. WeatherBug Achieve focuses on the weather, but it teaches the 3 R's as well.

