



## Wrentham Public Schools Streamlined Their Registration Process with Follett Aspen SIS

FOLLETT ASPEN® STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (SIS)  
ONLINE REGISTRATION SOLUTION

### EASY REGISTRATION AT A DISTANCE

As the COVID-19 pandemic forced school districts across the country to close, many searched for new ways to approach old processes. Massachusetts-based Wrentham Public Schools harnessed the power of Follett Aspen SIS to quickly and easily register kindergartners for the upcoming school year – all through a secure online portal that expedites the verification process.



“Our district has been beyond thrilled with Aspen’s online registration solution. Part of our district’s plan to respond to the coronavirus pandemic was to move our kindergarten registration process online. Aspen was able to work with our aggressive timeline and create a process that exceeded our expectations.”

#### SEAN AHERN

Director of Technology  
Wrentham Public Schools  
Wrentham, MA



## **THE BENEFITS OF A ROBUST STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM**

It was seven years ago that Wrentham Public Schools transitioned to Aspen SIS. The change modernized the district's SIS while bringing more security to its data, and added flexibility to how it could use that data to support educational goals. "From day one, Follett has been a valuable partner because of their commitment to keeping student data secure while maintaining key functionality and flexible reporting capabilities," said Sean Ahern, Wrentham's Director of Technology.

But in 2020, with the country in the midst of a pandemic, Aspen transitioned from being merely a valuable platform for hosting and managing student data to an invaluable tool that made it possible for Wrentham Public Schools to quickly move student registration online.

## **A QUICK PIVOT TO THE DIGITAL REALM**

When Wrentham initially adopted Aspen, Ahern says they were interested in the idea of implementing an online registration platform to increase the accuracy of student registration data, decrease the amount of time it took staff to input information, and provide all of the data needed for the district's Health Office and Student Services Department. But taking advantage of the online registration functionality wasn't in their immediate plans.

That all changed in March when schools were closed and access to Wrentham's buildings was restricted.

"We needed to quickly pivot many things, including our kindergarten registration process," Ahern said. He reached out to the Aspen team in April to explore the functionality of the system's online registration module and to explore a potential implementation timeline. To Ahern's relief, the team was extremely optimistic and was ready to work closely with Wrentham to reach the goal of having the system ready for the public in May. And they delivered on their promise: the system was ready for the public on May 21, 2020.

Ahern noted that the Aspen team's consistent communication and feedback kept him apprised of progress every step of the way, leaving him confident that Wrentham was set up for success. With that sense of confidence in the system, it was easy to reassure families that, even though things were far from normal, they could trust the process.

"During the pandemic, one of the things we found our families wanted was stability and certainty," Ahern said. "With things changing every day, the uncertainty of our constantly pushed-back kindergarten registration dates was just another thing to add to that. In implementing Aspen's online registration, we were able to provide families the stability and normalcy of registering their students for kindergarten in a convenient and safe manner."

As an added bonus, Ahern said staff also saved valuable time. Their ability to verify student registrations online instead of through a paper trail has been essential and a big time-saver.

"Aspen has changed the way we register students. Both families and staff have been able to recoup precious time with the implementation of Aspen's online registration. It has smoothed over our registration process and reduced the amount of time we spend on it," Ahern said.





“Our Aspen support representative has been amazing! He got our registration form up and running quickly and has been quick to respond to every piece of fine-tuning we have asked for.”

**CHRISTINA GILBERT**

Data Specialist  
Wrentham Public Schools

## RESPONSIVE SERVICE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE SUPPORT

When Aspen was first being considered more than seven years ago, the district was intrigued by the system’s ability to be customized to its needs. Ahern notes the flexibility of Aspen’s code is key to making it fit an end user’s needs. After Wrentham adopted Aspen, it found the system’s timely updating of modules and features made the jobs of those handling the data even easier.

“Aspen’s support might be the most important part of their product – it has exceeded expectations,” Ahern said. “Between the library of video tutorials, regular webinars, and live customer support, we rarely have a question that goes unanswered. We appreciate the rapid response of Aspen as questions arise and their willingness to spend time training and supporting our use of the product.”

Christina Gilbert, who serves as the Data Specialist for the district, agrees.

“Our Aspen support representative has been amazing! He got our registration form up and running quickly and has been quick to respond to every piece of fine-tuning we have asked for,” she said. “I wanted to know how to make small adjustments to the form myself, and he not only scheduled a phone call to answer my original request, but also responded to each subsequent question clearly and with screenshots. This allows us to take full advantage of Aspen’s customizable features that we have become used to and love.”

## A PARTNERSHIP BUILT TO LAST

Regardless of how things change moving forward, Ahern is confident that Wrentham’s experience with Aspen’s online registration module has had a positive effect on every aspect of the process and everyone involved, from staff to families.

“I would recommend my peers consider working with Follett and especially consider exploring their online registration module,” Ahern said. “They understand the needs and expectations of educational institutions. They are positioned to partner with you, learn your needs, and implement the solution you’ve been seeking.”

