



Morristown, NJ

Case Study

New Jersey's Morris School District Advances Equity with Unlimited Tutoring



I'm grateful that we have Paper in our district to support equity and access for all of our students.

— Christine Masi, Supervisor of Technology Integration for pre K-12, Morris School District

Key takeaways and results

Administrators at the Morris School District in New Jersey needed an academic support solution that could serve all members of a highly diverse student body, while ensuring equitable access for the district's less advantaged students. Many students must fulfill adult responsibilities and thus lack access to traditional in-person tutoring programs that take place after school.

The district adopted Paper's solution in October 2021. By March 2022, the district had exceeded its own high expectations for usage, thanks to a highly effective adoption strategy encompassing administrators, teachers, parents and guardians, and students. Enthusiastic teachers have begun to weave Paper into their teaching practice. Students are reaching out to Paper tutors in higher-than-expected numbers. And Paper's data, reporting, and commenting features are giving teachers and administrators valuable insights into student learning.

In the first 3.5 months that Paper was in use:

- ✓ 100% of the district's sites reached their target usage rates.
- ✓ Students engaged in 2,491 learning moments, including 573 essays reviewed.
- ✓ The most popular subjects included basic arithmetic, essay writing, and basic algebra.

About the Morris School District

Located in north-central New Jersey about 30 miles east of New York City, the Morris School District serves a highly diverse range of students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade from across three municipalities—Morristown, Morris Township, and Morris Plains.

Of the district’s nearly 5,500 students, 44.4% are White, 7.6% are Black, 3.8% are Asian or Asian/Pacific Islander, and 42.5% are Hispanic/Latino. While the per capita income in the district is relatively high, 27% of students come from disadvantaged homes. In addition, the district provides targeted language instruction for over 900 English-language learners (ELLs) in grades K-12.

“We are a very diverse community with very diverse needs,” says Christine Masi, Supervisor of Technology Integration. “We try to look at different avenues of what is the need in our community and how we can best support it.”


Although the district receives slightly less per-pupil funding than the state average, student achievement outpaces state averages, especially in reading and language arts. A key factor in that success is the district’s commitment to equity. “The Morris School District will provide each student with culturally relevant learning experiences and access to rigorous instruction, high expectations, and meaningful curricular programs,” the district declares in its Equity and Inclusion Action Plan.



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— Christine Masi

Morris School District at a glance

	Enrollment	English-language learners	Socioeconomically disadvantaged students
	5,477	17%	27%

The Dilemma

Traditional tutoring not reaching disadvantaged students

As was the case at so many schools around the country, the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected socioeconomically disadvantaged students in the Morris School District, statewide testing found. However, the pandemic shined the spotlight on equity challenges that the district was already determined to address.

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At the same time, the district knew that traditional ways of delivering extra academic help often failed to reach the students who needed it most. “Many of them have to go home and babysit, work, or both,” explains Masi. As a result, the district could not simply rely on site-specific after-school and summer programs.

The Solution

Individualized academic help when students need it, how they need it

The extreme challenges of COVID pushed the district to find new ways to reach its students— especially vulnerable ones. That’s when the district discovered Paper, which delivers unlimited, 24/7 high-dosage tutoring online.

Paper provides homework help, writing feedback, and study support on demand, even late at night—often the only time when students with adult responsibilities are free to reach out for help. In addition, Paper provides tutors who can teach in the students’ primary languages.

“Now, students who weren’t able to attend these supplemental programs have access to this type of tutoring,” says Masi.

District administrators believed that, with Paper as a partner, they could support their diverse set of learners. They could do so in a way that increased equitable access. And they could provide academic help across various subject areas—including feedback on the students’ writing.

“Paper is something that can really level the playing field for every single student,” says Masi.



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Rapid Adoption, Rapid Expansion

According to Masi, the implementation of Paper was quick and painless. Easy integration with Clever, the school’s principal digital learning tool, also helped to get both students and teachers up and running. And thanks to Paper’s intuitive interface, teachers learned to navigate the system in a single training session, she says.

The district knew it was important to get the message out about this new technology to all its stakeholders, from principals and teachers to parents, guardians, and students. To do so, staff sent communications to every household, leaning on Paper for help with Spanish-language materials. And the district took extra time with math and language arts teachers to show them the potential value of Paper in serving their students.

As a result of all these efforts, the Morris School District realized the value of its partnership with Paper right away. And just two months after Paper’s initial rollout to high school students, the district decided to expand the service to middle schoolers.

Results

High usage rates and satisfied teachers

So far, adoption of Paper by students and teachers has exceeded expectations. Within four months of the initial rollout, the middle and high schools reached 100% of their target usage. No doubt, students' positive experiences has helped drive adoption among their peers.

"Hands down the best tutor I have ever encountered," wrote one Morris student about an interaction on Paper's platform. "He answered all of my questions, and did such an amazing job at making sure I fully understood the question."

"They helped me through the problem and took their time explaining it to me," wrote another student. "They were also patient and did everything they could to help me!"



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— Review of Paper tutors by a Morris School District student

Helping Teachers, Not Just Students

In addition to word of mouth among students, teacher buy-in has been integral to a successful rollout. "The feedback from teachers is that they love it," says Masi. "They absolutely love being able to tell their students they have access to tutoring."

According to Masi, teachers appreciate that they can monitor students' interactions with tutors—and that tutors can provide teachers direct feedback about student interactions. In particular, language arts teachers, who have been key to adoption and usage, say that both they and the students benefit from the writing feedback feature.

As a leader on the technology integration team, Masi appreciates Paper's reporting features, which allow her to track usage and help ensure success. Likewise, teachers have used reporting to understand where students need help. "This can help them drive the instruction in the class," she says.

Results

What's Next: Keep Spreading the Word, Possible Expansion to Elementary Grades

Given the program's early successes, high adoption rate, and ability to reach socioeconomically disadvantaged students, the district is even considering expanding access to Paper to elementary students in grades 3-5.

Meanwhile, the district is broadening its efforts to communicate the value of Paper to teachers, students, parents, and guardians. For example, it plans to:

- Require students to submit drafts of written work for review by Paper tutors.
- Have teachers and staff add a link to Paper in their email signatures to direct students to extra help outside of school hours.
- Pass out Paper marketing materials at parent conferences.
- Educate case managers about the value of Paper.
- Ask 11th graders to submit college application essay drafts to Paper for review.

Thanks to this strong and growing partnership with Paper, the district is confident that Paper can help meet its long-held goal of advancing equity.

"I'm grateful that we have the opportunity to have Paper at our district to support equity and access for all of our students," says Masi.

Learning Moments

2,491

Learning Moments

1,918

Sessions

573

Essays

PAPER

Paper partners with school districts to deliver 1:1 tutoring that is equitable, scalable, and cost-effective. Students get unlimited 24/7 live help and writing feedback, teachers get insights to tackle individual learning gaps, and administrators get actionable data to inform strategic decisions. Paper's multilingual tutors add an extra layer of support across all content areas and grade levels, in and out of the classroom—so students always have access to expert help exactly when, where, and how they need it.

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