CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

Calvert Hall College High School

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Calvert Hall College High School in Baltimore has a dynamic student body and faculty that faced hurdles in accessing online textbooks and other digital materials. Now, thanks to the integration of OneRoster® and Learning Tools Interoperability® (LTI®) in the Blackbaud education management portfolio, the once cumbersome process of sharing student rosters can be accomplished with one click, providing easy access to a world of online resources.

Calvert Hall College High School realizes efficiencies with OneRoster and LTI integrations.

Calvert Hall College High School is a bustling all-boys Catholic school in Baltimore that follows the Lasallian teaching tradition, bringing together a diverse group of 1200 young men with the objective of educating the whole student. Innovative instructors teach six to seven periods a day in a lecture-seminar format, then dive into leadership roles after school, from coaching football to the robotics squad.

“Time drives how much they can do and how much they can’t do,” said Network Administrator Austin Ewachiw. As the school’s “IT guy,” he understands how technology wins can pay off for faculty, and ultimately students. “Whenever we find tools that make things go a little easier, a little faster, we will snatch them up in a heartbeat,” he said.
In addition to saving time and hassle, the integration of OneRoster in Blackbaud Education Management has led the school’s teachers to expand their use of online textbooks and other digital resources, enhancing learning opportunities for students.

Simplifying to a Single-Click Process

A game-changer that allowed Calvert Hall to seamlessly tap into online educational publishing offerings is the integration of OneRoster with Learning Tools Interoperability in the Blackbaud education management portfolio. “What previously was a truly cumbersome process has been reduced to a single click—how cool is that!” Ewachiw said.

LTI allows schools to establish a standard way of integrating third-party learning applications, known as learning tools, with the ability to have secure, single sign-on capabilities from a class page. OneRoster standardizes and simplifies data transfer between learning tools. The nonprofit IMS Global Learning Consortium manages OneRoster and LTI, both of which have been integrated into Blackbaud’s education management portfolio of products.

Calvert Hall College High School became a Blackbaud customer more than three decades ago, and as the school purposefully narrowed its number of technology partners in recent years, it adopted Blackbaud’s total cloud solution for K–12 schools, including Blackbaud Student Information System™ and Blackbaud Learning Management System™.

Ewachiw learned about the power of OneRoster more recently as he explored options his school had for using electronic textbooks. OneRoster’s standardized set of application programming interfaces enables the rostering of student information into learning tools offered, including those offered by McGraw Hill and other educational publishers that are certified for the OneRoster standard.

At the classroom level, this means Calvert Hall teachers can plug students into an online textbook, workbook, or related media without
having to manually upload rosters or input individual student names to make it happen. A task that may have taken a teacher—or the IT guy—an hour or two, now takes seconds and is accomplished by clicking a box. "It's actually pretty brilliant when you see it in action," Ewachiw said. "That's when you realize the value of OneRoster."

Removing Hurdles to Online Learning

Plus, with the single sign-on component of LTI, students don’t have to worry with additional usernames and related passwords that are often randomly assigned and easily forgotten. As Ewachiw pointed out, everyone in IT can recognize the value of that.

With those hurdles disappearing, he said, teachers are more likely to expand their use of digital resources. Students learning a language benefit from audio-driven exercises, and in chemistry, they can view animations of molecular activity. Online learning systems can now provide more robust offerings tailored to individualized instruction.

Calvert Hall College High School initially used OneRoster and LTI as it accessed McGraw-Hill materials for multiple courses, and the school plans to expand to other educational publishers that are OneRoster-certified, such as Pearson.

Blackbaud has implemented multiple API endpoints for OneRoster integrations, including those that handle academic sessions, classes, courses, enrollments, grading periods, organizations, schools, students, teachers, terms, and users. For Calvert Hall, this seamless experience fits into a connected school made possible through Blackbaud’s total cloud solution for K–12 schools, which includes student information, learning management, enrollment management, and school website capabilities.

As an illustration of the benefits the school received with Blackbaud, Ewachiw noted the ease with which coaches and the school nurse can share necessary medical information. Once required physical forms are registered, coaches immediately know which student athletes can participate by viewing their team rosters. As he put it: “Seeing that kind of integration is really impressive. We linked two sides of campus like never before.”

Learn ways you can provide an exceptional school experience.

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About Blackbaud
Leading uniquely at the intersection point of technology and social good, Blackbaud connects and empowers organizations to increase their impact through cloud software, services, expertise, and data intelligence. We serve the entire social good community, which includes nonprofits, foundations, companies, education institutions, healthcare organizations, and the individual change agents who support them.