



## CASE STUDY

### Lake Washington (WA) School District Expedites Volunteer Processing and Engages More Community Members

WATCH integration with Raptor® system key factor in success

#### LAKE WASHINGTON (WA) SCHOOL DISTRICT



Lake Washington School District is located east of Seattle and includes the cities of Kirkland, Redmond and Sammamish.

- 30,000 students
- 1,500 teachers
- 17,000 active volunteers
- 6,400 volunteer applicants screened between August 2018-February 2019
- 55 schools (33 elementary, 13 middle, 9 high schools) serving grades PK-12

#### CHALLENGE

The Lake Washington School District, located in the suburbs east of Seattle, was facing a costly and time-consuming logistical bottleneck. The 3rd-largest district in the state of Washington, Lake Washington serves 30,000 students across grades PK-12 in 55 schools. One of the benefits of such a large student population, of course, is an engaged and enthusiastic body of parents, relatives, and community members, many of whom wish to volunteer in the school system. But there were some snags.

Lake Washington had its own online volunteer portal, but it resided in the district's parent portal, preventing relatives or other community members from accessing and completing applications online. The district worked around this issue by providing paper forms for relatives and community members, but that just exacerbated yet another fundamental problem: every applicant's details, whether from an online or paper application, had to be input by hand into the Washington Access to Criminal History (WATCH) background screening tool. Each fall, Lake Washington was forced to hire temporary employees to type details from every new paper volunteer application into their volunteer system. Processing approximately 6,000 new volunteer applications each fall and managing 17,000 active volunteers district-wide, the task was a daunting one. All of this information was also stored on the district's physical servers, which were beginning to reach critical storage levels.



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— Chris Robison, Volunteer Program Supervisor, Lake Washington (WA) School District



## SOLUTION

“With all those applicants, all that paper, and all that filing space, by June 2017, we knew something had to be done,” says Chris Robison, Lake Washington’s Volunteer Program Supervisor. Lake Washington officials began searching for an answer but laid out three goals for any new volunteer system: “One, the district’s tech department insisted that the system not take up space on our own servers,” Robison says. “Two, it needed to provide online application access to parents, relatives, and community members alike. And three, we wanted the system to ‘talk’ to WATCH.”

Robison continues: “The district had recently hired a new communications director, and she was familiar with Raptor Technologies® from her previous job. She recommended that we look at what Raptor® had to offer.” A district team researched several volunteer management tools, and after demonstrations from several, chose the Raptor Volunteer Management system.” The system allows every prospective volunteer to apply in a user-friendly, customizable online tool. The Raptor system screens each applicant for sex offender status in all 50 states, integrates seamlessly with WATCH, and compiles all criminal background results for easy review, approval, and tracking. Finally, volunteer program managers can easily access and export a variety of reports, such as total and individual volunteer hours and top volunteers.

## RESULTS

“Frankly, when we learned that Raptor integrated with WATCH, I was sold,” says Robison. “Raptor has eliminated the need to hire temporary employees to help with data entry in the fall and has significantly reduced the sheer number of paper applications we’ve received. This has made our process much more efficient.”

“Raptor checked all the boxes and met every one of our requirements. It’s cloud-based, and it allows for easily accessible online applications. But the WATCH integration is the game-changer,” Robison emphasizes. “We still provide paper applications for the handful of people who need them, but we’re not entering data for applicant after applicant into the WATCH system. Raptor takes care of all of that for us.”

When asked whether she would recommend the Raptor Volunteer Management system to other districts seeking a volunteer management solution, Robison didn’t hesitate. “I spoke on the phone with representatives from an Oregon district just a couple of weeks ago. They spent the better part of an hour with me going over the Raptor system. I know they were impressed.”

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EVERY SCHOOL, EVERY DAY.**

**877-772-7867**

**info@raptortech.com**

**www.RAPORTECH.com**