

# RAPTOR<sup>®</sup>

TECHNOLOGIES

THE GOLD STANDARD IN SCHOOL SAFETY

## CASE STUDY

### Lower Merion School District (PA) Increases Speed, Efficiency, and Accuracy with the Raptor<sup>®</sup> Volunteer Management System

#### CHALLENGE

Amy Buckman, director of school and community relations for Lower Merion School District (PA), believed that using a spreadsheet and paper files to manage and track school volunteers was less than optimal. “Pennsylvania requires that all volunteers have three clearances on file: FBI clearance, Pennsylvania state criminal clearance, and Pennsylvania state child abuse clearance. Our district administration offices were taking in actual physical pieces of paper of these clearances and storing them in filing cabinets, and then recording the information and expirations in an Excel spreadsheet.

“We were getting to the point where the clearances were beginning to hit their expiration dates, and we had no good way of tracking those other than manually looking through the spreadsheet for expiration dates, and individually emailing various volunteers to remind them that their clearances might be ready to expire.” Buckman goes on to describe how this system was becoming labor intensive and filled with potential errors. The spreadsheet “sometimes had errors like the name would be spelled wrong, and then the secretary couldn’t find it, or if people changed their email address, and there wasn’t necessarily a way of updating that, it just wasn’t the best system.”

Buckman needed to go digital. “We had begun to look at various volunteer management systems. And simultaneous to that, our security team was looking at using Raptor<sup>®</sup> according to a recommendation from our school security task force. When we found out that Raptor had this volunteer module, it was perfect, because we were already in with Raptor on the security end, and then the volunteer module met our needs for managing all our volunteers.”

#### LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT



Lower Merion School District serves the 62,000 residents of Lower Merion Township and the Borough of Narberth in Philadelphia’s historic Main Line suburbs.

The district’s “Spirit of Community Pathway” connects students more closely with their community and includes almost 1,100 volunteers, all of whom have been processed and screened using the Raptor<sup>®</sup> Volunteer Management system.

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— Amy Buckman,

Director of School and Community Relations,  
Lower Merion School District (PA)

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## SOLUTION

Going digital with the Raptor® Volunteer Management system has saved Buckman and her district a huge amount of time and effort. She and her staff have been able to use the database to quickly process large numbers of volunteer files in a very short amount of time. “The fact that we got over 1,100 volunteers processed in about a two-month period, and no one had to come in during business hours to the HR office to bring in the physical papers, was a real benefit.”

Buckman not only uses the system to instantly and automatically screen individuals for sex offender status, but she’s also customized the database to suit the needs of her individual district. “One of the best parts of the whole process was the way we were able to personalize the volunteer application for our needs. We set up our application in a way that was able to look up the three required clearances and make sure they were all there and all proper. And then we also had a disclosure form where the volunteer indicates that they have read our policies and procedures for volunteers, and they sign off on that. It really checked all the boxes of what we wanted a volunteer management system to do.”

Going digital has also helped Buckman escape the grueling task of scanning pages and pages of spreadsheets. “What we are going to find most valuable is that the system will give automatic reminders 30 and 60 days before someone’s clearance expires. Whereas before, their clearances might have expired, and they wouldn’t know until they tried to volunteer, and the secretary would look at the spreadsheet and say, oh no, you’re not able to chaperone because your clearances expired three weeks ago. We had no way of automatically letting those people know before the expiration. Now, we don’t have to contact people individually because notifications go out automatically through the system. And so, if a person is interested in volunteering, this gives them ample time to get their new paperwork in without a lapse.”

## RESULTS

Buckman says she’s grateful for how the Volunteer Management system has improved her district’s ability to quickly and accurately clear and approve individuals for volunteering. “There were times when we thought that someone wasn’t cleared, but it turned out that they were just filed under the wrong hyphenated name on the spreadsheet. Having the ability to search everything electronically has been a huge help. If someone’s application was denied, we’re able to go into the system and see why, and then express to people, here’s what you need to do, go back in and redo it, and then they’re able to. It’s easier than volunteers coming to the building, realizing they have the wrong documents, and then, oh no, I have to send you home, and you have to come back another Tuesday.”

Buckman is also quick to point out how responsive and helpful Raptor’s customer service department has been both during and after implementation. “Our Raptor rep has been really helpful to us, and she was really easy to work with when we came up with challenges such as people being able to volunteer in different schools in different jobs. She quickly came up with solutions that fit our specific needs. And that was wonderful. Any time we had a question, we were able to go directly to her, and if she didn’t come up with a fix right away, she would consult with people on the development team, and they would come up with a fix.

“And every issue that we came up with along the way that could have been a stumbling block, she was able to fix it for us, and that was great.”

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**PROTECT EVERY CHILD,  
EVERY SCHOOL, EVERY DAY.**

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