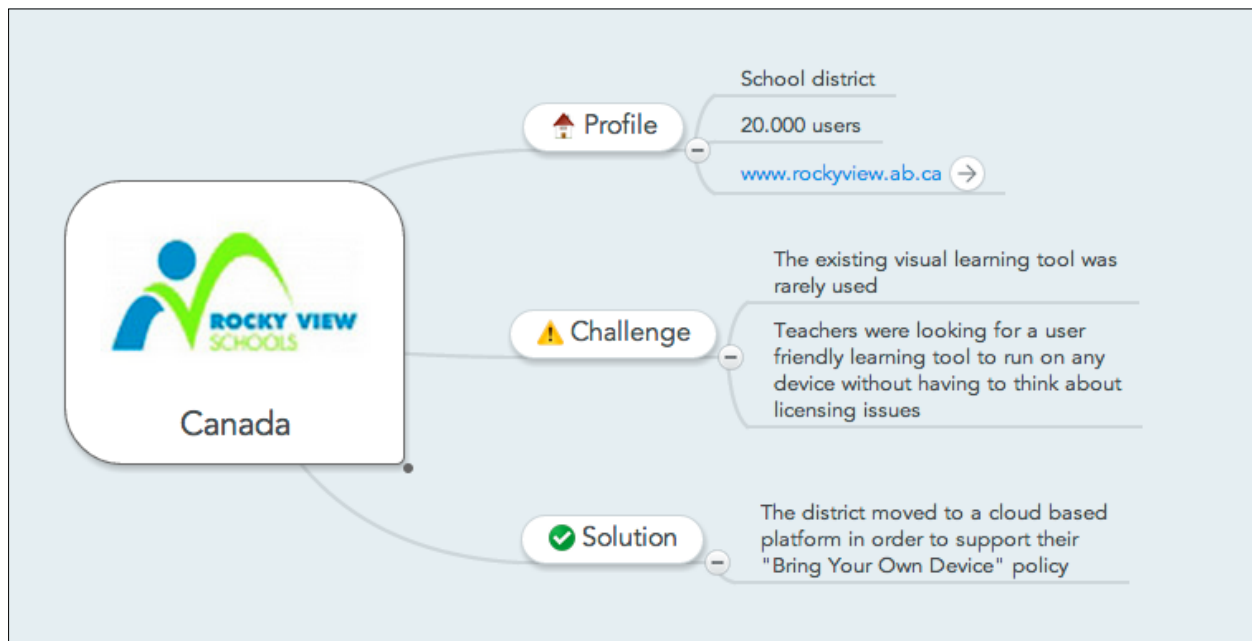


Canadian school district launches mind mapping platform for 20,000 users in just 3 months



"It is very user friendly, and **easy to start using**. My Grade 3 students had it figured out in no time."

Elementary School
Teacher Jennifer Friske



"Our school is going 1:1 this year - all of our Grade 8 students will have a laptop - and we will be using MindMeister **on a regular bases** in Language Arts and Social Studies." Middle School Teacher Donna Gray

Rocky View Schools (RVS) is the fifth-largest school board in Alberta, Canada, and provides a top quality learning environment for 18,000 students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The district, which consists of 42 schools has about 2,000 employees.

The Challenge

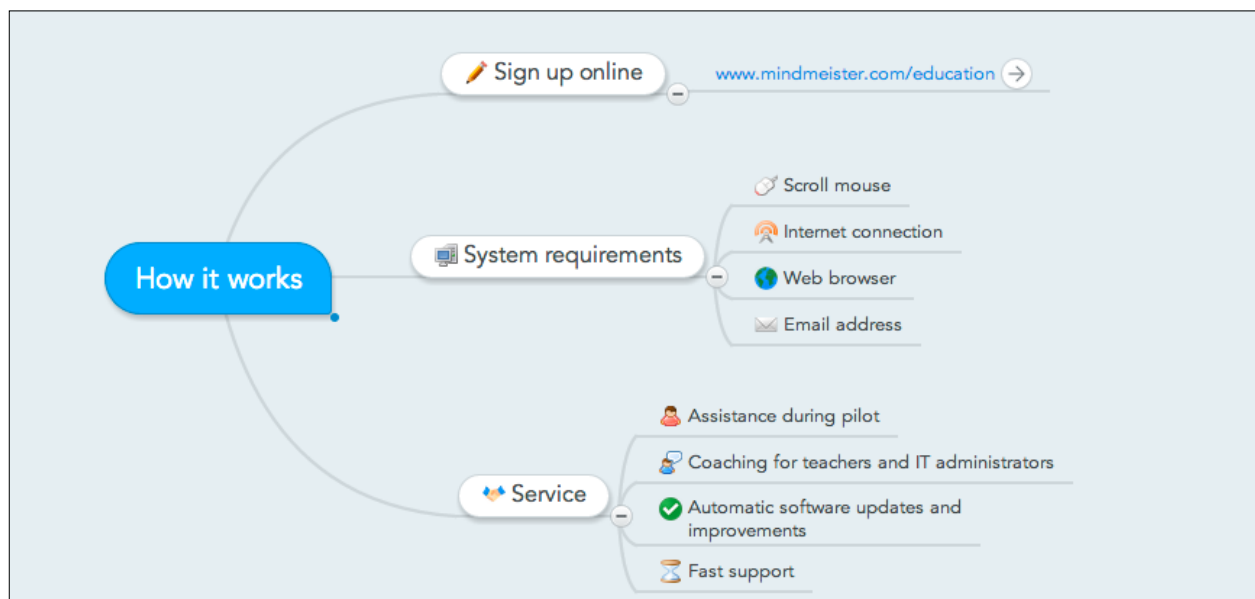
It's not easy for school districts to embrace a "Bring Your Own Device" policy. There are iPads, Google Chromebooks, Android tablets, Mac and windows laptops in addition to PCs which are owned by the schools. **"We prefer a cloud based solution which is accessible from any device"**, says Scott Mahan, Learning Specialist for Technology. He was the driving force behind the switch from the existing visual learning tool by Inspiration

Software, Inc. to the new MindMeister solution.a

Scott turned to MindMeister because the existing solution wasn't fulfilling the schools' needs. Many teachers were asking for a more intuitive and user friendly service that had the ability to collaborate in realtime.

Based on past experiences with other software vendors Scott was concerned about adoption rates. Some teachers were not too excited about using "another software tool".

A successful pilot could get everyone on the same page and eventually justify the investment in a new learning tool.



The Pilot

Rocky View Schools' Learning Specialists collaborated with MindMeister's sales and support team using a shared mind map for developing and documenting the pilot project.

The pilot had 3 phases:

1) **License distribution** (2 minutes)

By adding MindMeister to the school district's Google Apps domain Scott instantly enabled all users a seamless access to MindMeister.

2) **Introduction** (couple of hours)

"I introduced MindMeister to all of our school based administrators and senior executives at a meeting and then followed it up with an email asking them to spread the word."

Afterwards, informational news items were sent out to all staff using their internal "online" newsletter system and pushed out in the internal staff RSS feeds.

3) **Evaluation** (3 months)

Scott closely monitored the usage statistics and gathered feedback from teachers participating in the evaluation phase.

Teachers had access to training videos, use cases, a searchable help section and personal support by MindMeister's sales and support team.

The biggest key for many of the teaching staff was how well the students responded. **"I used MindMeister in Grade 7 and 8 social studies and found it a great tool to engage students,"** says Donna Gray.

Grade 1 and Kindergarten teacher Sarah-Faye MacGregor uses mind mapping mostly for **"co-operative planning with**



RVS' Learning Specialists used MindMeister to coordinate the mind mapping pilot

"I am working on a multi-jurisdictional project with five school boards in Alberta. MindMeister has **fostered a spirit of collaboration** between the members of the project, as we are able to work together to brainstorm ideas, make plans and timelines, and share information."

Program Specialist Nancy Lake

colleagues". She states the biggest benefit as **"being able to collaborate, post videos, pictures as well as text and having a web format"**.

Elementary classroom teacher Jennifer Friske explains **"It is very user friendly, and easy to start using. My grade 3 students had it figured out in no time."**

The teachers involved in the pilot found it extremely easy to use and were delighted at how simple it was for the students to learn.

The Result

The districts Learning Specialists received good feedback from their teachers. **"The students found it an effective program and it was great to see them independently begin to use it in other subjects,"** says Donna Gray.

After the three month pilot the Associate Superintendent of Learning, Dave Morris, approved to extend the subscription to three years.

