

## Case Study

# Showcasing Excellence: How a Strong Web Presence Boosted District Enrollment

Operating in Michigan's "Schools of Choice" system, Hudsonville Public Schools is a district comprising 13 K-12 schools in and around Grand Rapids, Michigan. The district competes with eight other districts and 25 private schools within the county.

Hudsonville has received accolades for its achievements with schools designated as high-performing and academically excellent. The district's high school was recognized by Newsweek magazine as one of America's best. Attracting families to the school district is a major focus for district leaders. To further that aim, the district prioritizes communications and public outreach.



### Challenges

A website lagging behind in technology;  
not reflecting excellence



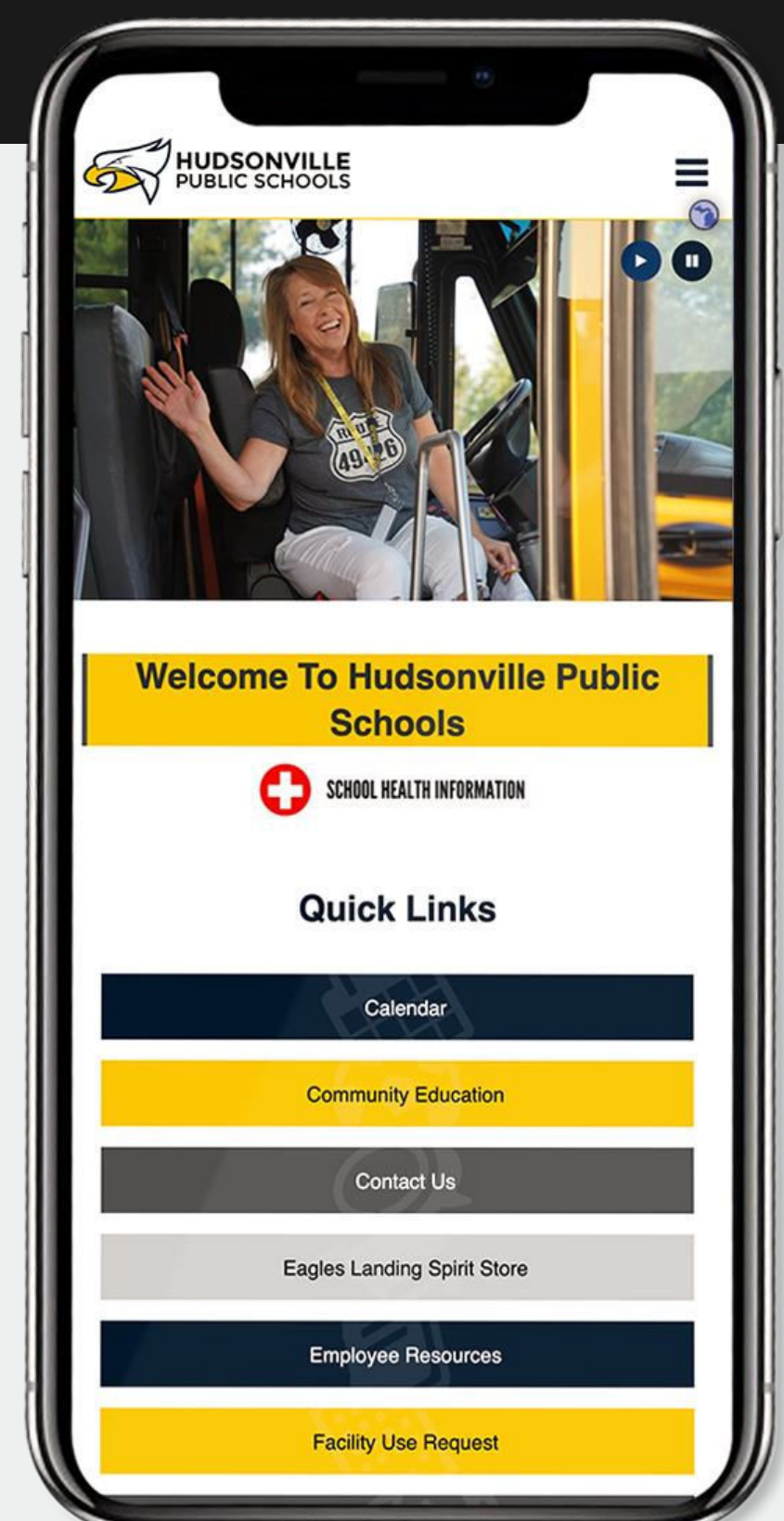
### District Size

~6800 students



### Products Used

SchoolStatus Sites & Apps



## Challenges: A Website Lagging Behind In Technology; Not Reflecting Excellence

The district's communications coordinator Rebecca Fabiano says Michigan's open enrollment policy keeps competition fierce, so branding—and a great school website—are necessary to attract the kinds of students and families that help fuel academic success. Schools of Choice means students from outside the district's boundaries can attend a school, providing there is room for them.

Saddled with a school website that had been created from scratch by the district's technology director, Fabiano realized that as the district continued to grow, the website needed an upgrade in functionality and ease of management.

"It was a good website, but it had run its course," said Fabiano. "Stuff was so buried on our site, it was very hard to find, hard to access. Plus, the other technology needs of the district were advancing too, so our IT director had so much else to do."

**"The needs of the website were growing right along with us, so the scope needed to expand. We needed a new look, and one that shifted the management of the site away from our technical people to our communicators."**


—Rebecca Fabiano

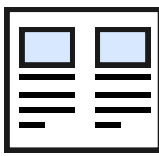
Communications Director, Hudsonville Public Schools

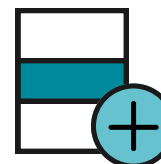


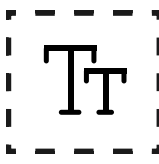


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Hudsonville Public Schools is situated in one of the fastest-growing counties in Michigan, and is among the fastest-growing districts in the state. As the second largest district in Ottawa County, it is experiencing growth that reflects the area’s popularity.

Fabiano said that as the area grows, important factors like website accessibility and increased mobile use—two major requirements for a school website—were not being met with the old approach. And managing each of the district’s 13 websites had become a herculean task.

“The needs of the website were growing right along with us, so the scope needed to expand,” said Fabiano. “We not only needed a website with a new look, but one that shifted the management of the site away from our technical people to our communicators, so they could focus on technology and we could focus on communications.”

It was time to explore a solution. That’s when the district turned to SchoolStatus Sites & Apps.



## **Solution:** A Website That Makes A Great First Impression, And Then Some

As a public school district, Hudsonville Public Schools is committed to providing excellent education for all students, while also working to attract and retain families in an environment of school choice.

“We need to project a very professional image,” said Fabiano. “Not just for attracting new families, but depicting an accurate image that reflects what our district is all about. We have a culture at our school that it is a very caring, nurturing environment...our new site helps us convey that.”

Fabiano noted that the district's reputation for excellence has led to consistent enrollment demand. Many families who move outside the district boundaries choose to continue their children's education within the Hudsonville system. To manage this, and maintain optimal class sizes, the district employs a thoughtful enrollment strategy and continues to serve and accommodates families who value the district's educational offerings.

“Image is very important, and you want that first impression to be positive,” she said. “Visitors form opinions (about your school district) right away from your website, so you really have to be up with the times and have a great-looking website that uses current technology.”



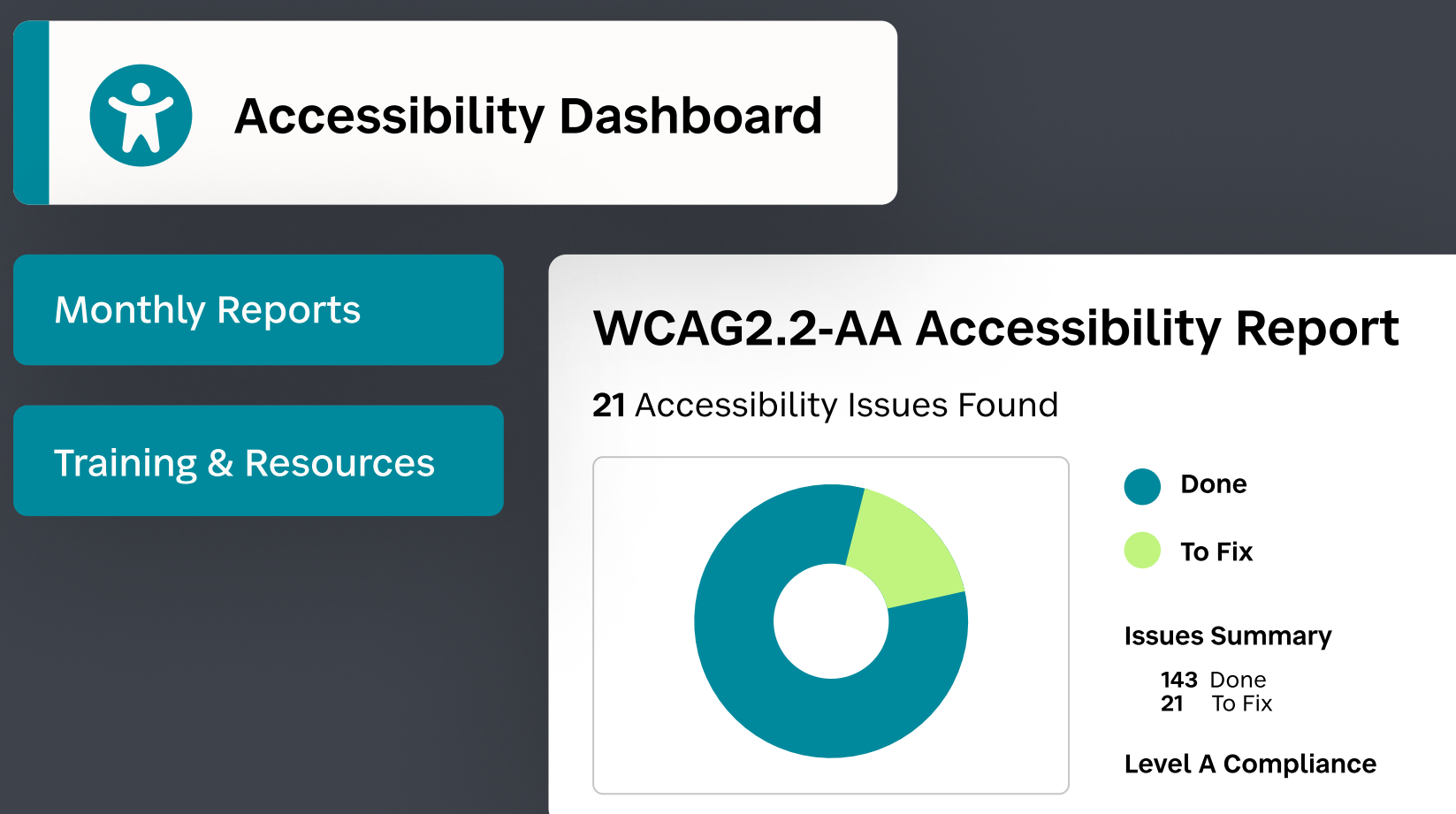
Besides projecting a beautiful image, the new site helps the school meet its ADA compliance and website accessibility requirements.

Using SchoolStatus Sites & Apps, Hudsonville is assured that all its web content is fully accessible to people with disabilities. Ongoing monitoring, monthly reports, issue remediation and training are all handled by SchoolStatus.

The district's site is accessible to those with disabilities as well as the increasing number of people in the school community who use mobile devices to access the website.

"It's a relief to know that [SchoolStatus] is helping keep all our 13 sites accessible," said Fabiano.

Fabiano also welcomes the ease with which the respective school principals and secretaries can manage their school's own content. SchoolStatus Sites & Apps enables nontechnical staff to readily create, edit and publish pages, while district-wide content is automatically shared across school websites.



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—Rebecca Fabiano



## Outcome: A Website That Reflects What School Excellence Is All About

SchoolStatus Sites & Apps is helping Hudsonville Public Schools compete and win in an open enrollment environment that puts school choice in the hands of parents who are weighing schools on much more than just geographic proximity.

Hudsonville school administrators recognize the important role a website plays in depicting the excellence of the schools, staff and performance that comprise the district.

With SchoolStatus as its K-12 success partner, the district has more than a beautiful, easy-to-manage website, but a communication foundation that's fully accessible and ADA compliant and that saves time, money and other school resources.



Learn how SchoolStatus can help **improve your district's websites**

[Schedule a Demo](#)

