

## **Jackson Independent Schools Leaders Speak at Dataseam Conference**

**Louisville, Kentucky** - Jackson Independent Schools Superintendent, Tim Spencer, and district Chief Information Officer, Jeff Coots, recently had the opportunity to inspire other educators with the district's program integrating technology to transform teaching and learning. Spencer and Coots were featured speakers at the Dataseam Annual Conference along with University of Louisville president, James Ramsey and selected educators from Jackson Independent, the Department of Education, Morehead State University and Dataseam.

More than 140 educators from 29 Dataseam-participating school districts gathered together to learn how technology plays a critical role in educating students in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills required with Kentucky's new standards and assessments.

Spencer told the audience, "We made a commitment to step out of our comfort zone and change how the district demonstrated what was happening with student work." According to Spencer he stopped requiring teachers to submit formal lesson plans to principals as part of their standard procedure. However, the teachers would need to develop a classroom website and post their plan and assignments online. This way teachers, administrators, students, parents and the community could be part of the process.

Jeff Coots cited teacher buy-in as the key to the district's success in integrating technology into instruction. "Going into this, many teachers were scared and afraid they couldn't succeed in the training," Coots said. "They came out of the training wanting to learn even more."

Teachers in Jackson Independent learned how to create websites, movies, podcasts, and to manipulate photos during an intense three-day Dataseam workshop. District representatives followed up with additional training and assistance. According to Coots teachers are now helping and pushing each other. They not only post lesson plans, homework assignments, and student work, but now engage students and parents in school work.

"Many districts claim that given the increased amount of core content that needs to be covered, they don't have time to integrate technology. We believe we have to use technology if we are going to cover all the content," Spencer added. "Not having time to work with technology is not an excuse we can afford to make to our children."

Dataseam is a unique Kentucky Company that has provided more than 15,000 computers to 48 school districts in coal producing counties. The school computers are linked together into one of the world's largest computing grids to support cutting-edge research at UofL's James Graham Brown Cancer Center. Harnessing the power of the DataseamGrid, researchers are working on more than 140 different cancer targets.

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Caption:

Jeff Coots shown with Superintendent Tim Spencer was recognized at the Dataseam Recognition Lunch for completing his Apple Certified Systems Administrator certification program this past year.

