New Caney Independent School District (ISD), located 25 miles northeast of Houston, Texas in Montgomery County is among the fastest growing school districts in Texas. Over the past 15 years, enrollment has doubled and the district now serves more than 16,000 students across 19 campuses.

The Challenge
When New Caney ISD’s technology leaders set goals to implement 21st century teaching methodologies in the form of digitized learning and ongoing student-teacher engagement, they created a program called 1:Vision. The goal of the new program was to issue a laptop to each student in grades 3 through 12—nearly 10,000 students. But implementing this vision would be far from simple, and would require New Caney to thoroughly modernize its technology systems. At the time, students used a shared username and password to log into the district’s legacy computer platform. New Caney would have to implement a wireless network and establish and manage individual user accounts so the district could protect student privacy and securely limit access to approved third-party and cloud-based applications.

Beyond these critical steps, technology leaders at New Caney wanted 1:Vision to foster increased student-teacher engagement. That meant educators and students would need a social platform and email accounts. New Caney ISD quickly came to the conclusion that their district would need a new technology platform and partner to help it meet these objectives. Ultimately, they found one that was more than capable of handling each of them.

The Solution
After researching and consulting with peers, technology leaders at New Caney ISD chose RapidIdentity, the digital identity platform in education, as the platform for their updated system. The powerful
RapidIdentity was an ideal fit for New Caney. The powerful solution has helped school districts nationwide provide easy provisioning and management of accounts, as well as controlled Internet access and privacy protection with a secure Single Sign-On (SSO) solution. It was an ideal fit for New Caney.

Because of the amount of change the district planned to introduce, New Caney technology leaders developed a carefully considered plan that rolled out the system to different audiences over time. First, they worked with Identity Automation implementation experts to use RapidIdentity’s built-in tools to migrate the district’s current directory, which included all administrative and staff members, from its existing Novell platform to Microsoft Active Directory, for greater flexibility for user authentication and authorization.

Then, during the following summer, the New Caney ISD IT department rolled out user accounts to teachers. The final step came the next summer, after teachers had been trained and were thoroughly familiar with the system, when New Caney’s students were issued their own individual accounts.

At the same time, New Caney ISD’s IT team also provided secure access to Google Gmail through RapidIdentity, giving students and teachers a secure platform for engagement. Before the summer was over, New Caney teachers were assigned Gmail accounts and Google Chrome laptops. Students received their own laptops and tablets in time for the upcoming school year, and teachers—asked by the district to find new ways to engage their pupils—have been finding creative ways to incorporate the new technology into day-to-day learning.

The Results
Today, the digitized, collaborative learning that technology leaders at New Caney envisioned is a reality. New Caney students have secure access to the district network from any location, and they’re using it every chance they get. Students now have the opportunity to take notes, backed up on the cloud, as well as share documents and communicate with each other. On the weekends, students do their homework and engage with teachers. It’s all-the-time learning.

- **Implementing Project-Based Learning District Wide.** With RapidIdentity, New Caney ISD progressed from a school district with no wireless network — and no way to implement one securely — to a district that not only has wireless capabilities, but also is able to ensure safe, controlled student usage. As a result, New Caney has been able to digitize the teaching process, radically transform its curriculum, and pave the way for another district goal: the implementation of project-based learning.

- **Preparing Students for their Technological Future.** RapidIdentity made it possible for New Caney ISD to protect students’
privacy and monitor students’ network activity by issuing unique user accounts. This technology allowed New Caney to successfully implement a one-to-one laptop initiative that gives students the solid technological foundation they’ll need for success in college and the workplace.

- **Empowering Teachers Through Technology.** Through RapidIdentity’s self-service feature, teachers can now reset student passwords in the classroom. This capability has allowed New Caney’s IT team to advance beyond the campaign to digitize the school district and focus on new strategic efforts.

- **Saving Time and Resources.** New Caney’s technological transformation, made possible through RapidIdentity, has reduced IT workload by 80%.

Learn how Identity Automation can help your organization streamline identity management and boost security with single sign-on: www.identityautomation.com