



# College Secures Student Information and Intellectual Property on Personal Devices

## Business Benefits

**Faculty:** Saved 5-7 hours weekly by grading assignments from anywhere

**Administrators:** Made more timely decisions by accessing, editing, and emailing documents during meetings

**IT:** Fulfilled fiduciary responsibility to protect confidential student information and faculty's intellectual property, without tracking faculty location



North Hennepin  
Community College

**Industry** Education

**Location** Brooklyn Park, Minnesota

**Employees** 350

**Products** BlackBerry Enterprise Mobility Suite –  
Collaboration Edition, iAnnotate

[www.nhcc.edu](http://www.nhcc.edu)

## The Challenge

With nearly 10,750 students, North Hennepin Community College (NHCC) is one of the largest, most diverse colleges in Minnesota. It's also part of The Colleges and Universities of Minnesota State, a collective of over 30 community/technical colleges and seven state universities across 54 campuses. The largest provider of education in the state and the fifth largest in the country, Minnesota State is dedicated to ensuring a positive experience for students and professors.

As a member institution, NHCC must be equally dedicated as well. It must support the workflows its employees prefer to use, which means supporting the use of personal smartphones and tablets for staff. Unfortunately, this presented a dilemma for the college IT team.

"Our faculty and administrators work in different classrooms, meeting rooms, and campuses throughout the day," says Joe Swenson, NHCC's Information Technology Specialist. "They'd like to grade assignments, check work email, and review documents from wherever they are, whenever they have free time."

The college IT team has a fiduciary responsibility to protect sensitive information on personally owned devices such as student grades, strategic plans, and curriculum. Popular ways of working on personal devices ran the risk of exposing this information, however.

For example, some employees emailed sensitive work documents to insecure webmail accounts. Some saved grades and student assignments on USB drives, which are easily lost or stolen. Others uploaded curriculum and student assignments to consumer-grade cloud services.

"We didn't have a way to protect data in public clouds," continues Swenson. "But if a professor's syllabus shows up in a Google search, we've lost intellectual property."

To protect student, faculty, and college information, NHCC's IT team needed a secure EMM solution that seamlessly enabled a Bring-Your-Own-Device (BYOD) deployment model. NHCC's employee bargaining unit further imposed a firm requirement that there be no location tracking, for the sake of user privacy.

## The Solution

After evaluating several leading security solutions, North Hennepin Community College chose the Collaboration Edition of the BlackBerry Enterprise Mobility Suite, including BlackBerry Work for secure email and PIM.

"Faculty members in our pilot liked the BlackBerry method the best, especially the easy sign-in," Swenson says. "They also liked the approach: securing a container used for work files and applications—not controlling the entire personal device."

The IT team had confidence in the security technology because BlackBerry Work conforms with Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS). The BlackBerry Dynamics' container encrypts job-related files and information, and if a device is lost or stolen, the IT team can wipe the container without touching any personal data. And the employees' bargaining unit accepted the

BlackBerry solution because the IT team disabled location services in the work container.

"Employees can have complete confidence that we're not tracking their whereabouts," explains Swenson. "But because the work container is managed separately, employees are free to turn on location services for their personal use—for example, to let a spouse or children know where they are."

To date, nearly 100 faculty and administrators have signed up to use BlackBerry Work. Publicity included professional development workshops, email, faculty and staff meetings, and pilot groups. Now word of mouth has taken over. Users include the college president, chief information officer, chief financial officer, chief human resources officer, chief academic officer, and head of student affairs.

**“The BlackBerry Enterprise Mobility Suite saves our staff and faculty time while keeping sensitive data secure and maintaining user privacy. Full-time faculty say working on a tablet with BlackBerry Work frees up 5 to 7 hours weekly – they can grade assignments whenever they have a spare moment. BlackBerry helps us to fulfill our fiduciary responsibility to protect confidential student information and faculty’s intellectual property.”**

**Joe Swenson**

Information Technology Specialist, North Hennepin Community College

## The Results

### Satisfied Users

“The number-one benefit of our BYOD program and the BlackBerry Enterprise Mobility Suite is faculty satisfaction,” says Swenson. “Full-time faculty say that working on a tablet with BlackBerry Work frees up 5 to 7 hours weekly. One reason is that they can grade assignments whenever they have a spare moment.”

The work container on the tablet holds the assignments—say, chemistry lab reports—as well as the Desire2Learn app for web-based grading and course management.

### More Efficient Meetings

By bringing a tablet with BlackBerry Work to meetings, administrators can complete tasks that used to have to wait until after the meeting.

“Rather than making a note to send an email, share a document, or look up past meeting minutes on the intranet, administrators can take care of it right then and there,” Swenson explains.

For example, suppose a committee wants to see another document before deciding to take action regarding the listing

of a new course in the catalog. In the past, the instructor who possessed the document had to walk across campus to print the document and make copies, or else the decision would be postponed.

“Now we can access the document from a tablet and either email it to other committee members or send it to a nearby printer,” says Swenson.

Administrators also save more time by editing documents on their tablet during meetings, using iAnnotate. Then they can email the revised draft to the committee for immediate approval.



## Future

Students who do not own a laptop or tablet struggle to complete assignments or take online classes. Some try to work on a smartphone, putting themselves at a disadvantage. To equalize learning opportunities, the college is considering an iPad loaner program.

With BlackBerry UEM, the IT team can remotely wipe and re-provision returned devices to make them ready for the next student. For these college-owned tablets, unlike employees' personal devices, the IT team would keep location services turned on to provide asset tracking.

“Higher education employees need BYOD so that they can work from anywhere,” Swenson concludes. “Through the Collaboration Edition of the BlackBerry Enterprise Mobility Suite, we’ve given them a safe place to store confidential information.”