

Taking a Systematic and Data-Centered Approach to CCR in Central Oregon



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Key Takeaways

- **SchoolLinks allows districts to establish a streamlined, system-wide approach to managing college applications—equipping counselors with real-time tracking of student progress, automating key tasks, and making information easily accessible to students and families.**
- **The platform provides districts with actionable data that strengthens CCR advising by offering insights into application outcomes, acceptance rates, and student preferences.**
- **The implementation of the SchoolLinks course planning feature led to more thoughtful and goal-aligned course selections, a significant reduction in schedule changes, and helped the district meet state requirements for multi-year personalized learning plans.**
- **The district has found that expanding use of SchoolLinks in middle schools has dramatically increased student engagement with proactive CCR planning from the very start of high school.**

The Bend-La Pine School District serves 17,000 students in Central Oregon and includes 33 schools across an expansive 1,600 square mile geographic area.

The district has made it a strategic goal to ensure that all students graduate with “a purpose and a plan.” As part of the team leading this work, Jess Calbreath serves as the District Lead Counselor—a role she has been in for three years. In alignment with this broader vision for student success, Calbreath and her colleagues are working to build more cohesive and aligned structures that ensure every student in Bend-La Pine has access to a comprehensive school counseling curriculum and robust support services throughout their K–12 journey.

Calbreath had previously worked in a district that utilized a digital system to support CCR goals. With that, she understood the value of a more streamlined, integrated approach for counselors, educators, parents, and most of all, students, and sought a CCR platform to underpin this work. Bend-La Pine identified SchoolLinks as the right solution to fit their current and evolving needs and catalyze CCR success within the district.

A Streamlined System for the College Application Process

When Calbreath came into her role, the district did not have a system in place to support the college application process. Like many districts around the country, Bend-La Pine had approached this work by providing students with general resources and guidance on financial aid and college applications, but there was no mechanism in place to track progress, automate processes, monitor completion rates, and collect data on application outcomes. With this backdrop, the district prioritized rolling out the SchoolLinks college application management feature in the initial deployment phase.

Calbreath noted that the district realized immediate benefits with the platform’s capability to allow counselors to visualize in real time where individual students and whole cohorts were in the process. She described that counselors were quickly able to see which steps students had taken, track whether they had submitted their application materials, note if they—the counselors—had any open action items, and identify if individual students needed additional assistance. And, the platform gave students and families easy access to information, processes, and updates that brought clarity and structure to an often complicated and uncertain process. Calbreath described the overall response to the platform as overwhelmingly positive, noting that users were “thrilled” with its functionality and ease of use. This translated to broad buy-in across stakeholder groups and meaningful support for students planning for college.

One platform for managing applications, transcripts, and more.

Document Manager

Track Submissions

Acceptance Verification

Filter

University of Oregon Applicant XLa Pine High School XGrade 11 X

Name	Start Date	Status
JA Anderson, Johnny	9/1/24	Needs Verification
SA Abernathy, Sarah	8/15/25	Completed
EA Adams, Emily	9/2/24	Needs Verification
PA Aoki, Pamela SIS: two_five_8	14 Overdue	



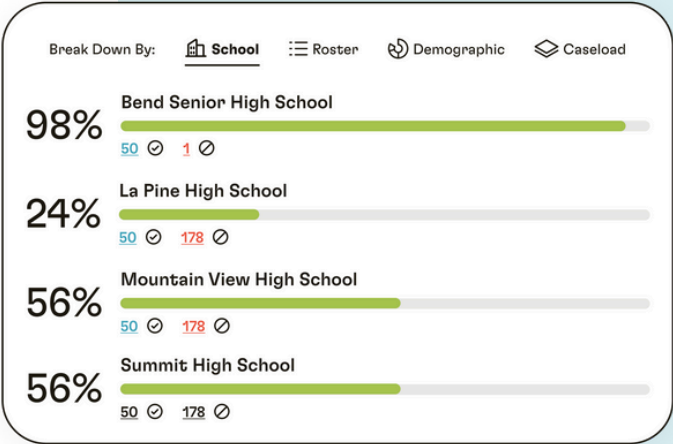
Actionable Data to Strengthen CCR Advising

One of the most powerful impacts the district has seen with the SchoolLinks implementation is access to a robust set of meaningful data about their college and career readiness efforts. Prior to SchoolLinks, the district only had extremely limited and often anecdotal ways to evaluate CCR success. Calbreath described that it has been transformative to “now have concrete data” on the college application process including the number of students who applied, where they are applying, acceptance rates, academic profiles such as test scores and GPAs associated with admissions, and students’ final college enrollment decisions.

This level of insight has proven incredibly valuable in a variety of ways. This data has significantly enhanced counselors’ ability to advise incoming seniors on college application choices by allowing them to reference trends and outcomes from the previous year as benchmarks. The information illuminated surprising trends about college preferences in their district. Previously, counseling teams assumed most of their students attended college within the state of Oregon and nearby states. With the SchoolLinks data, however, the district realized that colleges in Utah were some of the most popular post secondary destinations for their students. With this understanding, counseling teams were then able to include these popular schools of interest in their college fair and rep planning. The data has also helped the district counseling team identify disparities and patterns within the district. Calbreath noted that their district has some very rural areas and the data showed different application trends for those schools. With that, her team was able to tailor and adapt CCR supports to match those unique needs.

Having robust and nuanced data has been incredibly helpful for sharing CCR outcomes with the school board, district administration, and broader community. Calbreath has utilized a district newsletter to share out key metrics from the year—gathered via the SchoolLinks dashboard. The data has also proven to be very effective in helping the district assess if they are meeting their mission to ensure that all students are ready for a fulfilling and successful next step after graduation and identify areas of success and improvement for future phases of planning.

Detailed insights at every level



Utilizing Course Planning to Bring Cohesion to CCR Efforts

With the success of the college application feature rollout, the district launched the SchoolLinks course planning feature in its second year. The state of Oregon requires that all students in grades 7-12 have a personalized educational plan that includes course planning across these grade levels. The district had struggled to meaningfully implement this requirement, relying on paper-based planning sheets that resulted in inconsistencies across schools and lacked the ability to easily track and update plans across grade levels. In addition to facilitating course planning, Bend-La Pine sought a system that embedded the course selection process within broader CCR planning. Calbreath explained that “we want kids to make decisions on their courses based on where they think they’re going to be in the future.” SchoolLinks does just that in a student- and counselor-friendly way.

The process has been tremendously successful—with 90% of high school students completing a course plan within the first year. The process allowed students to make thoughtful and intentional decisions about their courses—in relation to their future coursework, goals, and postsecondary plans. It also forced schools to align their course offerings across schools and with postsecondary pathways and introduce the course selection process to students and families well in advance of deadlines for decisions. The fact that this plan stays with students from year to year fosters more successful and personalized course selection processes across the four years of high school. Feedback from parents was very positive with an appreciation for having a better understanding of course pathways and how they impact long-term outcomes for their students.

From an operational side, the district has also seen clear benefits in how the course planning feature integrates with and informs the development of master schedules at schools. Calbreath noted that with ever-shrinking budgets, there is increasingly less flexibility when it comes to staffing and scheduling. Implementing a more streamlined and proactive course planning process has significantly reduced the number of students requiring schedule changes at the start of each semester.

More control, better tracking, and seamless communication.

Filter

Class of 2025 x

Incomplete x

Bulk Send

Name	Status	Send Method	Requirements
JA Anderson, Johnny	In Progress		<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
SA Abernathy, Sarah	In Progress		<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
EA Adams, Emily	In Progress		<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
PA Aoki, Pamela	In Progress		<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
SB Beaumont, Samuel	In Progress		<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
CR Cort...			

Counselor Requirements

Transcript

Staff with management capabilities must upload.

Fulfill

Recommendation Letter

Jim Turpin

Fulfill

Transcript

Staff with management capabilities must upload.

Fulfill

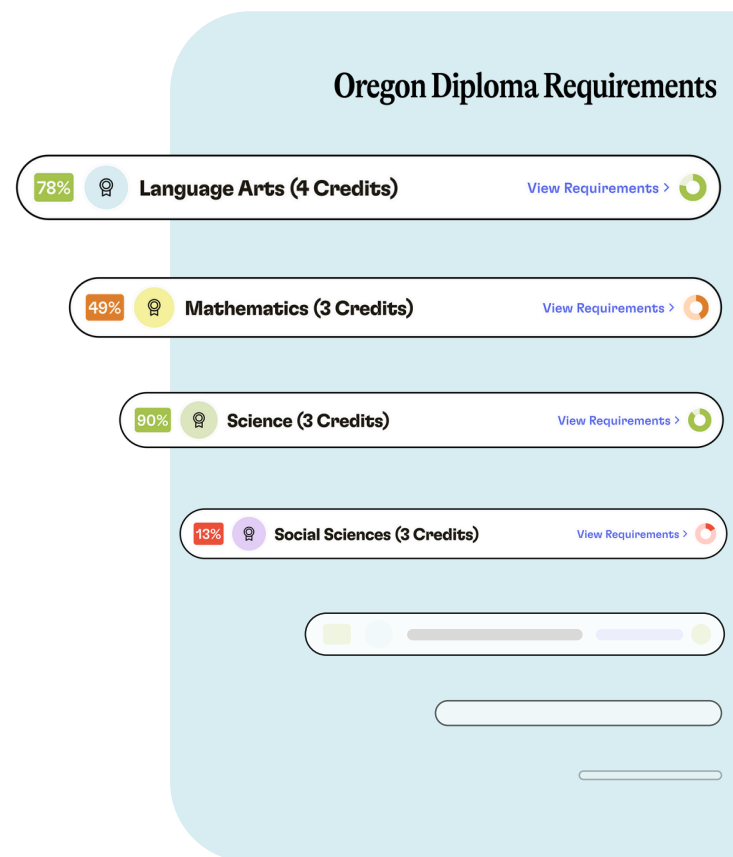


SchoolLinks: A Critical Component to Supporting District and Student Success

Calbreath expressed appreciation for the way the SchoolLinks team has been committed to ensuring the platform works for her district's unique and evolving needs. In fact, when the state recently enacted a new graduation requirement for all students to complete a Higher Ed Career Path Skills course that focuses on college exploration, workforce readiness, and self-advocacy, SchoolLinks immediately offered their support in helping the district to plan the rollout. SchoolLinks will be a central component to meeting this need as current SchoolLinks lessons are already aligned to the course curriculum requirements and the platform will enable the district to track progress and completion. Calbreath insightfully noted that having students do this work within the platform will also provide additional information for counselors about student post secondary planning, interests, and strengths and allow for even more personalized CCR support.

Going forward, the district plans to extend the course planning component to middle schools next year. Already, middle school counselors have embedded SchoolLinks into their advisory periods resulting in students engaging with important questions about their future even earlier. This has meant that when students enter high school they are now much more ready for thoughtful and deeper planning over the course of their four years. And these efforts have empowered students to take ownership over their postsecondary exploration and planning. The students are excited to utilize the resources and tools within SchoolLinks and engage with the platform on their own, without being prompted. Calbreath explained that this has transformed how students approach CCR planning

Calbreath is excited to see the long-term benefits of SchoolLinks on district, school, and student success. With greater alignment across grade levels, increased student agency, and data-driven support structures now in place, the district can fulfill the goal of making sure that every student has the tools, support, and information to graduate high school with a plan, a purpose, and the skills to be successful.



"We don't have to be in front of them for them to be able to engage."

- Jess Calbreath

**With SchoolLinks, every
student can graduate with
a purpose and a plan.**

Request a Demo



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