

Customer Story

Key Takeaways

The Problem: Finding the Right Fit

Keeping up with local and national legislation meant using multiple systems to monitor students graduation progress. This meant staff were spending a lot of time tracking down student data.

The Solution: From Many Systems to One

Replaced multiple platforms (graduation tracking, course selection, college management, career exploration) with SchoolLinks.

The Results: Focus on the Students

With 90% of students onboarded and using SchoolLinks by their predetermined goal date, staff are spending more time talking with students about post-secondary goals and less on data entry.



22 Schools



16K Students



5 Years with SL



Naperville, IL

The Problem

Legislation Changes & Data Everywhere

Like many Illinois districts, Naperville Community Unit School District 203 was hit with local and national legislation changes that required specific tracking of numerous college and career readiness indicators.

At the time they were monitoring student activities and tracking data with multiple platforms across 6th - 12th grades, struggling to provide efficiency or consistency for students and staff.

As the 9th largest school district in the state, they serve 23 schools, 16,500 students and 2,500 staff - all while striving to keep up a 97% college going rate. They knew they needed help.

Jill Hlavacek, Director of Innovation and Learning at the district, wanted her district to have one platform to support her entire district staffs' as well as students' college and career goals.

Working with her team, it was decided that Naperville CUSD needed a single CCR platform that would:

- 1** Comply with national and local legislation in Illinois which required districts to track indicators to show a more robust portfolio of students' college and career readiness.
- 2** Support strategic goals of supporting 6th - 12th counseling program in CCR preparation and providing career cluster centered programs of study for high school students.
- 3** Be friendly, inviting, and engaging for all users.
- 4** Provide consistency for students and staff - all college and career ready activities and tasks in one place with advanced reporting capabilities.

The Process

Be Thorough & Involve all Users

Naperville CUSD began a very detailed Request for Proposals (RFP) process to source and secure a single CCR platform to meet all of their needs. Choosing a platform to entrust in tracking and collecting data needed for state reporting, not to mention for supporting students in their post-secondary planning journey, was not taken lightly. Hlavacek admitted, "We had a lot of asks in the request that we put out."

Equally important to the platform's features was how easy it was for everyone to use and whether they enjoyed it. They brought in users across the district - district administrators, school leader, counselors, and teachers - for vendor demonstrations. When it looked like SchoolLinks was coming out on top as the platform of choice for staff, they invited students to try out the platform to confirm their decision. They knew that no matter how great of a reporting and data tracking tool they purchased, if it wasn't inviting, user-friendly and engaging it wouldn't do the job.

Ease of use, an engaging interface and robust reporting tools led to SchoolLinks being chosen as the college and career readiness platform for Naperville CUSD 203.

The biggest driver in the RFP process was looking for something that was really, really student focused. Something that kept the students' needs in the front and center in every part of the tool.

Jill Hlavacek

Director of Innovation and Learning

The Result

Accessible, Actionable Data & More Time Spent with Students

Implementation was a very strategic process for Naperville CUSD 203. To support SchoolLinks' implementation, Hlavacek selected a SchoolLinks Champion from each middle and high school to serve as building lead and be point of contact for all things SchoolLinks. A "Train the Trainer" model helped SchoolLinks training and use of the platform be promoted throughout the district.

Right from the beginning, Hlavacek could see SchoolLinks helping the district meet their goals and more. "Kids were very successful at navigating and getting into the tool and starting to learn," said Hlavacek.

The district had 90% of students onboarded and using

SchoolLinks by their predetermined goal date. Not only were students actually logging in and using the platform, but they were also finding it easy to use because it integrated really well with tools the district already used - like Google Workspace for Education and home grown documents students had created. The district found using SchoolLinks created a paradigm shift from annual course planning to a 4 year, future forward thinking planning. The district wanted the students to think "I'm not just picking classes to check the box for next year and to meet graduation requirements, but I'm picking courses and selecting pathways based on what my end goal is," said Hlavacek. Using SchoolLinks helped them to think with the end in mind.

Naperville has now set new, higher reaching goals as they have grown with SchoolLinks, including:

01

Invite ELL, CTE teachers and other district specialists to use SchoolLinks as an instructional tool to increase opportunities and corresponding learning.

02

Work with the activities director to host work based learning opportunities on the SchoolLinks platform

Summary

Armed with SchoolLinks, Hlavacek and her team can be confident that the right CCR activity metrics will be tracked for state reporting, and it can be done using the same tool that actively engages students in completing those activities. With less time spent navigating between platforms and spreadsheets tracking activities, Naperville CUSD can focus on achieving their new college and career readiness goals efficiently.

A Note From SchoolLinks

Supporting a wide range of district initiatives and complying with legislation changes doesn't have to be daunting. See for yourself with a personalized demo of SchoolLinks' modern platform and tell us how we can help you meet your district's goals.