



Evaluating College and Career Readiness: Improvements in the Shift from Naviance to SchoolLinks



Key Takeaways

1. Switching to SchoolLinks from Naviance resolved issues with the connection to Common App and improved the user experience for students.
2. Google single sign-on has made SchoolLinks more user-friendly and streamlined the login process for students.
3. SchoolLinks has improved the college application process, making it easier for students to connect with Common App and request transcripts.
4. Teachers have found SchoolLinks to be a smoother process for submitting evaluations and letters of recommendation.
5. The Career Center in SchoolLinks provides valuable information for students to explore different careers and make informed decisions.
6. Future goals with SchoolLinks include utilizing more features and collaborating with other Missouri districts.



Lindbergh
Schools



St. Louis,
MO



6,937
Students



Switch From
Naviance



Meet
Kate Keegan
College and
Career Counselor

In the bustling halls of Lindbergh High School in Missouri, the pursuit of academic excellence and future aspirations is a daily priority. As students navigate a variety of choices, from college applications to career paths, the guidance of dedicated professionals like Kate Keegan, College and Career Counselor, becomes invaluable. Kate's journey in steering students toward their dreams took an innovative turn with the adoption of SchoolLinks, a modern college and career readiness platform. In this customer story, we delve into Kate's experience, exploring the reasons behind Lindbergh High School's transition from Naviance to SchoolLinks, the transformative impact on student pathways, and the collaborative vision for the future of college and career readiness in Missouri.

Navigating Away from Naviance

The decision to depart from Naviance, a platform once relied upon for college and career readiness, wasn't made in haste. Kate Keegan sheds light on the challenges that prompted Lindbergh High School's transition to SchoolLinks.

"We were having issues with Naviance and the connection with Common App. We were having a hard time. It wasn't working the way that it should," Kate explains. The struggle with Naviance's integration with Common App served as a tipping point, a hurdle hindering the seamless navigation of college applications. But the obstacles didn't end there. "At the time, Clever wasn't an option and students had to remember logins and reset logins, and it was really difficult for the number of students that we have to do that," Kate elaborates. The cumbersome process of managing multiple logins became a cumbersome ordeal for students, detracting from their focus on academic and career pursuits.

Kate's frustrations extended beyond technical glitches.

"I was often having to contact their [Naviance] support team and was having a really hard time either getting through or to get the answers that I needed," she recalls.

The lack of responsive support compounded the challenges faced by Lindbergh High School, impeding the smooth operation of essential college and career readiness processes.

The inadequacies of Naviance became glaringly apparent when compared to SchoolLinks.

Kate notes, "The last two years they had been on Naviance, and students said that their experience with SchoolLinks was so much easier, that the platform was much more user-friendly."

Streamlining College Application Management: A Leap Towards Efficiency

With the transition to SchoolLinks, Lindbergh High School's goal was to improve efficiencies surrounding the college application process. Kate Keegan delves into the transformative impact SchoolLinks has had on this pivotal aspect of student life.

"[College Application Manager] is predominantly what we use SchoolLinks for at this point," Kate remarks, underlining the centrality of the platform in facilitating the college application journey. She adds, "But it's much easier for students to understand how to connect to Common App to SchoolLinks. SchoolLinks does a good job of giving step-by-step instructions and taking the student right there to connect the two more seamlessly." SchoolLinks' user-centric design empowers students with clear guidance, effortlessly bridging the gap between Common App and SchoolLinks.

From a counselor's perspective, the benefits are palpable.

"As far as sending documents, it's so much easier. Like it's just a click of a button," Kate explains.

Gone are the days of printing sheets or maintaining spreadsheets; SchoolLinks facilitates swift transmission of documents with unparalleled ease.

Teachers, too, have embraced SchoolLinks with open arms, reveling in its simplicity and efficiency. "Teachers have really had positive feedback for one because they don't have to have a separate login...they can do the single sign-on," Kate observes. The frustrations that once marred their experience with Naviance have dissipated, replaced by a seamless interface that facilitates evaluations and uploading letters of recommendation.

As Lindbergh High School embraces the future of college application management with SchoolLinks, the once-daunting process has been improved with newfound simplicity and efficacy, empowering students and educators alike to navigate the path toward higher education confidently and easily.

Empowering Student Success: Navigating Missouri's ICAP Process with SchooLinks

Aligning with state initiatives is paramount in college and career readiness. Kate Keegan describes Lindbergh High School's approach to meeting Missouri's Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) requirements through a meticulously crafted scope and sequence facilitated by SchooLinks.

"We are addressing the Missouri ICAP requirements by creating a scope and sequence of activities that tie into the requirements for what activities students have to do to be college and career-ready," Kate explains.

The process began with a collaborative effort involving Kate, her fellow counselors, and grade-level counselors. Together, they curated a selection of career assessments tailored to each grade level's needs, ensuring alignment with the ICAP guidelines.

"We met to see which of the career assessments that [SchooLinks] have would be the best for each grade level to complete," Kate elaborates.

This strategic selection process ensured that students received targeted guidance at each stage of their academic journey, fostering a holistic approach to college and career exploration.

To seamlessly integrate these activities into the ICAP process, Lindbergh High School leverages SchooLinks' capabilities. "We have a separate Canvas page that we do with the ICAP, and we have the students linked SchooLinks to them and then assign different assessments each year to help with the ICAP process," Kate shares. This integration not only streamlines the administration of assessments but also facilitates comprehensive tracking of student progress.

SchooLinks' robust reporting features further enhance the efficacy of Lindbergh High School's ICAP implementation.

"We can run reports to see how many students have done them, how many haven't, who we need to find to ensure that they complete those assessments," Kate notes. This data-driven approach empowers counselors to identify and support students who may require additional guidance, ensuring equitable access to college and career resources.

Informing Futures: Student Exploration with SchoolLinks' Career Center

Beyond assessments, SchoolLinks is a gateway to a wealth of career exploration resources. "We sit down and talk to students about all those assessment findings and show them that," Kate emphasizes. The Career Center feature within SchoolLinks provides students with invaluable insights into potential career paths, including salary projections and growth opportunities. Armed with this knowledge, students are empowered to make informed decisions about their future endeavors.

"I do like the Career Center a lot," Kate affirms, expressing her appreciation for its comprehensive features.

Drawing parallels to the Occupational Outlook Handbook, a trusted resource in career guidance, Kate recognizes the Career Center's efficacy in providing valuable insights from reputable sources.

One standout feature of the Career Center is its ability to generate a balanced list of colleges tailored to students' aspirations and capabilities. Kate recognizes its potential to guide students toward achieving their academic goals. "I do like that it also comes up with a balanced list," she remarks, acknowledging its value in presenting a range of options, from reach schools to safety nets.

As Kate delves deeper into SchoolLinks' myriad features, she embraces each discovery as an opportunity to enhance her support for students' educational journeys. "Every time I get to learn more, I do and try to use those as well," she reflects, embodying a commitment to continuous growth and innovation in her role as a counselor. In harnessing the power of the SchoolLinks Career Center, Lindbergh High School equips educators and students with the tools and resources they need to navigate the complexities of college and career exploration.

Looking Toward the Future

As Lindbergh High School's journey with SchoolLinks unfolds, Kate Keegan reflects on her experiences and offers invaluable advice for districts seeking to elevate their college and career readiness offerings.

"Everyone needs a platform with good customer service," Kate emphasizes the pivotal role of ongoing support in navigating the intricacies of implementation. SchoolLinks' commitment to responsive customer service stands out starkly against past challenges encountered with Naviance.

"The customer service is just amazing," Kate asserts, citing it as a cornerstone of their positive experience.

From implementation support to addressing user feedback, SchoolLinks' dedicated team ensures that every query is met with attentiveness and expertise.

"We've just had nothing but a positive experience," Kate affirms, underscoring the seamless transition and ongoing satisfaction with SchoolLinks. Despite not yet fully leveraging all of the

platform's capabilities, Lindbergh High School's journey is marked by optimism and a commitment to continuous improvement. "It really has just been a great experience," Kate reflects.

Looking ahead, Kate envisions a collaborative network of Missouri counselors united in their adoption of SchoolLinks. "I'd love for other Missouri counselors to be on board," she shares, highlighting the potential for collective learning and shared insights. Through collaboration and mutual support, districts can harness SchoolLinks' full potential to empower students on their paths to success.

In conclusion, Lindbergh High School's adoption of SchoolLinks is more than a mere transition—it's a testament to the transformative power of innovation and dedication to student success. As districts across Missouri and beyond embark on their own journeys towards enhanced college and career readiness, Kate's advice serves as a guiding light, illuminating the path toward a future filled with promise, possibility, and endless opportunities for growth. Together, we navigate the future, equipped with the tools and support needed to empower the next generation of leaders, thinkers, and doers.

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