

How Pattonville School District Expands on Missouri's ICAP Requirements with SchoolLinks



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Pattonville School District

Pattonville is a top-ranked school district tucked in the suburbs north of Missouri's bustling St. Louis County. Along the Missouri river, over 6,000 students make up the population that has earned them recognition as Missouri's most diverse school district.

This case study explores how they've digitized the process for completing the statemandated Individual Career & Academic Plan (ICAP). We interviewed Cara Hiripitiyage, Ed.D, Director of Secondary Education to learn more about how the transition and implementation of SchoolLinks solutions is helping them meet personalized learning goals.

Missouri's ICAP

The ICAP serves as a roadmap for Missouri students navigating their personalized pathway to success. Creating an ICAP is a multi-year process that starts no later than 8th grade. In addition to ensuring students have a vision for grades 9-12, the guidance, coursework, and activities help students develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to achieve postsecondary goals.

Pattonville School District was looking for a comprehensive digital solution to track those accomplishments, as well as share opportunities, such as certifications and state programs.

"The biggest thing is how SchoolLinks helped us with Missouri's required ICAP, a career planning tool that every student needs to complete...We didn't have a means for students to do that digitally."

Completing ICAPs Before and After SchoolLinks

Having experienced a handful of shortcomings with their previous college, career, and military readiness (CCMR) solution, Pattonville School District reached out to SchoolLinks for a more holistic, more streamlined platform. Specifically, they sought a solution that would merge college and career planning with completing Missouri's required ICAP. Pattonville was pleased to discover that a shift to SchoolLinks would better meet their CCMR needs without forcing them to sacrifice the features they love. In a short time, the district transformed its once inefficient paper-pencil process into a simpler yet more accurate and more collaborative experience.

The first step was meeting with SchoolLinks and establishing a clear goal. In Pattonville's instance, they had a tool to capture course options and choices, but they needed a place to build that out and include additional ICAP indicators. So they expanded their data collection features to collect information exactly as Missouri's ICAP requires. Rather quickly, step 1 was easy and done. Step 2 was a heavier left. Igniting excitement in staff and, most importantly, supporting them through onboarding was critical for a successful rollout. After all, for the first time in a long time,

“We realized that SchoolLinks could really meet both purposes. So we asked, ‘What was the transition to digital completion via SchoolLinks like?’”

“We wanted to make it more interactive; a place where students really had more direct control and had their hands on it as well. And it really made sense to be a part of our college and career planning process.”

conversations about goals and long-term course planning stretched beyond the counselor's office. The district's middle and high school homeroom teachers needed to become versed in the product. Fortunately, using ICAP completion as a smooth segue to training everyone on SchoolLinks worked, and everyone is benefitting.

The counselor's role is no less important in Pattonville School district, but with homeroom teachers enabled, students get more personalized attention more consistently. All stakeholders have become more active in an otherwise daunting journey thanks to SchoolLinks' user-friendly platform. Students have gained a network of support around them, empowering them with the experience and knowledge they need to make wise decisions about their futures.

So Cara and team empowered district staff with plenty of resources—from platform login help and navigation best practices to student tools. In just one spring semester, SchoolLinks was implemented, staff was onboarding, and teachers and counselors were well on their way to guiding students through the process.

Supporting Pattonville's Personalized Learning Initiative

Another important initiative in Pattonville School District is personalized learning. In fact, it's been an ever-improving effort for over a decade. Since the state's required ICAP aligns with this district's long-term goal, we asked if SchoolLinks has helped contribute to that effort of personalized learning and creating that holistic view of students and their learning profiles.

"Absolutely."

SchoolLinks combines the two initiatives by providing college and career readiness work alongside opportunities for students to reflect on who they are as a learner, what their goals are, what their strengths are, etc. Students as early as sixth grade are completing pieces of the learner profile. As they revisit that over the next few years—multiple times each year—those pieces become key components of their ICAP, a little bit more. We like them. We feel like kids are making good connections."

"We found that the tools within SchoolLinks, are resonating with kids."

"Opening students' eyes not only to the possibilities that exist beyond high school but also to the resources available while in middle and high school."

Better Course Planning with SchoolLinks

SchoolLinks' course planning tool has proven to be another pillar in this leading district's continuous college and career readiness success. Cara reflects on her earlier years in Pattonville when she was an assistant principal, "I worked with students. They'd say, 'Hey, I think I finally know what I want to do for my career goal. I wish I could have learned more about this in high school.' And the answer is... You could have."

Course Planner avoids this tragedy by allowing students to meaningfully browse course options, uncover existing opportunities, and plan accordingly year by year. SchoolLinks, Cara explains, perfectly complemented Pattonville's initiative to better inform students—even as early as elementary—on what's offered in middle and high school.

Pattonville School District works tirelessly to ensure all students have a panoramic view of the various options and pathways available to them. So the simpler it is to build out schedules, the easier it will be to guide students down the best path, all the while eliminating roadblocks and empowering them with knowledge.

On the Horizon

Having experienced such positive outcomes within the first two years, Pattonville School District is working towards even greater successes. To them, success includes more stakeholder involvement, better connections with community partners, and personalized extended learning opportunities.

Among the strategies for increased awareness and stakeholder participation is a solid communications plan. Clear communications will strengthen their second area of growth, as well. Because while the platform is already serving as an excellent database for college and career contacts and information, Pattonville is looking to SchoolLinks for guidance on how they could use the platform to better connect with community partners — to deepen those associations by connecting the opportunities they offer to the students they'd interest.

Lastly, to address another leading initiative for personalized learning at the high school level, Pattonville is working towards enabling students to create their own extended learning experience, whether that's a partnership with a local university for a research project, an industry-specific career experience at a local business, or something else. These opportunities vary greatly and are completely dependent on the student's passions and interests.

“SchoolLinks has been really great to work with. We've worked with a lot of great representatives, and they've been very helpful and very responsive to our needs. And as we've met some features that didn't quite meet our needs, we've actually had support in seeing some things adjusted or changed to meet our needs better, which has been really exciting and really makes SchoolLinks a great partner.”

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