

# For Huntley Community School District, SchoolLinks is the “Total Package”

SchoolLinks is the driver behind Huntley’s aspirations to make college and career readiness a student-driven, experience-based, and personalized endeavor.



Algonquin  
Illinois



8.8k  
Students



9  
Schools



1  
Year with SchoolLinks

## The Problem: Finding a Solution that Met All Their Needs

As Huntley implemented a new CCR framework, they needed a CCR platform that empowered students, expanded access to resources and experiences, and automated reporting for counselors.

## The Solution: One-Stop-Shop CCR

After evaluating numerous platforms, SchoolLinks was the clear winner as the only “one-stop shop” for meeting the CCR needs of students, teachers, counselors, and administrators

## The Results: Meaningful Engagement

After a smooth implementation, students are meaningfully engaging with the platform, teachers and counselors are embedding SchoolLinks into processes and courses, and there is an overall more robust CCR culture throughout the district.

# The Problem

## Seeking a Platform that Matched Their Ambitions for CCR Success

Huntley Community School District 158 sits just northwest of Chicago. The district serves 9,000 students across 9 schools. Over the past several years, the district has engaged in strategic planning and recognized the need for college and career initiatives to be a central part of their secondary curriculum and programmatic offerings. This work has occurred with the backdrop of new state reporting requirements around postsecondary readiness metrics.

As part of this work, the district created a new college and career readiness (CCR) framework that seeks to provide the foundation for a modern approach to college and career planning for district students. A key component to this vision for postsecondary readiness in Huntley was an effort to expand opportunities for real-world career exploration and mentorship as students plan and make decisions about their future.

As educators, counselors, and administrators initiated the work to put these plans into practice, they shared frustration with the current CCR platform and articulated that it could not offer the tools, resources, and support to provide students with the robust, meaningful, and cohesive CCR experience they were seeking to create. The district decided to launch a search for the optimal CCR platform for students, counselors, and administrators to undergird this critical district work.

# The Process

## The “One-Stop Shop” for Effectively Meeting the CCR Needs of Students, Teachers, Counselors, and Administrators

They decided to explore the breadth of offerings in the CCR platform landscape to identify the right tool for their students and educators. Experiencing each platform first-hand was a critical part of the selection process. The district had a variety of stakeholders—including teachers, department chairs, and administrators—engage with various platforms with demonstration credentials to explore each option from both the student and counselor perspective.

Michael Kennedy, Director of Curriculum for AVID, Grants, and College and Career Readiness for Huntley, shared that as they went through the process, SchoolLinks emerged as the obvious “one-stop shop” they were looking for. He explained that it offered, by far, the most “digitally-appealing and user-friendly” interface. The district review team was also blown away by the ease with which the system tracks and automates the reporting of key indicators for college and career pathway endorsements required by the state. He summed up the decision by saying: “SchoolLinks stood out where others came up short. It provided the total package.”

Upon the selection of SchoolLinks, the district was excited to give their students and staff access to this incredible suite of resources. Huntley rolled out SchoolLinks to its 5,000 secondary students at two middle schools and single high school.

# The Result

## A Smooth Implementation Has Yielded Meaningful Engagement

The initial reception from students and educators has been overwhelmingly positive both in verbal feedback and on utilization metrics. The school district structured the introduction of SchoolLinks to students to occur during student advisory periods. Within the first three months of implementation, about 90% of students completed the onboarding process and the strengths and interests inventory. Students have been eager to explore the features and self-initiate using the platform, logging in to search for colleges, build resumes, and explore and “favorite” careers. Some teachers have even reported students are so excited to engage with SchoolLinks that they have had to ask some to pause using SchoolLinks during course time and close their devices to focus on other tasks. District counselors and administrators realize that student interest and engagement are critical factors to maximize success, as students must use the features in order for them to be effective.

Teachers and counselors reported tremendous customer support from the SchoolLinks team and an easy and smooth platform launch. Kennedy described meaningful and practical training for educators that allowed implementation to be seamless. He described that teachers are being thoughtful about building usage of SchoolLinks into a variety of course content and curriculum. Teachers and counselors within Huntley have also used SchoolLinks as a tool to engage families and collaborate with them around their child’s college and career planning. The district connected families to SchoolLinks through easy-to-use parent codes that give families access to important notifications about CCR events and deadlines and share information on student goal-setting and other CCR exploration milestones.

Kennedy explained, “SchoolLinks is our main vehicle helping guide all of our conversations [around] building curriculum and engaging our students in the college and career process.” In short, SchoolLinks has become an anchor for expanding CCR in Huntley.

# Summary

Reflecting on his professional experience, Kennedy shared that “of all the platforms I’ve used or seen...[SchoolLinks] is truly the best for CCR.” As administrators in Huntley look to the future, they are excited to expand and deepen student and counselor engagement with SchoolLinks and leverage its features to cultivate an environment where students have agency to explore their passions, tools to connect with learning experiences to inform decision-making, resources to help them be fully prepared for their choice of career or college, and ultimately realize postsecondary success.

## A note from SchoolLinks

Leveraging data to support your district’s college and career readiness goals is simple. See for yourself with a personalized demo of SchoolLinks' modern platform and let us know how we can help you meet your school district's goals.

Watch the video on this  
case study



Request a demo of  
SchoolLinks

