



Elevating SchoolCash Online Adoption at Halton Catholic District School Board

The Challenge

HCDSB has long understood the benefits of using technology to manage school activity funds. The Board was an early adopter of KEV's first generation of products in the early 2000s and implemented SchoolCash Accounting upon its release in 2004. This helped the Board eliminate the disparate processes and tools employed and created an integrated system for activity fund management.

By 2013, annual activity fund revenues had grown to more than \$11M. Paul McMahon, the Board's Superintendent of Business Services and Treasurer at the time, identified the opportunity to expand these efforts and lessen exposure to risk by reducing the number of transactions using cash and paper checks. He believed that adopting an online system to collect and manage activity funds would help to achieve this.

"Our Board wanted to eliminate any possibility of fraud and wanted more accountability in the way that schools managed activity funds," recalls Jo-Anne Tucker, Former School Administration Systems Liaison, HCDSB.

Working with her colleagues at HCDSB, Ms. Tucker and the implementation team were tasked to find an online payment system that integrated into its existing activity fund management solution to achieve this goal.

"We did our due diligence and evaluated other solutions, but the clear choice was SchoolCash from KEV," said Ms. Tucker. "The online payments module was designed to integrate into our existing accounting module, which we knew would make tracking and reporting a seamless process. Competing solutions only processed online payments—they couldn't match KEV's power to automatically write back to the general ledger. Also, it offered more than one payment option, which the competitors could not."

In 2014, HCDSB selected SchoolCash Online and developed an implementation plan. At Mr. McMahon's direction, the new system's purpose and benefits were clearly communicated to all schools in advance of the rollout. HCDSB implemented SchoolCash Online in three phases over a 16-month period.

ABOUT THE HALTON CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

The Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) operates 45 elementary schools and 10 high schools, delivering educational services to more than 37,000 students. Established in 1969, the Board serves the Ontario communities of Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton, and Oakville.

Results

By fall 2016, 80% of all parents had registered on SchoolCash Online with over \$6.1M in activity funds collected through online payments. For district staff, these early results were extremely positive, but they worked strategically to improve engagement.

“Our goal in implementing SchoolCash Online with smaller groups and training school staff was to obtain a smooth rollout,” explained Ms. Tucker. “We started them on basic tasks so they could see how activity funds appeared in different areas of our accounting system, such as the general ledger.”

Phasing in the implementation reduced the number of schools the district office needed to support, giving Ms. Tucker the time to speak with and, in some cases, visit administrative staff. This led to important discoveries, such as learning that schools weren't aware they could use SchoolCash Online to collect money for the annual Halloween Dance-a-Thon — one of the largest fundraising events for schools.

“We educated them on the benefits of the donations module and how it would result in less paperwork for them,” said Ms. Tucker. “And when KEV released the new guest account module that allowed friends and relatives of students to donate, that also helped. It makes collecting donations so much easier, and drove up overall usage.”

Another important driver was leadership.

“Our superintendent provided clear direction to the principals and schools,” recalled Ms. Tucker. “Once the principals bought in, they encouraged administrative staff who began using it more and more.”

This effort was bolstered by distributing parent adoption results at administrator meetings, which helped generate peer-to-

peer competition amongst principals. These approaches proved effective. By fall 2019, parent adoption grew to 92% and the amount of revenue generated through online payments had jumped 69% to \$8.3M. This means that close to 70% of the activity funds collected annually at HCDSB are now protected from potential fraud.

“Now that parents can make payments through SchoolCash Online, our teachers have more time to focus on what they do best – teaching,” said Ms. Tucker. “And, with less physical cash being collected, school administrative staff now spend much less time preparing deposits for a trip to the bank.”

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Schools in the District

55



Number of Parents Using SchoolCash

33,300



Amount of Annual SchoolCash Transactions in 2018-2019:

\$12.3M



Parent Adoption Rate

92%

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— Jo-Anne Tucker

Former School Administration Systems Liaison, Halton Catholic District School Board



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KEV Group provides the only unified school activity and district fee management solution that enables K-12 schools to manage every dollar accurately, consistently, and efficiently. By seamlessly integrating and automating all activity fund management processes, our solutions provide real-time visibility and control over how districts and schools create, collect, manage, track, and reconcile school activity and district fees. Parents/guardians benefit from an easy-to-use solution that offers convenience and supports all payment types. More than 25,500 schools across North America rely on KEV to manage over \$4 billion in activity funds annually, and over 40% are members of the Council of the Great City Schools. Visit kevgroup.com to learn more.