



SchoolCash Unlocks Efficiencies for Onslow County School District

The Challenge

Growing demand from parent/guardians to pay student fees online inspired Onslow County School District (the District) to explore the possibility of a school activity fund management solution that would allow the District to not only meet those needs, but also deliver financial transparency and staff efficiencies.

Cheryl DesRoche, the District's Internal Auditor, saw firsthand the degree to which cash handling was hindering productivity. "Our teachers were devoting entirely too much classroom time to collecting and counting cash," recalled Ms. DesRoche. "Likewise, our administrative personnel were spending a significant amount of time processing cash and making frequent trips to the bank."

To manage cashflow in schools, the District employed manual processes that relied on Excel spreadsheets and paper-based documentation. Routine accounting tasks required extensive labor hours and auditing efforts to complete and properly document.

"Issuing refunds, in particular, stood out as an activity that required significant effort from our administrative staff," said Ms. DesRoche. "This became especially apparent after we had to manually write refund checks on a mass scale when COVID forced us to cancel all field trips and activities."

Beyond the inefficiencies, the District's paper-based system also presented visibility issues. "With no centralized system, gaining an overarching view of our schools' finances was nearly impossible, which prevented us from effectively monitoring data quality," explained Ms. DesRoche. "Furthermore, collaboration among multiple people and keeping track of document versions was difficult to manage, which greatly hindered communication between our treasurers."

The District was eager to adopt a solution that would reduce the need for cash handling in schools, while also automating many school-level accounting

ABOUT ONSLOW COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Onslow County School District is the 11th largest district in the state of North Carolina with over 27,000 students currently enrolled. The district has 39 educational facilities, including 20 elementary schools, 8 middle schools, 7 high schools, as well as an early college high school, early childhood development center, alternative learning program, and the Eastern North Carolina Regional Skills Center.

tasks. However, after evaluating several competing solutions, the District was left unsatisfied.

“Most solutions could not integrate with our student information system and also lacked comprehensive reporting capabilities and online payment functionality,” recounted Ms. DesRoche. “However, when we were introduced to the robust functionality and high level of integration SchoolCash offers, we knew we’d found the solution that would address our needs.”

Results

After implementing SchoolCash in May 2020, the District is now experiencing early success with close to 50% of its schools achieving parent adoption rates of 60% or greater. The high level of adoption in such a short period of time can be attributed to the strategic marketing and outreach efforts undertaken by the District.

As part of these efforts, the District prominently featured SchoolCash Online on the its website, while also promoting the platform in its regular newsletters and voicemails to parents/guardians. To further encourage usage, the District ensures that popular items, such as athletic tickets, are always available for sale online. Likewise, the District also places old yearbooks and old t-shirts as public items. However, it was the use of a resurgent technology that the District credits with having the biggest effect on adoption.

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“A major driver of parent adoption has been the QR codes we include in our flyers and posters,” explained Ms. DesRoche. “When parents scan the QR code with their phones, they are automatically directed to the school’s SchoolCash Online page where they can conveniently pay their children’s fees.”

This level of convenience has not gone unnoticed. “Parents have been vocal about how much they appreciate the convenience and flexibility of SchoolCash Online.” said Ms. DesRoche. “Several parents have also remarked to us how much the platform has improved school-to-home communication.”

And parents aren’t the only ones who have shown appreciation for SchoolCash. “Our teachers love it because it allows them to spend less time collecting and counting money and more time delivering lesson plans and working with students one-on-one,” explained Ms. DesRoche. “And with SchoolCash’s easy-to-use reporting capabilities, teachers can easily discern which students have paid and which ones haven’t.”

SchoolCash has also allowed the District to realize marked financial benefits, most notably from the reduced printing costs associated with paper-based processes. However, these cost-savings pale in comparison to the way SchoolCash has eliminated many of the hidden costs that previously hindered efficiency.

“SchoolCash has allowed us to benefit from increased productivity by relieving our staff of many time-intensive manual tasks, including data entry, check writing, and making cash deposits,” explained Ms. DesRoche. “As a result, our administrative staff have more time to focus on other, higher-impact tasks.”

By the Numbers



K-12 Schools Served
in the District

40



Number of
Students

27,041



Number of
Parents/Guardians

16,385



Funds
Managed Annually

\$3 Million

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— Cheryl DesRoche
District’s Internal Auditor



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