



# Pittsylvania County Schools Adopts SchoolCash Management to Drive Better Decision-Making

## The Challenge

Without access to up-to-date activity fund information, Pittsylvania County Schools (PCS) struggled to make informed and timely decisions.

Across the district, school bookkeepers manually collected funds and recorded balances in spreadsheets. At the end of each month, schools would send the spreadsheet with the beginning and ending balance for the month to the district's central office. This meant the district had to wait until the end of the month to receive accurate data from each school. This made it impossible for Amy Hardy, the district's Financial Analyst, to properly gauge activity fund information in real-time.

"The superintendent would contact me to inquire about balances, but I couldn't always provide clear answers because I only ever had access to the previous month's numbers," explained Ms. Hardy. "With only outdated data on hand, it's difficult to engage in productive conversations or make timely decisions."

The decision-making process was further hindered by the lack of data granularity contained in the schools' spreadsheets. For example, most schools used a single

catch-all account for all library-related transactions. The absence of sub-accounts made it difficult to discern which revenue streams – such as donations, allocations, book fair revenue – contributed to that monthly figure in the library account.

This lack of granularity translated into a lack of understanding. "Since all funds raised went into an all-encompassing account, I couldn't provide strategic advice to principals or help them understand the success or failure of their initiatives," recalled Ms. Hardy. "This lack of insight diminished our ability to identify and apply best practices or benchmarks for future events."

## ABOUT PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS

Pittsylvania County Schools (PCS) is a PK–12 graded school district serving Pittsylvania County, Virginia. PCS is responsible for educating over 8,000 students across its 21 schools. Each year, PCS manages over \$3M in school activity funds.

These challenges also made audits a cumbersome process. With such an error-prone, manual process, problems inevitably occurred. But without real-time visibility, Ms. Hardy had to wait for auditors to identify these problems before trying to correct them. As well, without a consistent account structure and few auditable controls the district ran the risk of non-compliance with state guidelines.

## Results

To overcome these challenges, PCS implemented SchoolCash Management — an integrated, cloud-based activity funds management solution.

Because transactions are posted immediately in SchoolCash Management, Ms. Hardy can instantly view accurate data from across the district instead of waiting until the end of the month. “I can run reports that give me a clear picture of each school’s chart of accounts so I can help them make more informed decisions,” said Ms. Hardy. “This has allowed the district to think strategically and be proactive rather than just reacting to the past.”

The district also used the implementation as an opportunity to create a uniform chart of accounts for all schools. Ms. Hardy worked closely with bookkeepers to create one consolidated chart of accounts prior to implementation and training. Now incorporated into SchoolCash Management, the uniform chart of accounts provides greater data granularity and automated reconciliations. For example, funds collected from a book fair are now allocated to specific accounts instead of a single, catch-all library account.

“Now that we have data to measure success, we can identify superior performance and try to understand the practices that achieved this result,” explained Ms. Hardy. “This allows us to establish best practices and benchmarks

so we can replicate this success with other activities across the district.”

These insights have elevated the district’s finance department from a transactional function to a strategic one. With the ability to generate reports at a moment’s notice, finance personnel can now engage with key stakeholders to provide relevant data, as well as strategic advice and analysis.

These improvements have made it possible for PCS to achieve cleaner audits and ensure compliance with state guidelines. With the ability to monitor each school’s activity funds daily, Ms. Hardy can identify problems in real-time. And when discrepancies or inaccuracies are flagged, she works with school staff to proactively address issues in advance of monthly reconciliations and audits.

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**Schools in  
the District**

**21**



**Funds Managed  
Annually**

**\$3M**

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— **Amy Hardy**

Financial Analyst, Pittsylvania County Schools



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