



Randolph Township School District Reaps the Benefits of an Integrated Activity Fund Management Solution

The Challenge

With an environment that staff members compared to the 'Wild West', Randolph Township School District needed a solution that would allow them to improve their management of activity funds. Stephen Frost, Business Administrator, experienced firsthand how the District's disparate systems and paper-based processes hindered efficiency.

"Since our data was spread across multiple systems, it was an arduous task to have to pull data, reconcile it, and compile into reports," explained Mr. Frost. "And with our paper-based processes, routine accounting tasks – like check writing – required significant manual effort."

Furthermore, the District's existing online payment solution suffered from poor adoption, meaning that nearly all activity funds were received in the form of cash and checks. This proved to be problematic given the lack of internal controls over cash handling at the school level.

"Our schools were collecting between \$750,000 and \$800,000 each year, which made us uneasy given our limited ability to track and trace each dollar," said Mr. Frost. "This was compounded by the fact that school-level staff did not always follow cash handling best practices. For example, we'd often hear about teachers storing cash in unlocked desk drawers or other unsecured locations."

This lack of visibility also extended to the District's internal spending. "We used a traditional 'honor system' style of expense reimbursement where staff members submitted claims each month. But we had no system to track and manage these claims, resulting in hodgepodge spending and murky audit trails."

Since district-level staff were frequently left in the dark about spending, they could only react after money had already been spent. "Inquiring into a school's finances in the middle of the month often felt like a reconnaissance mission," recalled Mr. Frost. "I'd have to devote significant time sorting through volumes of paper and manually matching transactional data between the paper files and our accounting system."

ABOUT RANDOLPH TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

Nestled in the hills of central Morris County in northern New Jersey, the Randolph Township School District serves more than 4,300 students from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade in six schools: Center Grove, Fernbrook, Ironia, and Shongum elementary schools, as well as Randolph Middle School and Randolph High School.

To overcome these challenges, the District sought a comprehensive activity management solution that would automate paper-based processes and remove the burden of maintaining multiple systems, while also offering seamless integration between school-level accounting and online payments. After an intensive review of available offerings, the District selected KEV Group's SchoolCash platform.

Results

The District implemented SchoolCash during the 2019/2020 school year. The timing of the implementation proved to be fortuitous as it allowed the District to capitalize on the COVID-fueled surge in demand for contactless payments.

As a result, the District's online payment adoption has grown to an impressive 80%. However, the high level of adoption cannot be attributed to the pandemic alone. The District also credits its outreach efforts during parent-teacher conferences, as well as SchoolCash's integration with MealManage – online meal program management software – as major drivers of online payment adoption. SchoolCash's auto-subscribe feature also proved to be a significant driver.

"The auto-subscribe feature leverages the existing integration with our student information system to automatically set up parent/guardian accounts in SchoolCash Online," explained Mr. Frost. "By simply enabling this feature, we were able to immediately boost our adoption rate by 20%."

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Further, the District leveraged SchoolCash's district-level fee capabilities to introduce a laptop insurance fee to recoup the cost of extended warranties as part of its 1:1 student device program. The insurance initiative has achieved early success with almost 800 payments being submitted for a total of approximately \$20,000.

High adoption has allowed the District to significantly reduce cash-handling costs and minimize labor-intensive tasks. This was evident in 2020 when thousands of refunds were issued after COVID restrictions forced the cancellation of school proms.

"Since most prom payments were made online, we processed refunds with just a few clicks using SchoolCash Online," recalled Mr. Frost. "Using our old system, we would have been stuck manually issuing over 2,500 checks, which would have taken eight to nine weeks."

Despite the high adoption rates, some parents/guardians still prefer to pay using cash and checks. However, processing and tracking these payments have been greatly simplified thanks to SchoolCash Register—KEV's virtual point-of-sale solution.

"Even when a student brings cash to school, school-level staff can now digitally record the payment, which is then automatically written to the general ledger," explained Mr. Frost.

These automated capabilities underscore the benefits of an end-to-end solution. "Having all data housed in a single, fully integrated system has provided enhanced visibility over all transactions, including staff expenditures," said Mr. Frost. "Further, SchoolCash has eliminated the need to reconcile multiple systems, which has delivered significant time-savings for our staff."

By the Numbers



K-12 Schools
Served

6



Number of
Students

4,300



Funds Managed
Annually

\$800K+



Online
Adoption Rate

80%

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— **Stephen Frost**

Business Administrator, Randolph Township School District



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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.