

SchoolLinks Innovation Guide

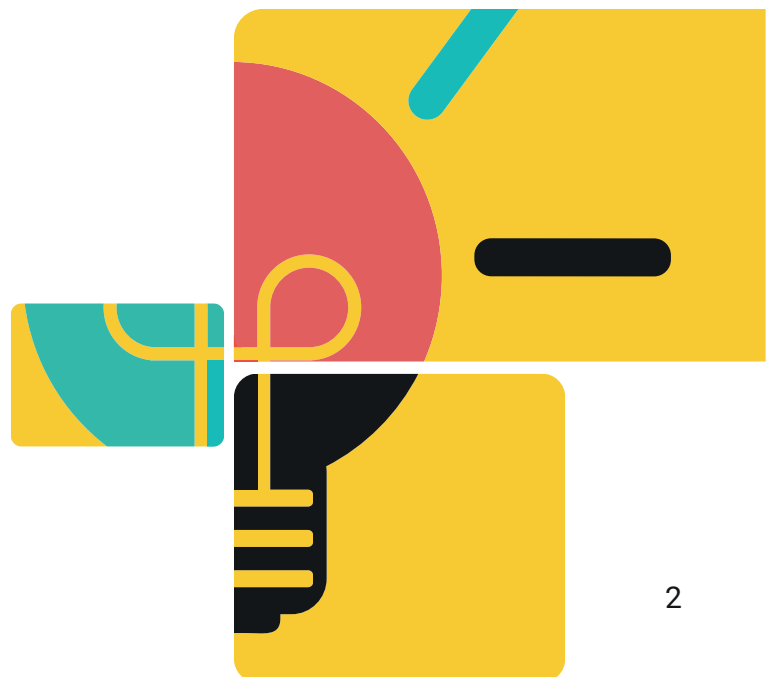
It's Time for Something New



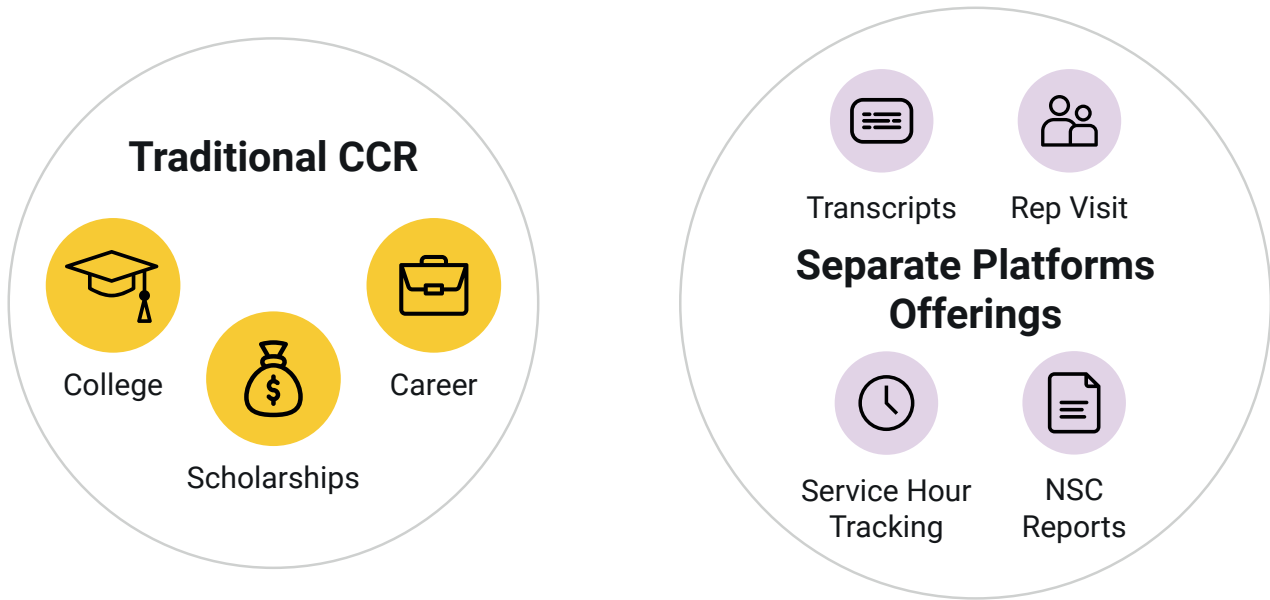
Implementing CCR program standards isn't new — as a school district, you've been doing it for decades. On the other hand, *innovating* a CCR program is a relatively new concept (even though it really shouldn't be).

You know that the world students are graduating into looks a lot different than it did decades ago. You can say the same about the economic, cultural, and social landscape, too. Your student's needs are changing.

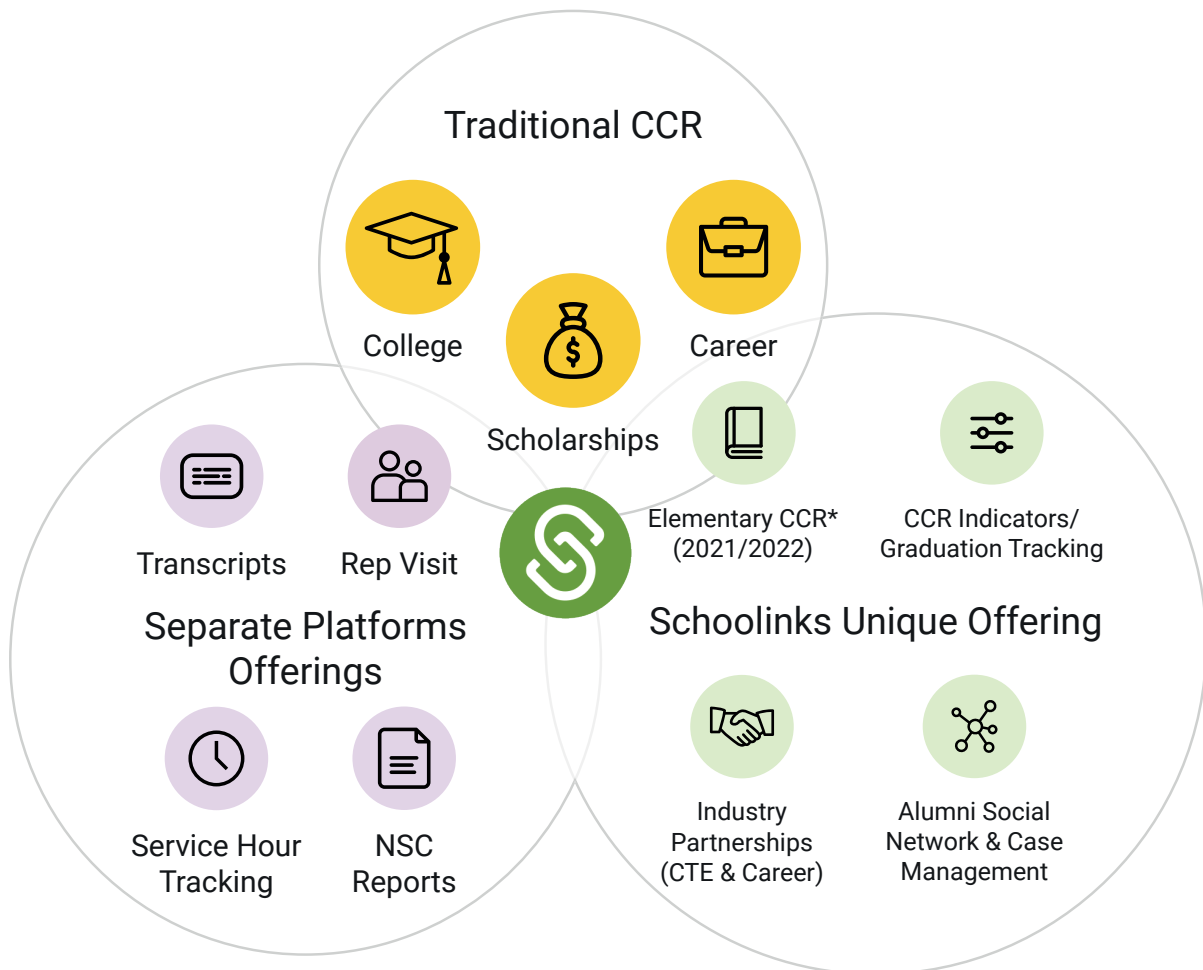
So why hasn't the CCR technology at their fingertips changed alongside them?



The CCR platform you use probably looks a little like this:



When what your students need looks a lot more like this:



WHOLE STUDENT COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

5 Innovations for 2021

01

A ROBUST EXPERIENCE AT ANY AGE

02

TECHNOLOGY THAT REWARDS STUDENT OWNERSHIP

03

A BROADER FOCUS THAT SEES EVERY OUTCOME AS WORTHWHILE

04

CREATING INTER-MUTUAL BENEFITS BETWEEN COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND STUDENTS

05

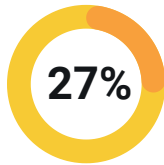
TURNING COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES INTO MEANINGFUL, ACTIONABLE DATA

A ROBUST EXPERIENCE AT ANY AGE

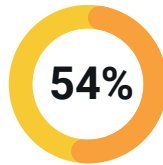
01

College and career readiness is a marathon, not a sprint. But for some reason, educators, counselors, and students are all expected to work within a short window of 4-6 years to create an outcome that's actually the result of an entire lifetime of factors and experiences.

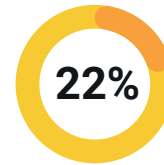
When school districts add an SEL program to their curriculum, they see, on average:



More students with positive academic outcome



Increase in skill level gains



Less students with fewer conduct problems

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A return of \$11 for every \$1 spent on SEL programming

An innovative CCR program reflects that reality. It begins in Kindergarten and extends beyond graduation day. Developmentally appropriate SEL programs lay the foundation for positive outcomes throughout students' primary and secondary education experiences, while alumni engagement opens up opportunities for meaningful representation and community networking.

INNOVATE WITH SCHOOLINKS

Connecting both to a traditional CCR program makes it possible to track historic student outcomes and create continuous improvements for generations to come.



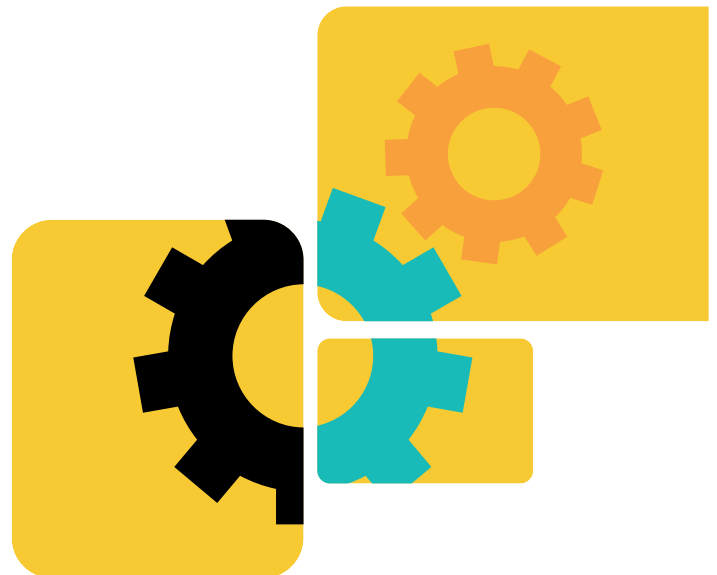
SchoolLinks is the first CCR that begins in Kindergarten with SEL programming.



Developed by educators and interventionists.



It also takes alumni relations out of siloes and spreadsheet labyrinths by providing networking and engagement portals all within the same CCR platform.



TECHNOLOGY THAT REWARDS STUDENT OWNERSHIP

02

When CCR initiatives feel like drudgery, that's how students will treat them. Students can't benefit from programs if they see those programs as barely tolerable busywork at best and something to be dreaded — and therefore ignored — at worst. Just because something should be taken seriously doesn't mean it has to be colorless or tedious to navigate.

96%

of students reported gamification in education technology increased their interest and skill acquisition in goal achievement activities.

No one looks forward to filing their taxes, but the technology we've come to take for granted has at least made the process easy to follow and understand. If the only available option were a piece of scratch paper and a complicated IRS form, barely anyone would be able to stand it at all.

But that's what most CCR platforms expect of the students they're meant to serve. Planning for the future can be exciting, so why not get kids excited about it? An innovative program serves up an engaging user experience that's engaging and familiar enough to make the process of choosing a path accessible and — dare we say it — fun to do.

INNOVATE WITH SCHOOLINKS

Imagine a scenario where you aren't forced to drag students into experiences that don't resonate with them. Innovation makes that scenario possible, and it's one where those same students seek out opportunities to explore even more about what interests and excites them – all on their own.



SchoolLinks' interface mimics the experience students have come to expect from the apps and technology they use every day.



A BROADER FOCUS THAT SEES EVERY OUTCOME AS WORTHWHILE

03

Traditionally, enrollment and graduation from a four-year college or university have been considered the gold standard in positive student outcomes. Over time, that focus has narrowed even further to accommodate the concept of "prestige" institutions of higher education. CCR platforms have come to reflect the narrowness of that desired outcome.

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Over 30 million jobs that don't require a college education pay \$55K or more a year

For some students, chasing (and attaining) an Ivy League education is the perfect pathway. Others might require a more nuanced approach to finding a college that will fit their skills and desired outcome just right. Then there are the groups that might benefit from an advanced Associate's degree through an early college high school program followed by professional certification. And what about the students who have their sights set on a military career? How about those who have the work ethic to pursue training in skilled labor fields right after graduation, bringing their much-needed expertise to companies like Tesla and industries like healthcare and construction?

Each of them deserves the same kind of attention, preparation, and guidance. Innovating CCR within a school district means prioritizing this kind of equity.

INNOVATE WITH SCHOOLINKS

There are near-infinite possible combinations of education, training, and work experience to meet students where they are and help them where they want to go. CCR tools and tech should reflect that.



Equitable experiences are something we've codified directly into the experience we provide.



We don't create a hierarchy of desired outcomes and expect students to conform to them.



Instead, we work from the beginning to understand students as individuals, destigmatize pathways that don't focus on college and consider the entire spectrum of possible experiences, including military enlistment.



INTER MUTUAL BENEFITS BETWEEN COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND STUDENTS

04

Positive outcomes, no matter which path leads to them, require more than just students' investment to come to fruition. Enlisting community members' expertise – whether they are potential employers or college representatives – is a critical step along all of those paths. Whether it's a matter of supplying talent or cultivating a better understanding of what rising first-year college students are looking for in a school, industry and education partners have a lot to gain from participating in college and career readiness.

Innovative programs recognize that these relationships are inter mutual and remove hurdles that stand in the way of cultivating them. That means having access to a place to interact and opening up channels that facilitate communication. It means giving community partners a place to speak directly to the students they need to reach to use on their own terms.

INNOVATE WITH SCHOOLINKS

Creating events — and tracking associated interest, attendance, and feedback should be simple for partners and district stakeholders.



Industry partners in your own community can connect directly with students via selfie videos and Q&As.



While college reps can create meaningful connections by coordinating visits directly on the platform.



Work with both to create events like FAFSA nights, information sessions, and job fairs — all on the same platform.



TURNING COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES INTO ACTIONABLE DATA

05

Compliance activities are in place to keep students from falling through the cracks. Sometimes, they create a paradox instead. Guidance counselors and educators, a powerful force in better student outcomes, often have to function as data entry clerks instead of applying their expertise where it's needed most, and students fall through the cracks anyway. If both could operate in tandem instead of opposition, maybe the "cracks" we hope to keep students away from could shrink significantly.

Innovating CCR to make compliance measurement easy – and to generate robust data in real-time as students move through activities – prioritizes student outcomes over ticking a set of boxes.

INNOVATE WITH SCHOOLINKS



As students complete assessments and learning modules in SchoolLinks, counselors can track their real-time progress.



See a caseload snapshot, or drill down by school, grade, or to the individual student level.



Early intervention? Easy.

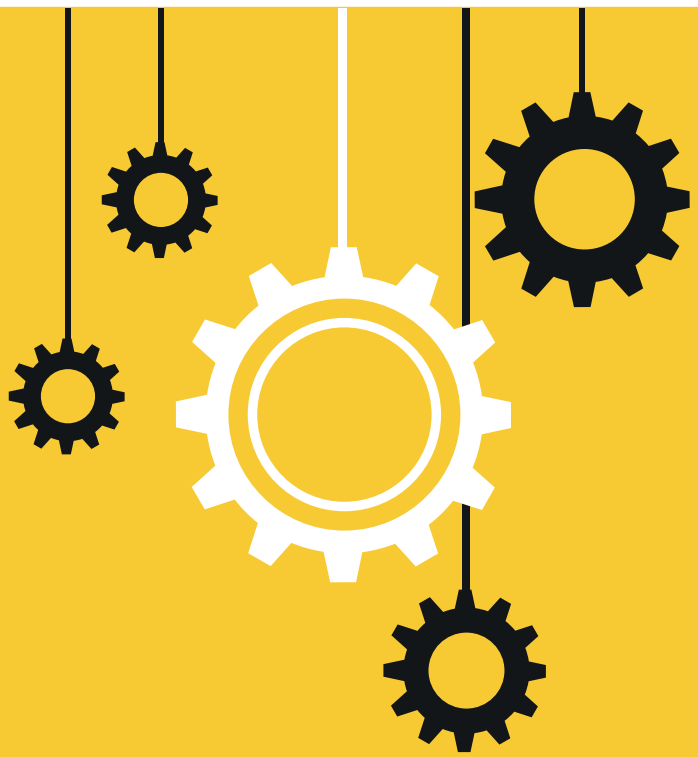


Historical data tracking? No problem.



Make data work for you, not the other way around.





ABOUT SCHOOLINKS

SchoolLinks is a modern college and career platform on a mission to help school districts innovate to meet student needs and drive better outcomes.

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The difference is in our all-in-one, equitable platform built for student engagement, community building, and counselor utility.

Book a demo today to see how innovating with SchoolLinks can change the way you, your students, their families, and your community work to prepare the next generation of thinkers, doers, and changemakers.

<https://why.schoolinks.com/demo-request>

