



## CASE STUDY

# Transforming Student Outcomes: How SchoolStatus Became Prince William County's Educational Game Changer

Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS), the second-largest school district in Virginia, boasts a student population exceeding 92,000 across 100 schools and centers. In their pursuit to provide students with top-notch learning resources and equip educators with effective tools, AJ Phillips, Director of Information Technology Services, and Matt Guilfoyle, the district's Chief Information Officer (CIO), play pivotal roles.

After evaluating multiple unreliable tools for school-home communication, AJ and Matt turned to SchoolStatus to help improve family communication and prevent chronic absenteeism. SchoolStatus's unified solutions empower effective communication, collaboration, and family engagement, transforming the educational experience.



### Challenge

Empowering District-Wide  
Communication and  
Attendance Management



### District Size

92,000 students



### Products Used

SchoolStatus Attend &  
SchoolStatus Connect



## Navigating Challenges and Seizing Opportunities

When Mr. Guilfoyle took the helm four years ago, the district was challenged with scattered data, disjointed communication strategies, and chronic absenteeism.

"We didn't have a strong plan," he admitted. Chronic absenteeism rates were as high as 40% in some schools. This problem, especially prevalent among Hispanic students and families below the poverty line, was rooted in communication. Mr. Guilfoyle emphasized, "It's really a family messaging issue."

What they needed was a solution that would enable them to swiftly detect, address, and communicate about student patterns, from day-to-day issues to supporting at-risk students. Mr. Guilfoyle's search for a solution led him to SchoolStatus.

## SchoolStatus Connect & Attend: A Dynamic Duo

With integrated student data, analytics, two-way communication tools, and an attendance management system, SchoolStatus was a game-changer for PWCS.

One essential feature was SchoolStatus Connect's two-way auto-translation capability, a lifeline for PWCS, where 40% of students are English Learners. **"Our staff predominantly speaks English, and that was a barrier to connecting with our families,"** noted Mr. Guilfoyle.



With SchoolStatus Connect's single-screen Student Card, educators can see all the data they need to communicate effectively about student progress. From this screen, they can effortlessly exchange messages with families in their preferred language and through their preferred channel, whether by text, phone, video call, or email, greatly improving their ability to reach every family and support every student. School administrators can see a record of all communication with families and view recordings to monitor and intervene when necessary.

After a successful pilot phase, PWCS fully embraced SchoolStatus Connect, complemented by SchoolStatus Attend. **"I really liked how they had the data piece, the IT piece, and the student information directly connected to messaging,"** noted Mr. Guilfoyle.



**"One of the things I always talk about is that for 55 years we have been sending a newsletter home and that's not true engagement."**

**"SchoolStatus allows us to use the data to target and communicate directly to families."**

**—Mr. Guilfoyle**



By using both SchoolStatus Connect and SchoolStatus Attend, PWCS fostered direct connections between student information, messaging, and family engagement. They were able to set up automatic interventions for chronically absent students focusing on the positive benefits of consistent school attendance. Critically, these communications arrived in families' preferred languages, a pivotal approach in a diverse environment where translation was indispensable.

**PWCS saw improvement right out of the gate.**

## Immediate Impact and Achieving Goals

1

### Reduced Chronic Absenteeism:

SchoolStatus Attend played a pivotal role in combating chronic absenteeism. Within just one quarter, absenteeism stabilized and, in some cases, decreased. Tangible improvements were evident, leaving the district hopeful about positive trends.

2

### Decreased Administrative Burden:

The administrative burden of managing attendance letters was significantly reduced. SchoolStatus removed this overhead, allowing schools to allocate resources more effectively. Ms. Phillips noted,

**"We've taken the attendance letter burden off their plate."**

3

### Positive User Feedback:

Educators and staff enthusiastically embraced the new tools. They appreciated access to data-driven insights, customizable reports, dashboards, and communication with specific groups and subgroups.

**"People love the tools. The data and the ability to create groups have been well-received,"** said Ms. Phillips. The SchoolStatus team's responsiveness in addressing any issues further bolstered their satisfaction.

4

### Enhanced Data Utilization:

SchoolStatus streamlined access to reliable data for at-risk students. This ready access empowered educators to make informed decisions at the individual student, school segment, and overall strategy levels. **"We're excited to delve deeper into data functionality, especially our principals,"** noted Ms. Phillips.

## A Bright Future Ahead

By partnering with SchoolStatus, Prince William County believes they're on the path to overcoming previous challenges, resulting in improved engagement, reduced absenteeism, and more efficient administrative processes. Leveraging data and effective two-way communication to drive family engagement is the key to enhancing student outcomes.

Mr. Guilfoyle concluded, **"With the tools in place from day one, we're set to begin the year on the right foot. It's a shared focus for our entire district."**

## Continue the Conversation

SchoolStatus empowers your district to forge meaningful relationships between administrators, your educational staff, and your students' families. Contact our team to see how SchoolStatus can help your district achieve its goals.

[Request a Demo](#)

