

Infinite Campus + Schoology

Q & A with Ray Coffey, Director of Technology

The implementation of Schoology for the 2015-16 school year has resulted in some great questions. We sat down with the district's Director of Technology Ray Coffey, to address the functionality and necessity of each software package. And how, together, they are creating a brand new way to teach, learn and share information.

Q. Why do we need Schoology when we already have Infinite Campus?

A. Infinite Campus is the Student Information System our district has used for many years. Unfortunately, it doesn't offer the full range of features we wanted to provide our faculty, students and parents. To fill in the gaps, we purchased Schoology, a Learning Management System (LMS). Each system offers features the other doesn't. Unfortunately, they will not talk to each other, for instance, information from Schoology cannot be automatically put into Infinite Campus.

Q. What does Schoology do that Infinite Campus can't?

A. Schoology is a Learning Management System that connects students, faculty and parents in an innovative way. It has everything needed for faculty and students to teach, learn, grade, communicate and share—with each other and parents—around the clock. There is a long list of unique features with Schoology:

- A simple user interface, similar to Facebook, for parents to monitor student assignments, due dates, grades and academic progress
- Makes facilitation of group projects easier
- Teachers can create interactive lessons on any device
- Allows teachers to easily share files with students and vice-versa
- Increases collaboration among students in the classroom
- Provides teachers with additional ways to assess student learning
- Allows teachers to provide discreet feedback

Infinite Campus tracks daily attendance and stores all permanent student information, such as demographic information, as well as midterm, quarter and semester grades, and much more. It does not offer the daily detail and interactivity/collaboration tools Schoology offers. At the same time, Schoology does not have the capacity to store permanent academic records. That's why both software products are necessary.

Q. How does Schoology improve the student experience?

A. Schoology enables learning and teaching to continue outside the classroom—long after the last bell rings. Using Schoology's online collaboration tool, faculty can continue to interact with both students and parents outside regular school hours. Faculty and students can have online discussions about assignments, and students can ask questions or request help if they're struggling. Parents are also able to ask questions or post comments about their student's progress. This type of connectivity is what our students will experience in college and the workplace. By enhancing our Digital Learning Environment (DLE), we're giving our students an advantage. We're helping them get familiar and comfortable with the technology they'll use after they graduate from IHS.

Q. Who was involved in selecting Schoology software?

A. The faculty approached the IHS administration with the request for this type of software. They recognized the benefits of an LMS right away and wanted to provide greater accessibility to our students. This is just one example of how committed our teachers are to making sure students are exposed to technology and capable of using it in the classroom and out. Our teachers wanted to empower students to be more active learners, interacting and collaborating more with faculty and each other. We performed demos for a variety of different LMS software products. Ultimately, the faculty selected Schoology.

Q. Who do I talk to if I have questions about Schoology?

A. Start with the teacher if your question is specific to a course. For broader questions, you may contact Craig Calhoun, Justin Gilkerson or Ali Sauter.

Q. How can I access my student's information in Schoology?

A. You can access Schoology by logging into the Schoology Parent Portal. Go to <https://www.schoology.com>, click on the "Sign Up" button at the top right of the page, click on the "Parent" button, and then enter your unique access code. If you do not have your unique access code, call Justin Gilkerson at 515-961-9500 ext.2511. To learn more about how to use Schoology as a parent, please check out a video by visiting <https://youtu.be/88b0Zcy-Mjw> or <http://tinyurl.com/SchoologyParentVid>. You can also find parent user guides at <https://goo.gl/0eLZur> or <http://tinyurl.com/Schoology4Parents>.

If you do not have an **Infinite Campus Parent Portal** account, please request one at <http://tinyurl.com/ICSDParentPortalRequest> or <http://goo.gl/peOqJV>.

As with any new software implementation of this scale, there is always a learning curve and a period of time required to work out the kinks. After a few months of using Schoology, we're finally starting to feel like we've moved beyond the initial issues. Thanks you for your patience as we work through the Schoology implementation process.