



PROCARE SOLUTIONS CASE STUDY:

For Berkeley County School District, Procure Makes the Grade—in Efficiencies and Experiences

What began as a way to improve the billing process for Berkeley County School District's after school programs has dramatically boosted operational efficiencies and experiences for students, parents and staff. That's an extra-credit-worthy result under any circumstance. But amid a pandemic, the simplicity, control and peace of mind the Procure solution delivers may merit an automatic A+.

Berkeley County School District, South Carolina's fourth-largest school district, operates 22 unique after school programs based on the needs of 20 elementary and two middle schools. Until this year, program directors relied on disparate, manual systems for registration, check-in and check-out, attendance tracking, payment and parent communications.

Using spreadsheets and paper, processes were inefficient, subject to human error and delivered experiences that left much to be desired.

A New (and Improved) School Year

Since its July rollout—in time for the start of the district’s first post-pandemic new school year—Procare’s out-of-school time management software has quickly transformed the after school program’s previously high-touch manual processes. And at a time when anxiety is sky-high and change is constant, the software has meant operational efficiency improvements, safer processes, more staff time to focus on student needs and better parent experiences.

Kristina Brooks, the district’s child care program manager, advocated for the Procure solution. After years in financial and administrative roles in Berkeley County schools, she saw the need for greater accountability in the after school programs’ billing processes. As a parent who had two children in the program and one entering next year, Kristina was intimately aware of how manual processes were falling short.

From paper sign-in sheets to only accepting check and cash payments at most schools, the processes not only lacked financial accountability, but also, they were time-intensive for school bookkeepers and program staff. Parents couldn’t easily track their children’s attendance, communicate with staff, make online payments, or social distance when signing students in or out. Procure changed all that.

“Parents love it, we had no problems training staff and it saves steps for the bookkeepers,” Kristina says. Here’s why:

Convenient and Secure Online Registration and Payment

Parents now register students online and payment is electronic—streamlined and automated through Procure’s easy-to-use mobile app.

The automated processes have eliminated steps for the schools’ bookkeepers, who previously had to manually enter each payment. With Procure, payments go directly into the schools’ bank account and can be entered into the accounting system in a single batch.

Because payments are made through the app, staff spends less time handling payment on-site and more time focused on direct student care. In many cases, on-time payment increases when automated, and delinquency communications decrease. So does bad debt.

“It also keeps it private,” Kristina explains. “There aren’t payment conversations in front of other parents, which makes it a better experience for everyone.”



Easy to Use and Helpful Support

All program staff—with varied experience and comfort levels with technology—were trained before the start of the new school year, and every school was up and running quickly.

“It’s very user-friendly,” Kristina says. “I didn’t have complaints from anyone, and when I do have to call, the support is amazing. Questions are answered quickly, they know our system, and feedback and suggestions are taken.”

Safe, Contactless Check-in and Check-out

Procure’s contactless check-in and check-out addresses social distancing concerns. Parents can now use their smartphones to check their kids in and out with QR codes or GPS technology. Students’ movements are tracked, and health checks and attendance monitoring are simple. Everyone stays healthy, and the process is efficient, so staff can spend more time with the children in their care.

“Parents have appreciated the contactless process for health reasons, but it’s also convenient and takes less time for staff,” Kristina explains.

The QR codes are posted on a stand outside the school buildings for scanning. Staff can see arriving parents, who never have to enter the building.

Better Parent Communication When Peace of Mind Is Critical

A parent portal and mobile app elevate communication. Communication with parents during after school hours had been a challenge because school phones were turned off. Now parents can easily message staff through the Procure app.

“It makes it so much easier for everyone,” Kristina says. And while that kind of communication is always important, control, convenience and peace of mind are critical during these highly uncertain times.



Well-timed and Ready for What's Next

Last year, when Kristina lobbied for a new billing system for the district's after school programs, she wanted to bring greater accountability to the process. She anticipated some operational efficiencies would come with the automation. What no one expected, though, was a pandemic and its unprecedented effects on the district, students and families.

The well-timed implementation is delivering efficiency and experience improvements that have never been more important. Automation, innovative self-service and contactless processes, and better communication and engagement have delivered the foundation necessary for the district to handle what's ahead—this school year and for many grading periods to come.

Talk to a Procure expert to learn how you can take the hassle out of running your after school program.

Visit www.procaresoftware.com to learn how you can leverage Procure to manage every aspect of your child care business, enrich classroom and parent interactions, and automate the payment process.

