

CASE STUDY

How **mobile point of sale** helped Opelika City Schools boost concession and fundraising revenue

THE OPELIKA CENTER
FOR THE
PERFORMING ARTS

OPELIKA HIGH SCHOOL

THE CHALLENGE

Career tech and athletics needed modern tools

With Opelika City Schools' career tech center preparing to take its student-run food truck to a downtown Christmas market and basketball season right around the corner, Director of Finance Cody Patterson joined a discovery call with Givebacks knowing **his district needed a solution fast.**

"Our culinary arts program needed a credit card reader to sell food from their truck at the market," Patterson said. "Meanwhile, the basketball coach also wanted a credit card reader ready for the upcoming season. There was a lot going on."

Then he laid out the timeline: Givebacks had 10 days to make it happen.

Within that timeframe, **Givebacks helped Opelika City Schools launch a new mobile point-of-sale system in time for both the Christmas market and basketball season.** Culinary arts students were able to accept card payments at the downtown event, and concession stands were ready to process digital payments when students returned from winter break.

What started as an urgent rollout quickly became part of **a larger effort to modernize fundraising and increase revenue opportunities across Opelika City Schools.**



Opelika High School's Career Tech Culinary Program

Courtesy: Opelika City Schools



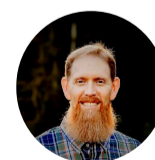
Courtesy: Opelika City Schools

Turning concession stands into revenue opportunities

Opelika City Schools serves ~5,200 students across nine schools in Opelika, Alabama. Like many Alabama districts, athletics play a major role in school culture and fundraising.

"Athletics in Alabama is a big deal," Patterson said. "That's the bulk of the fundraising too."

Before Givebacks, coaches and volunteers relied on cash-based concession sales and fundraising, while bookkeepers manually counted and deposited funds after events—a time-consuming process that also limited revenue opportunities.



Cody Patterson

Director of Finance,
Opelika City Schools

"Givebacks has allowed for other opportunities to make sales that we didn't have before."

“You’re depending on volunteers, sometimes parents, sometimes workers, sometimes students to work concession stands and handle cash,” Patterson said. “Bookkeepers often had to stop and restart counting throughout the day while balancing other responsibilities.”

More importantly, Patterson realized cash-only operations were limiting fundraising potential.

By introducing mobile point of sale devices and Tap to Pay functionality, Opelika City Schools made it easier for families and community members to support at concession stands, school events, and fundraising activities.

“We’ve reduced cash flowing from hand to hand to the bookkeeper to be deposited into the account,” Patterson said.



Courtesy: Opelika City Schools

Results

- Expanded fundraising opportunities
- Reduced reliance on cash handling across athletics and school events
- Improved financial visibility with account-level tracking and reporting

“Givebacks has allowed for other opportunities to make sales that we didn’t have before,” Patterson said.

Softball concession revenue increase from 2024-2025 **+ 355%**

Baseball concession revenue in 2026 **\$15,000+**

Year-over-year increase in baseball concession sales **70%**

Expanding opportunities across the district

What began with athletics quickly expanded into other programs across Opelika City Schools.

Today, multiple departments use Givebacks to support sales, payments, and fundraising activities.

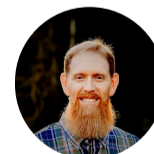
The culinary arts department uses Givebacks Point of Sale for its student-run food truck and mobile coffee cart, while the horticulture department accepts card payments during its annual plant sale. The district also uses Givebacks to collect after-school care payments and **plans to transition those transactions into Givebacks' student fees solution.**

For Patterson, the ability to track every transaction while scaling at the district's own pace was key.

“We needed the ability to tag and track every dollar with an account code,” he said. “I told Givebacks if you can make this successful, we'll expand on it. And we are.”

As he prepares to transition into the CFO role, Patterson sees modernization as part of his lasting impact on the district.

“Being able to make positive changes in the school system has been fun and exciting,” he said. “For me, that means giving bookkeepers options. It doesn't have to be the same old manual way.”



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