Student Email Update

Presented to CEC Wed., May 10, 2023

Earnest Phillips, Andrew Svec

Seattle Colleges'
student email environment
is multifaceted and complex.

Key Acknowledgements

- No one chose or intended to have a complex system. It is the result of legacy issues, external mandates, and valid policy decisions.

- Seattle Colleges has worked diligently to adopt and use to the tools we have for communicating with students.

- Some students may have more difficulty adapting to our system than "digital natives" (typically younger English-speaking students who grew up with technology).

- Kudos to IT for its continued work on streamlining and simplifying system logins within MySeattleColleges.

Currently at Seattle Colleges

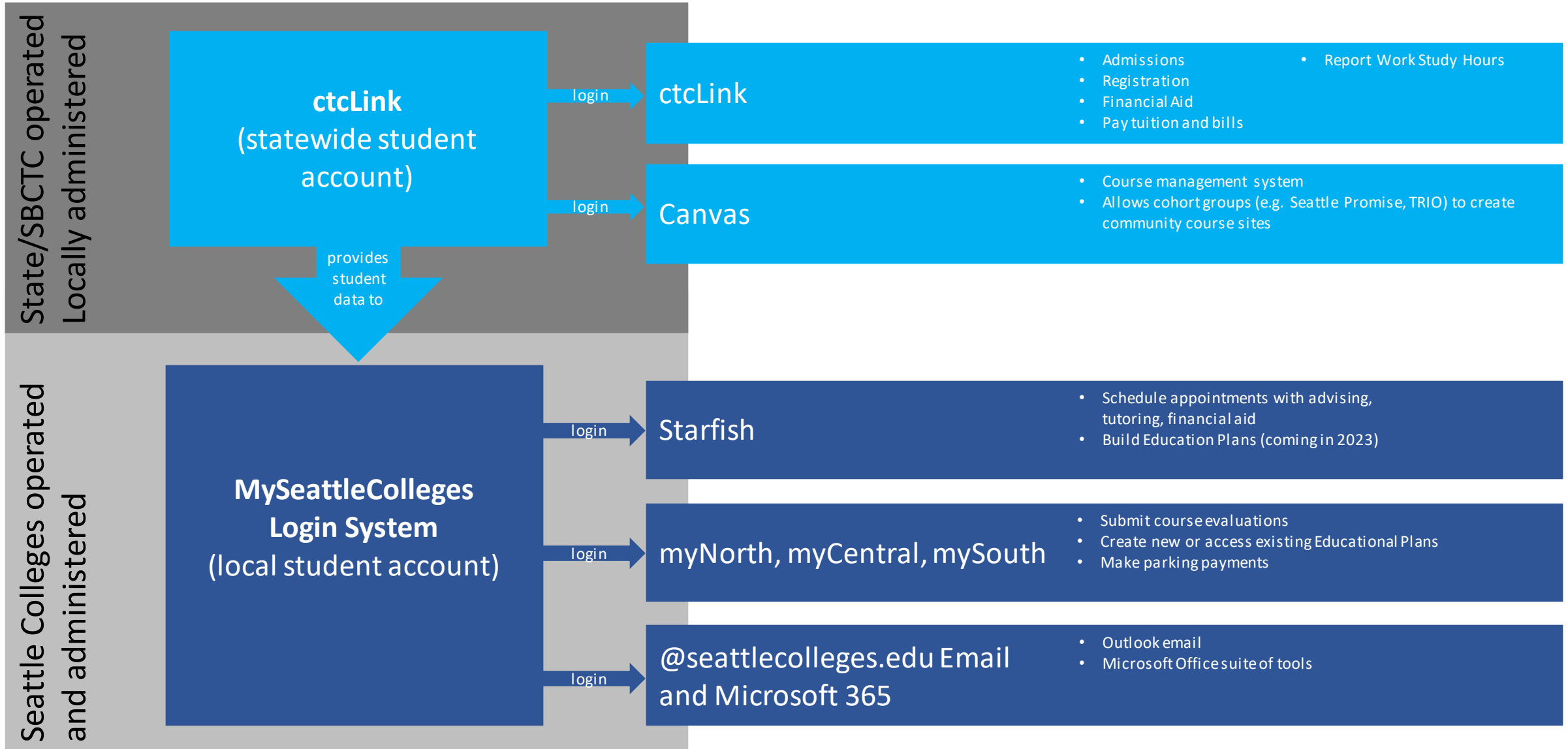Official college email comes to students from multiple systems:

- **Azorus CRM** (prospective students, Seattle Promise scholars)
- **ctcLink** (admissions, financial aid, payment and registration info)
- **Direct email messages** (sent from district, college, and dept. levels)
- **Starfish** (advising, tutoring, education planning)
- **Canvas** (course related)
- **Rave** (emergency messages)
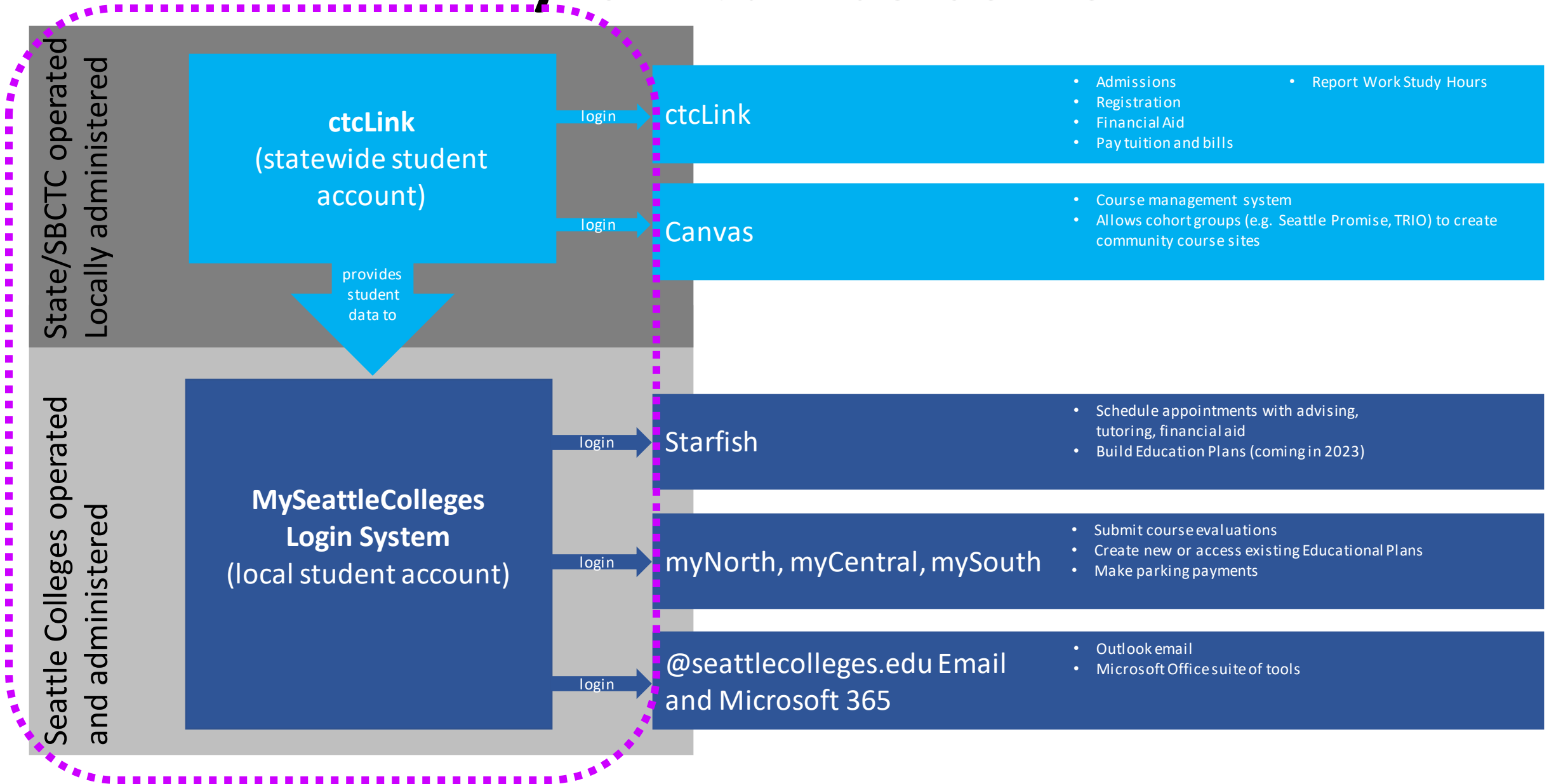
Why is it cumbersome?

Each of these systems:

- Sends email
- Interacts with email
- Or uses email as login

Why is it cumbersome?

State/SBCTC operated
Locally administered

ctcLink
(statewide student account)

login → ctcLink
- Admissions
- Registration
- Financial Aid
- Pay tuition and bills
- Report Work Study Hours

login → Canvas
- Course management system
- Allows cohort groups (e.g. Seattle Promise, TRIO) to create community course sites

provides student data to

Seattle Colleges operated and administered

MySeattleColleges Login System
(local student account)

login → Starfish
- Schedule appointments with advising, tutoring, financial aid
- Build Education Plans (coming in 2023)

login → myNorth, myCentral, mySouth
- Submit course evaluations
- Create new or access existing Educational Plans
- Make parking payments

login → @seattlecolleges.edu Email and Microsoft 365
- Outlook email
- Microsoft Office suite of tools

Why is it cumbersome?

ctcLink
(statewide student account)

ctcLink →
login →

Canvas →
login →

provides student data to ↓

- Admissions
- Registration
- Financial Aid
- Pay tuition and bills
- Report Work Study Hours

- Course management system
- Allows cohort groups (e.g. Seattle Promise, TRIO) to create community course sites

MySeattleColleges Login System
(local student account)

Starfish →
login →

myNorth, myCentral, mySouth →
login →

@seattlecolleges.edu Email and Microsoft 365 →
login →

- Schedule appointments with advising, tutoring, financial aid
- Build Education Plans (coming in 2023)

- Submit course evaluations
- Create new or access existing Educational Plans
- Make parking payments

- Outlook email
- Microsoft Office suite of tools

Key Takeaway #1:

Seattle Colleges has two major login systems:
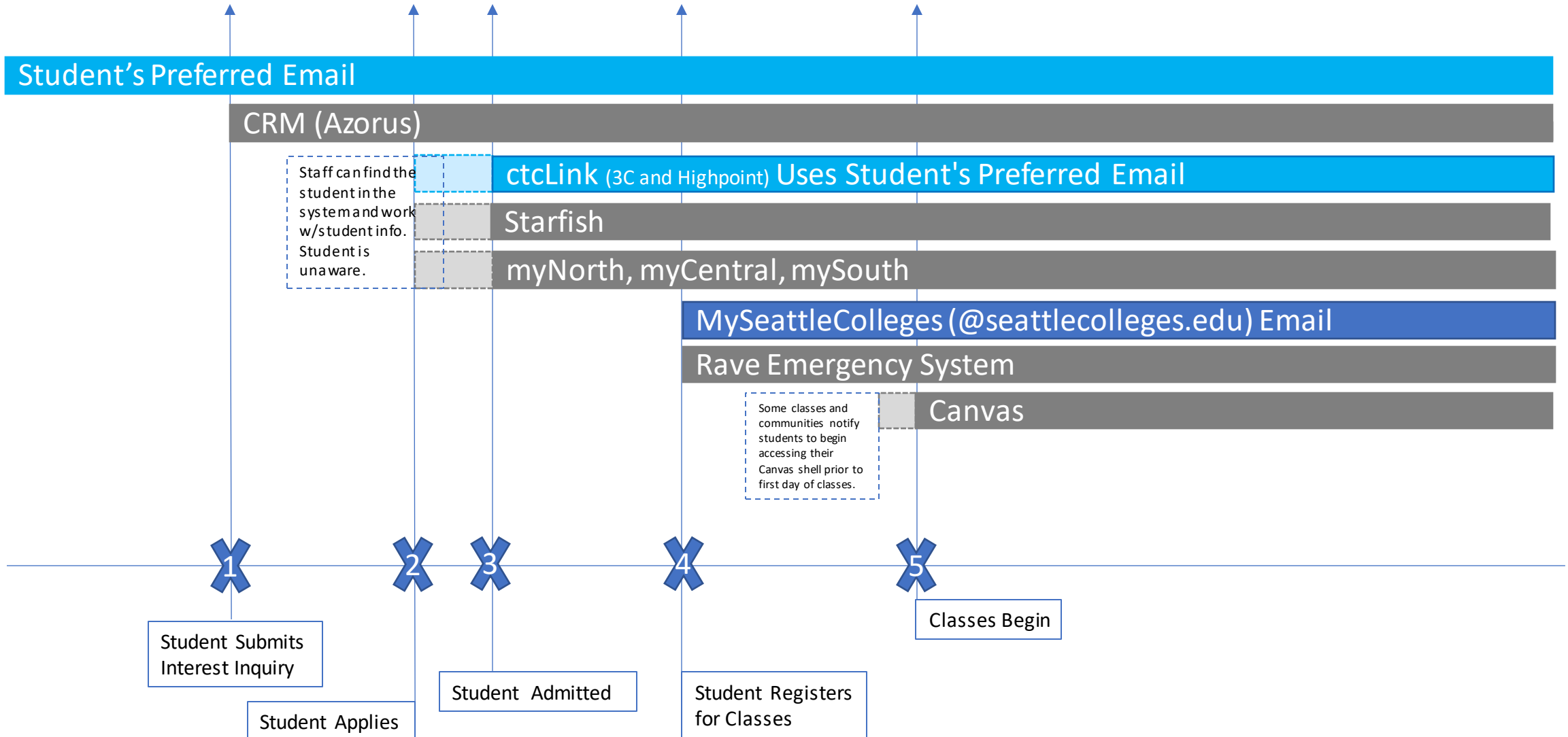- ctcLink (ctcLink ID)
- MySeattleColleges (@seattlecolleges.edu)

Currently at Seattle Colleges

- Students apply for admission through the SBCTC application tied to ctcLink.

- When they are admitted, they are asked to activate their ctcLink account.

- The preferred personal email they set in ctcLink is used to communicate with them through their admissions and enrollment process.

- Once they register for classes, they are assigned a MySeattleColleges (@seattlecolleges.edu) email account.
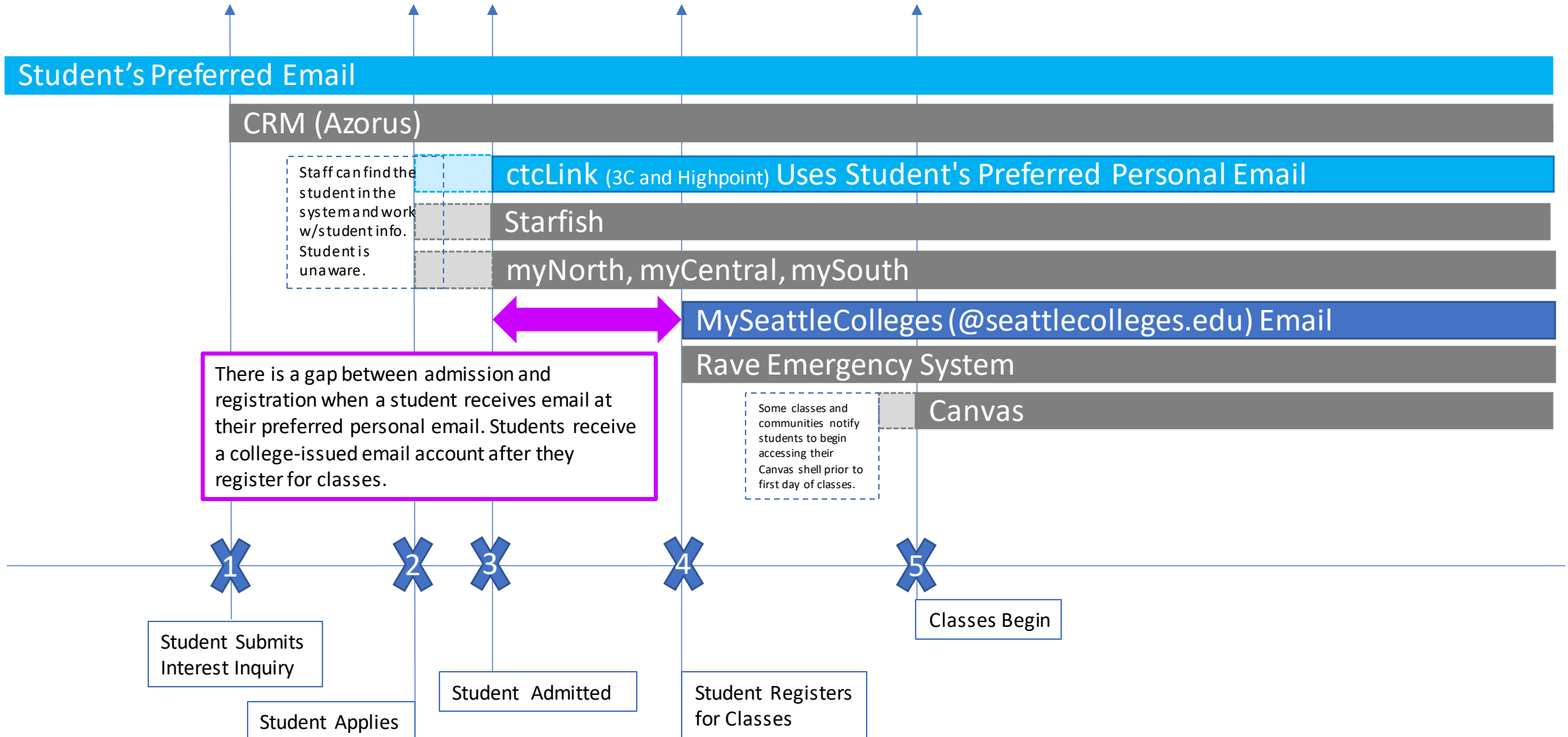
Email Timeline

For a typical student attending Seattle Colleges

Student's Preferred Email

CRM (Azorus)

Staff can find the student in the system and work w/student info. Student is unaware.

ctcLink (3C and Highpoint) Uses Student's Preferred Email

Starfish

myNorth, myCentral, mySouth

MySeattleColleges (@seattlecolleges.edu) Email

Rave Emergency System

Some classes and communities notify students to begin accessing their Canvas shell prior to first day of classes.

Canvas

1 2 3 4 5

Classes Begin

Student Submits Interest Inquiry

Student Applies

Student Admitted

Student Registers for Classes

Email Timeline

For a typical student attending Seattle Colleges

Student's Preferred Email

CRM (Azorus)

Staff can find the student in the system and work w/ student info. Student is unaware.

ctcLink (3C and Highpoint) Uses Student's Preferred Personal Email

Starfish

myNorth, myCentral, mySouth

MySeattleColleges (@seattlecolleges.edu) Email

Rave Emergency System

There is a gap between admission and registration when a student receives email at their preferred personal email. Students receive a college-issued email account after they register for classes.

Some classes and communities notify students to begin accessing their Canvas shell prior to first day of classes.

Canvas

1   2   3   4   5

Classes Begin

Student Submits Interest Inquiry

Student Applies

Student Admitted

Student Registers for Classes

Other reasons why it is cumbersome:
Password requirements are different

ctcLink account password

- Numerical username
- Does NOT require a special character (*&%$@-)
- Does NOT require a change after time
- Activated at admissions point

MySeattleColleges (@seattlecolleges.edu) account password

- First name, last name username
- Requires a special character (*&%$@-)
- Requires a change every 4 months
- Activated after class registration point

Key Takeaway #2:

Seattle Colleges' two login systems:

- Are activated at two different times (ctcLink at admission; MySeattleColleges after registration)

- Have different password requirements

Currently at Seattle Colleges

Official student email is directed to:

- either a student's preferred email address (set in ctcLink)
- or a student's MySeattleColleges (@seattlecolleges.edu) email address
- or both

Systems and Student Email Interaction

For a typical student attending Seattle Colleges

Messages, notifications, and reminders are sent to the following email addresses:

Student's Preferred Email

MySeattleColleges (@seattlecolleges.edu) Email

Emails from Seattle Colleges (district, college)

CRM (Azorus)

ctcLink (3C and Highpoint)

Messages and checklist notices are archived in ctcLink portal and Highpoint message center

Starfish

Messages and "complete task" notices are archived in Starfish message center

Canvas

Messages, class reminders, and notices are archived in Canvas Inbox and Canvas environment

Rave Emergency System

Why is it cumbersome?

Students receive email from different Seattle Colleges systems because:

- A specific system is tied to ctcLink *or* MySeattleColleges.

- A specific system can only send to one primary email, and we have chosen to send to one or the other.

- A specific system allows us to send to two email addresses, and we have decided to send to both to ensure a student receives the message.

If a student doesn't check both, they can miss important information.

Key Takeaway #3:

Students receive official Seattle Colleges email at two addresses:

- Their preferred email (set in ctcLink)
- Their MySeattleColleges email (@seattlecolleges.edu)

Regional Peer Institutions
Official college messages go to:

- **Bellevue College** – college-issued email account

- **Clover Park Technical College** – college-issued email account

- **Edmonds College** – ctcLink preferred email (but students also have college-issued email)

- **Everett Community College** – college-issued email account

- **Green River College** – college-issued email account

- **Highline College** – college-issued email account

- **Pierce College** – college-issued email account

- **Renton Technical College** – college-issued email account

- **Shoreline Community College** – college-issued email account

- **Whatcom Community College** – college-issued email account

Note: students have the option to set forwarding to another email account

Key Takeaway #4:

- Most of our peer colleges have policies that send official email to a student's college-sponsored email address.

The Reality of ctcLink's Preferred Email

- ctcLink allows a student to set their preferred email address and change it at any time.

- All 34 of Washington's CTCs are on the same instance of ctcLink.

- There is no definitive way to ensure @seattlecolleges.edu is set in the college or preferred email fields.

  - There is also a college email that can be set for communications in ctcLink.

  - Students attending two or more colleges may have their preferred email or college email overwritten by the other college.

- One solution is to convince/encourage students to set @seattlecolleges.edu email as their preferred email.

Key Takeaway #5:

- There is no definitive way to ensure @seattlecolleges.edu is set in the preferred or college email fields of ctcLink, and a student can change that at any time.

Key Takeaways:

1. Seattle Colleges has two major login systems:
- CtcLink (ctcLink ID)
- MySeattleColleges (@seattlecolleges.edu)

2. Seattle Colleges' two login systems:
- Are activated at two different times
(ctcLink at admission; MySeattleColleges after registration)
- Have different password requirements

3. Students receive official Seattle Colleges email at two addresses:
- Their preferred email (set in ctcLink)
- Their MySeattleColleges email (@seattlecolleges.edu)

Key Takeaways:

4. Most of our peer colleges have policies that send official email to a student's college-sponsored email address.

5. There is no definitive way to ensure @seattlecolleges.edu is set in the college or preferred email fields of ctcLink, and a student can change that at any time.

Looking Ahead at Solutions

- Removing even one layer of complexity would be helpful and beneficial.

- Being able to send official information to **a singular email account** for each student would gain benefits of consistency, system administration, and potential diagnostics if there are issues.

- Some solutions or mitigation require policy decisions or changes.

- Solutions must consider ctcLink's preferred email field.

Reasons supporting @seattlecolleges email as the default student account

- Avoids issues of multiple student email accounts, inactive, shared, or forgotten accounts

- Eliminates/lessens privacy issues

- Keeps all college-related communications together

- Sets clearly defined expectations for students: "check your seattlecolleges.edu email"

- Makes tracking of messages easier

- Eliminates issues with spam filters

Next Steps

- Determine if additional research, discussion, consensus building is needed

- Decide if/when Seattle Colleges would move to official student communications through @seattlecollege email addresses

- If yes,

  - Address the "gap" between a student's admission and registration for classes and plan for transition to @seattlecolleges email

  - Develop a communications plan for announcing to students

  - Develop a communications campaign to encourage students to set their preferred email field in ctcLink as their @seattlecolleges.edu email address