

CASE STUDY METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Overview

- School district wanted to increase their education reach with virtual learning
- Outfitted each school with mobile carts designed for virtual lessons
- Plans are to increase carts and allow access for more students



Metropolitan School District of Perry Township in Indiana services students throughout a large K-12 school system in over 18 schools.

Randy Middleton, IT Senior Technician for the district, was responsible for researching, development, implementation and maintenance of new technologies. One program that he was working on is the introduction of a distance learning program. Because of budget cuts, Randy was looking for a highly scalable and cost-effective way to implement a distance learning solution that he could manage from a central location. He wanted to easily connect room systems and desktops for a high-quality experience over the Internet.

Action

Each building in the Metropolitan School District of Perry Township has been outfitted with a distance learning endpoint that included a video conferencing system and monitor mounted on a cart so it can easily be moved to different classrooms or offices in a building. Teachers and administrators are able to move the system into their classroom or office and connect to other endpoints for meetings or discussions. Teachers can use the system to bring virtual field trips to their classrooms, or to bring purchased content from the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC) to complement their curriculum.

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RANDY MIDDLETON
IT SENIOR TECHNICIAN

Randy uses Vidyo conferencing to connect VidyoDesktop and their video conferencing systems to centrally connect to content outside of classrooms. "I can't be in every building at once, so I needed a way to manage sessions centrally from my own office. With Vidyo, I'm able to monitor the sessions and make sure everything is going smoothly," said Randy.

Once the cart is in the classroom, Randy is able to remotely make the connection so that the teacher only needs to plug it in and turn it on. Once the session is underway, Randy can silently depart or stay on the call to continue monitoring.

Results

Using distance learning in the classrooms has helped enhance curriculum, even with the budget cuts that so many districts are now facing. And it has helped to reduce travel time and costs because administrators are able to utilize the endpoints for interdepartmental meetings.

Most teachers were welcoming and open to the new system. "There was little resistance to implementation," said Randy, "especially because they know that I'm there remotely to help. It really eases their minds and makes them more open to utilizing the technology. They don't have to learn something new."

Right now, the district averages about one session per day, but it has been as high as seven per day. The goal is to increase the use for the next school year. "We are planning to implement additional end points and other multimedia display technologies in the classroom so I think that will increase usage."

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*RANDY MIDDLETON
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