

ComTec Solutions at Work: Franklin Towne Charter High School

Background

Franklin Towne Charter High School (FTCHS) is a comprehensive high school located in the historic Frankford Arsenal in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The school offers students an academically progressive curriculum supplemented with sound support services. These programs are designed to equip students with an education that encourages personal growth and success. The students benefit from a well-rounded program that encourages not only academic success, but also participation in several extra-curricular activities in sports, clubs and the arts.

Students at FTCHS can expect a safe and structured learning atmosphere that focuses attention on individual needs as well as a high school experience that cultivates tradition and school pride.



The Challenges

As a growing educational facility, it was imperative to provide leading-edge technology to compete at a state-of-the-art level without adding long-term, costly maintenance and upgrades. It was important to build a technology foundation that could be easily expanded, required minimal maintenance and would provide progressive applications to the educators and students.

This facility was expanding across a campus and there was need to add voice technology, data infrastructure and video applications. The core of this project was designing an infrastructure that could support Franklin Towne's current and future growth into multiple buildings over a manageable network. There was an aging

Challenges

- update aging data infrastructure
- build an easily expandable technology foundation
- provide applications that require minimal maintenance

Solutions

- phones: NEC IPS 2000
- wiring: Ortronics/Berk-Tek Enhanced Category 5E and 6 cabling
- security: state-of-the-art DVR

Results

- cost savings with only one network
- cost savings on changes and adds
- enhanced voicemail capabilities
- work-from-home capabilities during weather emergencies
- state-of-the-art call center capabilities for IT Help Desk
- smoothly-operating pure IP test environment

Project Snapshot

phone system in place that served little use to the faculty and could not meet the expansion needs. The data infrastructure was aging and new technology was required.

The Solution

ComTec Systems was chosen to perform technology upgrades for several privately-managed growing education facilities throughout the Philadelphia Area, including the Franklin Towne Charter School. The selection process was based on price, product support and the company's proven capability for servicing the school's technology objectives.

The voice solution selected for FTCHS was the NEC IPS 2000, with their award-winning Remote IP DMR solution. This application provided for unlimited expansion.

sion and would tie in all of FTCHS's existing buildings with the capability of future expansion, all over a single communication platform. This design replaced the need for a separate, costly paging and bell dismissal system while adding convenience, quality and overall ease of maintenance.

The premise cabling solution, Ortronics/Berk-Tek, was implemented as the premise cabling backbone standard. This solution provided enhanced category 5e and 6 cabling throughout the entire campus, consisting of over 1,500 locations. Connecting Franklin Towne's remote facilities was done utilizing Proxim's 10 Meg bridges with built-in Quality of Service (QoS), managing the voice, data, paging and security.

The security solution was a state-of-the-art DVR integrated with strategically placed cameras that included vandal-proof lenses placed in hallways and critical points of vision. All information transmits back to a centralized Digital Video Recording solution which can be administratively viewed throughout the network. Administrators can easily view the activity throughout the entire campus right from their desktops.

Franklin Towne Charter High School also took advantage of video distribution to classroom technology. Innovative Technologies Private Video Distribution solution allows teachers to play media through their television sets as well as select media from a centralized location, providing the highest level of teacher/student interaction and making best use of the educational time while protecting the technology in a secure, manageable, centralized location.

The Results

Franklin Towne Charter School invested almost 1.5 million dollars in new technology, securing itself as a premier, privately-run education institution. The technology platform that has been put in place will allow the expansion of future locations with controlled costs and ease of administration. Teachers and students are able to communicate in the most convenient manner and, with the added surveillance, the environment is now safer and more easily managed.

Each project was carefully designed with the understanding that the investment must be cost-effective,

while delivering top-level performance. The primary focus was to provide students and teachers with useful technology that can enhance the educational process.

Franklin Towne Charter School has been converted into a modern, forward-thinking educational facility by adding unparalleled technology to a sound educational environment. Franklin Towne now offers students privileged applications that will better prepare them for tomorrow's workplace.

“ComTec is considered part of the Franklin Towne family. ComTec's old-fashioned customer service in this ever-evolving technological world has proven to be a winning combination.

Due to a lean IT staff, FTCHS finds it advantageous to utilize ComTec's resources to successfully execute projects that are simply not feasible without ComTec's assistance and expertise. I would highly recommend ComTec to any organization.”

- Timothy Loranger, Jr., Director of Information Technology, Franklin Towne Charter High School
