

Gates Chili Central School District saves time and improves productivity through Voice over IP solutions.

"SMP has helped us move into the twenty-first century with their technical expertise and real-world experience. Anyone can supply the newest technology—but it takes a dedicated partner to really understand and communicate how we can best use that technology to better serve our staff and students. And SMP does just that."

Philip Jay, Sr. Network Engineer, Gates Chili Central School District

SUMMARY

Gates Chili Central School District needed to replace their aging phone system which had long been unsupported and was increasingly hard to find replacement parts for. Realizing that they needed more reliable communications, the district began searching for the right solution. The selected vendor, however, had to not only meet their strict budget, but complete the entire installation of 700 phones within the few short months between school sessions. They turned to SMP for a solution, recommended and implemented a new Cisco-based Voice over IP system. The entire solution was installed on time and on budget, providing new time-saving features such as voicemail-to-email translation and robust conference call capabilities that enabled staff to communicate more efficiently, effectively, and reliably.

GATES CHILI CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Consisting of six separate schools that serve 4,100 students in Western New York, Gates Chili Central School District is dedicated to creating the right conditions for learning for every student. Along with rigorous curriculum and highly qualified staff, Gates Chili offers instructional technology to assist with educating the 21st-century student. Resources available to students and staff include computers in every classroom, computer labs, mobile wireless computer labs, Palm Pilot technology, teacher web sites, and online learning opportunities to help engage students and enrich their education.

On the web: www.gateschili.org



VOIP SYSTEM delivers new efficiency for district communication

CHALLENGE

Covering a 26-square mile area serving nearly 4,100 students in six schools, Gates Chili Central School District has long been dedicated to delivering quality education to its community in Western New York. Like many schools across the state, recession-era budget constraints had cut into the district's ability to fund necessary upgrades to their infrastructure. This included upgrading their analog phone system which ceased to be supported by the manufacturer some years ago. When a technical issue arose or a repair was needed, significant time had to be spent trying to find replacement parts—sometimes not successfully.

Realizing that a more reliable communications system was needed, the district began searching for the right solution. Voice over IP offered many of the new efficiencies and features they were looking for and they were immediately attracted to a solution provided by Cisco, as their network was already Cisco-based.

However, they needed to find a Cisco-certified partner who could not only meet their budget constraints, but complete the entire implementation of 700 phones in the few short months between school sessions. After a robust RFP process, the district identified one partner who had the Cisco expertise they wanted as well as the resources to get the job done on time: SMP.

SOLUTION

The district had worked with SMP before over the course of 17 years, so they were familiar with the engineering skill and real-world experience they could deliver. Of particular note for this project, SMP had recently achieved Master Unified Communications Specialization from Cisco, demonstrating the highest level of enhanced skills and capabilities specifically around designing and implementing sophisticated Cisco Unified Communications and Collaborations solutions—exactly what the district sought.

SMP started by making detailed site surveys of the school buildings as well as conducted interviews with IT staff and key faculty to ensure the solution was exactly what the district needed. They then worked closely with the district to make recommendations on how best to implement the VoIP system within the allotted timeframe, ensuring that it integrated seamlessly with their Cisco environment from day one.

With a methodical plan in place, the implementation proceeded, swapping out the 700 phones in progressive stages across the districts buildings. Each milestone was met on schedule, despite a few challenging hurdles such as a serious car accident that disrupted power to the school campus for an extended period of time.

RESULTS

The cut-over date was achieved as planned and the system was fully operational before the first day of school. This gave SMP the chance to train staff and faculty about the many new, time-saving features that were now available to them. Of specific interest was the voicemail-to-email capability. Since faculty often did not have the opportunity to get to their offices during the school day, voicemail messages would often not be received in a timely manner. By translating voice messages to sound files which were then automatically delivered via email, teachers could now quickly access these messages right from their own personal devices, be it smart-phone or tablet.

In addition, conference calls were now easier than ever to set up and attend, enabling staff and faculty to become more productive in the planning of curriculum and school activities. The district, exceptionally satisfied with the solution, is now looking forward to utilizing more capabilities in the feature set, such as video and security options, to make operations even more efficient in the coming months.

ROCHESTER, NY
1020 John Street
W. Henrietta, NY 14586
585.475.0670
800.934.4790
Fax: 585.475.0909

ALBANY, NY
125 Wolf Rd
Suite 401
Albany, NY 12205
518.435.0800
Fax: 518.435.0808

BURLINGTON, VT
47 Maple Street,
Suite 202
Burlington, VT 05401
800.934.4790
Fax: 585.475.0909

