



The North Broward Preparatory Schools

Building a Next-Generation Network to Prepare a New Generation of Students

The North Broward Preparatory Schools—The North Broward School and Lighthouse Point Academy—are college-preparatory, non-public schools serving 1,450 students in grades PK to 12 from families in Palm Beach and Broward

Counties in southern Florida with two campuses located approximately 7 miles apart. The school has enjoyed full accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS) since 1957.

Industry:

Education

Number of Users:

1,500

Challenge:

Implementing state-of-the-art technology—cost effectively

Solution:

Enterasys Networks RoamAbout wireless solutions, Matrix E7 intelligent access platform and Vertical Horizon stackables

Benefits:

- High capacity to handle demanding and diverse network traffic—including distance learning applications
- Scalability to accommodate constant change—with no fork lift
- Wire-speed performance and functionality to meet student and teachers requirements
- True investment protection thanks to compatible modules and technology that migrates seamlessly
- Wireless networking saves money by eliminating thousands of dollars of recurring costs, and new facilities can be connected at a fraction of the cost of fiber
- Increased bandwidth delivers faster data flow and enhanced performance
- Schools can take advantage of advanced technology and the latest convergence applications

The schools strive to provide a college preparatory program within a challenging and nurturing environment that promotes personal excellence and individual responsibility.

The Challenge:

Implementing State-of-the-Art Technology—Cost Effectively

The North Broward Preparatory Schools faced a challenge not unlike that confronted by many other elementary and secondary schools today: taking advantage of available technology while working with limited financial resources. According to Headmaster Dennis C. Brown, The North Broward Preparatory Schools sought to maintain a “cutting-edge” environment and recognized the need for creativity and partnership to achieve that goal. “Schools at the elementary and secondary level must work creatively and forge partnerships with companies that offer both expertise and good product value,” Brown said. “For schools such as ours, placing a computer in the hands of every student and teacher shows that we embrace the important philosophy that technology is a tool that augments the learning process. We needed to determine when and where we would be able to find both the hardware and software proven to do what we want it to do, in a dependable way, at an affordable price.”

To meet this objective, Brown and his team first evaluated the school’s priorities. It was clear that The North Broward Preparatory Schools were growing and that the network needed to evolve to accommodate new facilities and students. At the same time, though, they recognized the need to work cost effectively given budget constraints; using as much of the existing network as possible became extremely important.

“We wanted to take advantage of technology to provide students with the important tools they need to excel,” Brown explained.

“Our ambitious goal was to put a laptop into the hands of every student. If we were to accomplish this, we needed to increase the speed and reliability of the network—perhaps by migrating from a 100 Mbps to a 1000 Mbps backbone and installing new servers. We were also very interested in exploring the possibility of wireless, especially for use in our upper grades.

“After sitting back and taking several deep breaths,” Brown continued, “I realized we needed a technology partner that had expertise with wireless, switching, routing, network management and security. Most importantly, we needed a strategic partnership through which we could work to develop a long-term plan and technology migration path.”

The Solution: Enterasys Networks™ Solutions Become the Smartest Choice

In Enterasys Networks, The North Broward Preparatory Schools found a partner that had all the qualities they were seeking. “We were looking for a partner who would listen to our needs,” said Becky Schmaus, Director of Technology Services. “We also wanted a partner whose products performed as advertised and who would be there for us after the sale. Enterasys was up to the challenge. Not only did their wireless solution exceed our expectations, their other products guaranteed that we would have a network we can expand as future technologies are developed.”

Schmaus points to Enterasys Networks’ sales and engineering team as a cornerstone of the network’s success. “Their expertise in networking and desire to assist us in developing a long-term plan were critical in the design and implementation of our current network.” Schmaus said.

Today the network at The North Broward Preparatory Schools includes Enterasys RoamAbout wireless solutions, the Matrix E7 intelligent access platform, and Vertical Horizon stackable solutions.

“One of our first tasks was to find a wireless solution that was easy to install and would give us the performance and reliability we required,” said Andres Isaza, Technology Network Engineer. “After evaluating wireless solutions from more than 10 vendors, Enterasys won hands down. It was by far the easiest solution to configure and its features, performance, ease of management, and price offered us everything we needed and more.” Award-winning RoamAbout wireless solutions give students and faculty secure mobile and remote capabilities that allow them to work or study where it is convenient: in a classroom, a cafeteria, the lab, a conference room, a temporary building, even outside at a picnic table. In fact, with the RoamAbout outdoor solution, wireless access can extend across an entire campus.

And, The North Broward Schools found RoamAbout to be extremely cost effective. It requires no expensive wiring, and a single Access Point can support up to 250 users.

To meet requirements for high-performance switching in the campus’ new building and data center, The North Broward Schools looked to the Matrix E7. The E7 delivers pinpoint control to critical network entry areas, without the expense and complexity of competitive routed solutions. The Matrix E7 offers comprehensive quality of service, security and traffic containment to desktops and servers at the network edge. Network managers can now guarantee delivery of high-priority applications, enable service level agreements by provisioning bandwidth, and prevent security breaches by stopping them at their sources—all important to the deployment of critical applications in an education setting. “We selected the Matrix E7 because it is a high-density and extremely fault-tolerant switching solution. Its high-speed Gigabit links made it ideally suited to our environment,” Isaza added.

Finally, The North Broward Preparatory Schools deployed the Vertical Horizon 2402S (formerly SmartSTACK) to bring additional ports to the school’s wiring closets and provide uplinks to the new high-speed Gigabit backbone they were relying on to support an increase in bandwidth. Wire-speed performance and industry-leading features allow the Vertical Horizon to integrate into small to medium-sized networks making it an ideal enterprise edge switching solution.

“Thanks to Enterasys, The North Broward Preparatory Schools’ network is now in a position to handle future growth,” Isaza concluded. “We’ve planned ahead to easily implement VLANs, QoS and other advanced features to insure we have an advanced reliable high-speed network for years to come.”

Contact Us

For more information, call Enterasys Networks toll free at **1-877-801-7082**,
or +1-978-684-1000 and visit us on the Web at enterasys.com