

# Upper Darby School District

Large school district improves network with Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise solutions to move students to broader online learning.

“Technology was a focal point in our comprehensive plan. The Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise solutions were the most cost-effective design for our needs. We turned on the network, and it worked the first time - that was a big thing! Today, it handles additional capacity and it still works.”

Bob Hilinski, Director of Technology, Upper Darby School District

Upper Darby School District was operating a disparate network. They began working toward a 1:1 device learning initiative but connectivity to the Internet was unreliable. Taking a step back, they identified the need for a comprehensive plan to create an enterprise-grade network, one that would support an advanced wireless environment. With grant money they were able to invest in an infrastructure from ALE that added better connectivity, greater safety, advanced application use for digital learning, and accomplished the goals of the district to provide an advanced, reliable network.

## CHALLENGES

Upper Darby dealt with budget issues for a few years and to cope, created a homegrown network which created management inconsistency with the different network vendors' equipment. Users had different network experiences depending on what building they were in because Upper Darby lacked an overall enterprise-level solution. Teachers across the district found the network unreliable and found connecting to the internet was either slow or non-existent, which hampered the move to an online curriculum. With over 13,000 users (including students, staff and teachers), it was not the experience district wanted to provide for students.

## ACTION

ALE took a consultative approach with Upper Darby Schools. Network and technology education experts spoke with teachers and administrators, toured the buildings and network closets and suggested a network that would resolve these issues. With this input and utilizing the federal eRate program, Upper Darby started from scratch and worked with ALE to build a solid technology infrastructure that would help achieve the district's curriculum goals.

Ongoing, Upper Darby's stays focused on its goal to reach a 100 percent rate of 1:1 learning. They are also looking to expand the IP-based camera system and physical access control thanks to the network infrastructure in place.

## PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

[Alcatel-Lucent OmniSwitch® 6860](#)

[Alcatel-Lucent OmniSwitch® 6450](#)

[Alcatel-Lucent WLAN Access Points](#)

[Alcatel-Lucent OmniVista® 2500 Network Management System](#)

[Alcatel-Lucent Emergency Notification Server](#)

## RESULTS

### Technical Benefits

- Each classroom has 4 network drops for teachers and devices; there's a dedicated wireless access point to allow unfettered network access
- Network star configuration provided increased bandwidth and streamlined network management
- IT Staff is able to remotely reset APs or update network configuration across 14 campuses
- Moved curriculum and business applications to the cloud: student information systems, LMS, financial systems, learning and testing
- Created individualized Wi-Fi networks with SSIDs to control and manage use of network
- Security cameras, interactive projectors, smartboards and printers securely connected to independent VLANs

### Financial Benefits

- ALE solutions qualified for eRate funds allowed a greater network build-out
- OmniSwitch products delivered a cost-effective solution with low TCO
- Money previously assigned for annual infrastructure updates was reallocated for software curriculum
- IT Staff spends less time managing network issues and can redirect support costs to servicing students and staff

### User Experience Benefits

- Administration staff now attends meetings and webinars without connectivity issues
- Teachers have a network for solid, reliable lesson planning, removing learning disruptions
- IT staff supports Curriculum department to launch broader range of learning applications
- Staff, students and guests have differentiated access rights to do activities while keeping the network secure.

## Customer Story

MARKET: EDUCATION

DEAL IMPLEMENTED: JUNE 2019

COUNTRY: UNITED STATES

NUMBER OF USERS: 13,000+

COMPANY:

UPPER DARBY SCHOOL DISTRICT