Education

Daily Use
- Distance learning
- Staff meetings
- Special events

Solution
- 6 Polycom® HDX® 7000 room telepresence solution
- 2 Polycom RMX® 2000 conference platforms
- 2 Polycom Video Border Proxy™ (VBP™) firewall traversal solutions
- Polycom Converged Management Application™ (CMA™) server
- 200 Polycom CMA™ Desktop Client licenses
- Polycom Professional Services network deployment assistance

Results and Benefits
- Teachers and staff can access video network on demand
- Teachers can engage multiple classes at once
- Home-bound students can keep pace with schoolwork
- Students collaborate with teachers, mentors and experts around the world
- Video-based staff meetings save time and money, and increase productivity
- Seamless workflow via integration with Microsoft Active Directory
- District better protects safety of students and staff with video call logs and monitoring

Jefferson County Public Schools Delivers Collaboration on Demand

Jefferson County (Jeffco) Public Schools is Colorado's largest school district with more than 84,000 students and approximately 15,000 full-time and part-time employees.

Like many districts nationwide, Jeffco Public Schools continually explores how new technologies can dissolve the physical boundaries of the classroom, while introducing new learning opportunities to students, reducing operating costs and improving productivity along the way.

Since 2008, the district has relied on a Polycom-powered video communications network that offers on-demand access to collaborative learning experiences, while reducing the need to move students and staffers between the district's 130 schools and administrative buildings. Eventually, district administrators plan to integrate their video and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) networks into a Unified Communications (UC) environment, further streamlining their teaching and administrative processes.

Jeffco Public Schools' interest in video conferencing began when the district's IT staff was asked to find a way to let students from multiple schools watch a presentation by a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient. "The demand for seats far exceeded the capacity of the facility where the event would be held," recalls Brett Miller, executive director of infrastructure services. "We had to find a way to connect all the schools over video."

Miller's team deployed a temporary solution, and video conferencing became an instant hit. "Everyone immediately got it," recalls Steve O'Brien, Jeffco's director of data center operations. "When the kids at the live venue stood to applaud, the kids connected over video stood and applauded, too. They were engaged."

Soon there came requests for ongoing video communications from throughout the district. "We were using Skype™ [technology] at that time, but its limitations made it a poor choice for working with entire classrooms," says O'Brien.

The district entertained proposals and presentations from an array of solution providers. "Polycom was the obvious choice," says O'Brien. "Polycom delivered the right price, the ability to integrate with other systems, and superior security. Polycom also gives us the ability to bring quality, reliable video conferencing to everyone in the district. That's powerful."

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Steve O'Brien, Director of Data Center Operations, Jefferson County Public Schools

POLYCOM®

Building a Flexible, Scalable Network

Working with Polycom Professional Services, Jeffco Public Schools deployed dual Polycom® RMX® 2000 conference bridges and Polycom Video Border Proxy™ (VBP™) firewall traversal solutions to provide the network backbone. One RMX/VBP pair handles the bulk of the district's video conferencing traffic, connecting six Polycom HDX® 7000 room telepresence systems. (Five are installed in administrative facilities and the sixth is the centerpiece of a high-tech model classroom.) The other handles H.323 traffic, which enables the district to include systems running Linux and Mac OS®.

But for Jeffco Public Schools, the ability to bring video communications to every desk is a key advantage. That's made possible by Polycom Converged Management Application™ (CMA™) conference management solution and CMA desktop software, which enable any camera-equipped desktop or notebook PC to serve as a video conferencing endpoint. The district distributes 200 CMA desktop licenses that expire after three days – long enough for instructors to teach a class or collaborate with students from another school, or even another country. "Because the licenses roll to different users, we can make video conferencing available to the entire district, depending on who needs it at a given time," says O'Brien.

Polycom's advanced security is another plus. "With Skype, you have to knock a giant hole in your firewall," says Chris Paschke, information security manager. "Polycom's VBP solution solves that for us, and lets anyone securely access the network from the CMA desktop. We also can better protect students and staff by maintaining logs of who called whom, and when."

Collaborating On Demand

The district maintains Web pages instructing employees how to equip their systems for video conferencing. They can also download the CMA client application and activate their three-day license. "We don't need a person dedicated to supporting video conferencing," says O'Brien. "You know Polycom is user-friendly when the biggest technical problem is people forgetting to turn their mics on. Support is not an issue."

That ease of use is helping faculty make use of the on-demand video communications network. Arvada West High School's librarian uses it to conduct classes with eight classes at once. "She only has to go through the material once, not eight times," says Leah Lindblom, Arvada West's technology coordinator. "Now you don't have kids moving from room to room, and they have access to her PC desktop." And that's not all:

- One class used the systems to communicate face to face with a local teacher who lived in an undersea habitat operated by NASA. "They already had a Polycom unit down there," says O'Brien.

- One poetry teacher spent several days letting a renowned poet from Mexico mentor her class.

- Students recovering from illness or injury can remotely attend classes. In the 2009-2010 school year, three students used CMA software to keep pace with their school work. "Other students can see and interact with them as though they're in the classroom."

- One faculty member, on extended leave in New Zealand, dialed into a class at his former school. His video updates proved so popular that they were expanded to other schools.

Administrators also save money and improve productivity by conducting staff meetings, training, and other activities via video." For some teachers, it can take an hour to drive round-trip to district headquarters," says O'Brien. "The Polycom bridge supports 40 endpoints at once, so employees can participate in meetings from their home schools, or at least from their nearby high school. That saves a lot of time, and money, too."

Working Toward a UC Environment

Polycom's open standards-based solutions are designed to protect customers' investments by supporting multivendor networks, Jeffco's IT staff were able to integrate their video network into the district's workflow. ""Polycom is fully integrated into our Microsoft Active Directory," says O'Brien. "Without that ability extending video to all employees never would have worked."

Future plans call for a district-wide VoIP network, and integrating both video and voice with Microsoft Exchange. "With Polycom, we have a robust, reliable and standard-based network that will help anchor our UC environment," says O'Brien. "It's not just that it's good enough. It's great."

Learn more.

To find out how Polycom solutions can help your organization, visit us at www.polycom.com or speak with a Polycom Account Representative.

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