

Ethernet Dedicated Internet Lines at K-12 Schools Enable Online Testing and Learning for Students

REGIONAL EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE PROVIDES EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES TO MEMBER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission (MRESC) is a state-chartered organization that provides cooperative, cost efficient education, transportation and business services to 800 K-12 New Jersey Schools and numerous government agencies.

Students and teachers take advantage of MRESC services, which include non-public school services, business services, instructional services, special education, professional development, management services, and technology services.

SCALABLE INTERNET IS CRITICAL TO SUPPORT BYOD INITIATIVES AND ONLINE ASSESSMENT

As a large educational consortium backed by the New Jersey Department of Education, MRESC is plugged into the collective demands of its member school districts—many of which were in desperate need of more bandwidth to support 1:1 device initiatives, online assessments, online learning and collaboration, and, of course, more pervasive Wi-Fi coverage to support the increasing number of mobile devices and tablets students and teachers were bringing to school each day.

To help member districts acquire scalable, high-capacity connectivity, MRESC sought to broker a deal with local Ethernet service providers so that member districts could leverage federal E-RATE funds (otherwise known as Schools and Libraries Program of the Universal Service Fund). With the help of Dellicker Strategies, a consulting firm that specializes in the areas of blended learning and the telecommunications purchasing process, the MRESC embarked on an expansive project to upgrade and future-proof the network infrastructure for more than 100 K-12 schools across New Jersey.

“In the past, our member schools had to seek funding for Internet services through E-RATE directly, and that is a very cumbersome process. With the consortium, MRESC submitted a single request on behalf of all K-12 schools in New Jersey. When individual schools were ready to select and apply for funding, it was much less time consuming,” said Patrick Moran, business administrator and board secretary for the MRESC.

SITUATION

- New Jersey education collaborative provides technology and learning resources to students and teachers in 800 K-12 schools across all of New Jersey

CHALLENGE

- Existing Internet connections cannot cost-effectively scale to support digital education initiatives and technology needs of member school districts

SOLUTION

- Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet
- Comcast Business Ethernet Network Service

RESULTS

- Scalable capacity to support digital learning and online testing
- Access to nationwide fiber network to support future initiatives

COMCAST BUSINESS DELIVERS SCALABLE, HIGH-PERFORMANCE ETHERNET SERVICES TO SUPPORT DIGITAL TESTING AND LEARNING

After evaluating multiple service providers, MRESC selected Comcast Business to provide Internet services to its member school districts within the Comcast Business footprint. Comcast Business offered a wide breadth of cost-effective services, and its large fiber network gave MRESC the option to connect schools from across the state to each other. Now, more than 75 K-12 schools throughout New Jersey are leveraging Ethernet Dedicated Internet (EDI) lines that provide Internet access for online testing and learning, including providing the backbone for WiFi services to support student and faculty use of mobile devices. Individual schools determine their own bandwidth requirements based on their network capacity needs and budget. The average speed secured through this program is 1 Gigabit per second (Gbps), though schools have opted for speeds ranging from 10 megabits-per-second (Mbps) to 10 Gbps. In addition to Ethernet Dedicated Internet services, many school districts are opting to install Ethernet Network Services from Comcast Business to connect their various elementary, middle and high schools to each other. This has improved collaboration and efficiency by allowing school administrators to access student information via a secure network connection.

“Comcast Business has allowed many of our member districts to increase their bandwidth exponentially – and for a great price, in some cases – which has given them access to scalable bandwidth that was previously cost-prohibitive for them,” said Moran. “We’re seeing members getting 3-4x bandwidth for the same price they were already spending, while gaining the ability to let students collaborate with each other via a secure network.”

“As blended learning continues to gain traction in our schools, districts need abundant and affordable Internet services,” said Kevin Dellicker, co-founder and chief executive of Dellicker Strategies. “The high-speed Ethernet services that providers like Comcast Business offer to our educational clientele provide the Internet access students need to collaborate better, solve problems more efficiently, and take advantage of the many benefits that digital learning can provide.”

“We’re seeing members getting 3-4x bandwidth for the same price they were already spending, while gaining the ability to let students collaborate with each other via a secure network.”

- Patrick Moran
Business Administrator
and Board Secretary
MRESC