

THE WALKER SCHOOL PREPS STUDENTS FOR CAREERS IN A DIGITAL ECONOMY WITH FIBER-BASED ETHERNET FROM COMCAST BUSINESS



SITUATION

- Private Pre-K-12 school is committed to fostering technical proficiency
- Digital curriculum and informal BYOD program strained existing network connection

CHALLENGE

- Establish fast, reliable Internet connection that can support technology-intensive coursework
- Provide scalable connectivity to support growing number of connected devices

SOLUTION

- Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet

RESULTS

- Reliable, high-speed Internet service
- Cost-effective, scalable connectivity
- Flexibility to add more devices to the network, experiment with cloud-based applications and services

Pre-K-12 school supports educational apps and variety of devices across entire curriculum with scalable, high-speed Internet connection

ATLANTA-BASED PREP SCHOOL PRIORITIZES DIGITAL LITERACY AND PROFICIENCY TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR 21ST CENTURY SUCCESS

The Walker School is a co-ed private school located in Marietta, Georgia that offers extended day preschool and a college preparatory pre-K-12 program.

To prepare its students for success in college and beyond, the school is committed to providing students with an academic experience that will serve them well beyond the walls of conventional education and enable them to excel in the dynamic environment of 21st century society. Toward that end, it has incorporated the development of specific technical competencies into the curriculum to foster student proficiency in a digital world.

Today, the school has more than 1,000 students, 180 faculty and staff, 400 networked computers and six mobile computing labs for accessing the Internet, educational applications and online resources – all of which generate a significant volume of traffic on its campus-wide network.

Additionally, faculty, staff and students are bringing their own laptops and mobile devices to school each day, placing additional burdens on the network.

STATE-OF-THE-ART INTERNET SERVICE CRITICAL TO SUPPORT CLASSROOM LEARNING

Technology courses at The Walker School cover a wide range of technical disciplines including multimedia communications, computer programming, robotics and computer literacy. Each classroom is equipped with a variety of digital tools for faculty and student use, including up to eight computers, overhead computer projectors, cameras and interactive white boards.

With technology being a way of life for students and staff, and many of the study books and materials going online, the school's 15 Megabits per second (Mbps) Internet connection was getting bogged down, especially during peak hours of the school day.

“The installation was so smooth – I barely remember it. I wish I had more to say about support, but I have not had to call them.”

*Kerry Bossak
Director of IT
The Walker School*

COMCAST DELIVERS SCALABLE, RELIABLE INTERNET CONNECTIVITY AND COST SAVINGS

To address its growing bandwidth needs, The Walker School sought to upgrade its Internet service. The IT department surveyed other local schools to find out about their experience with various service providers, and ultimately selected Comcast based on recommendations that it could provide fast connectivity at competitive prices.

Comcast installed a Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet line to enable 100 Mbps Internet service to the campus. The new fiber-based connection also provides the bandwidth to support the School's two separate WiFi networks – one for students and one for staff. The installation was completed during summer break and students and staff returning for the new school year remarked on the noticeable improvement in Internet speed. Since deploying the new Ethernet service, The Walker School is now getting up to seven times more bandwidth at an affordable cost.

According to Kerry Bossak, director of IT for The Walker School, “The installation was so smooth – I barely remember it. I wish I had more to say about support, but I have not had to call them. I think it is better when the only person's name that you know at your ISP is the salesperson – that's a good sign.”

The additional bandwidth has enabled The Walker School to continue with its aggressive testing of new technologies to support its curriculum, such as Google Apps for Education. And its seventh grade literacy class just piloted a tablet program to access lessons and take notes throughout the school day. Additionally, teachers and administrators rely on student information system software to track student progress, attendance and develop report cards, and to collaborate with students and parents.

“The student information system is the most important piece of software that we run – it serves as a grade book, helps our teachers track attendance and generates report cards. This summer, we upgraded our service and had to decide whether to buy a new physical server and associated storage, or move the service out to the cloud. We selected the cloud service – and thanks to the dependability of Comcast, we haven't regretted it!” said Bossak.