



QWEST SOLUTIONS FEATURING:

Qwest® GeoMax® Service
Qwest Metro Optical Ethernet Service
Qwest Cisco® Unified Communications Solution



Case Study: **Highline
Public
Schools**

Qwest 
BUSINESS

HIGHLINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CUSTOMER:

Highline Public Schools
www.hsd401.org

ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGE:

At Highline Public Schools in Washington State feature-rich media applications are increasingly important for teachers to enhance their own education and for classroom instruction. The existing T-1 lines could not support an expanding array of high-bandwidth tools. A new data warehouse and plans for Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) made the need for increased bandwidth even more urgent.

SOLUTION:

Highline chose Qwest GeoMax® high-speed, high-capacity fiber optic data transport service for the majority of its more than 30 facilities. Highline also selected Qwest® Metro Optical Ethernet Service (QMOE™) for three of its schools and also implemented VoIP with Qwest providing Cisco® Unified Communications Manager™ and Cisco Unity® technology. Qwest is a "one-stop shop" for additional services including Qwest DSL, Qwest ISDN, Qwest Direct Inward Dialing (DID), and primary rate interface (PRI) lines.

BENEFITS AND RESULTS:

- Enhanced quality of instruction with reliable access to rich Internet applications and instructional media
- High-capacity GeoMax service enables cost-saving server consolidation
- High-bandwidth capabilities enable the IT team to do backups locally, which is faster and more efficient than manually "swapping tapes" at each site
- Reliable Qwest support and technology provide dependable uptime
- Centralization allowed strategic staff re-assignment so that higher-qualified technicians support the system, further improving uptime
- When complete, the Qwest-installed Cisco VoIP solution will provide four-digit dialing and enable E911 compliance

The Highline Public School District serves approximately 17,500 students in the communities of Burien, Des Moines, Normandy Park, SeaTac, Boulevard Park and White Center in the state of Washington. There are 38 Highline campuses, including multiple elementary, middle, and high schools in addition to operational locations. Teachers and administrative staff use an expanding array of feature-rich media and online information.



FACING THE CHALLENGES

Highline Public Schools was rapidly outgrowing its T-1 lines, according to Mark Finstrom, Director of Technology Services for the school district.

School districts have a unique responsibility to their teachers, administrators, and students, Finstrom emphasized. "In addition to thousands of students, we have nearly 40,000 parent/guardians. Disaster recovery capabilities and E911 compliance are examples of services that help us handle emergencies that impact the staff and students and also the community at large," Finstrom stated.

Highline's legacy phone system included 24 different systems in 33 buildings, and the school district wanted a new VoIP solution to consolidate this and to support E911 compliance. The district was also implementing a new student information system and a new data warehouse.

"With increasing use of rich applications such as streaming video and online classes, bandwidth was a serious concern. We knew that we would be trying to force large chunks of information down pipes that were much too small, and we needed to upgrade the network," Finstrom explained.

“Qwest has provided many years of dependable, quality service to the Highline School District. Now, by enabling Highline to consolidate on multiple Qwest services including GeoMax and QMOE, Qwest provides us the best solution for high bandwidth—a sustainable and expandable solution—at the least cost.”

—Mark Finstrom, Director of Technology Services

PROVIDING A SUCCESSFUL SOLUTION

Highline School district performed a detailed analysis of its expanding communications needs, and decided to upgrade the network with fiber. The school district evaluated four vendors, and service and support were key criteria.

“Our clients—students and staff—need to be served no matter what happens, so 24 x 7 support for the fiber was critical,” Finstrom said. “We need to provide for the school district’s telecommunications, video, and audio needs today. Plus, we need to support emerging applications for the long term,” Finstrom explained.

“We decided that Qwest offers the best solution, at the least cost, and it’s sustainable and growable,” Finstrom stated.

Qwest offered a comprehensive solution to address the full scope of Highline’s communications requirements. Qwest® GeoMax® fiber-optic transport service is the answer to Highline’s need for high speed and high capacity at most of its 38 campuses. A few of the schools do not have fiber, and Highline chose Qwest® Metro Optical Ethernet Service (QMOE™) to provide the scalable, cost-efficient high bandwidth they require. Qwest also provides Qwest DSL, Qwest ISDN, Qwest Direct Inward Dialing (DID), and primary rate interface (PRI) lines to Highline.

The school district plans to implement VoIP across all of its sites, and Qwest is providing Cisco® Unified Communications Manager™ and Cisco Unity® technology. “The Qwest and Cisco team together form a unique group with the ability to address network issues, telecommunications, and to blend in the messaging

system to provide a unified solution to our school district,” Finstrom stated. “Qwest technicians who know the Cisco gear can install, configure, test, do the QA, and turn over a working solution, and that is very important to us,” Finstrom said.

“During the entire network redesign, my staff has worked with Qwest side by side, getting pointers and ensuring that we have a solution with optimum performance,” Finstrom said.

DELIVERING RESULTS

The Qwest solution enhances the quality of instruction at Highline by providing reliable access to rich Internet applications and instructional media.

When the Qwest-installed Cisco VoIP solution is in place, it will provide four-digit dialing across 5,000 Direct Inward Dials (DIDs) in the district with an additional 5,000 DIDs set up for emergency response. The system will be E911-compliant based on state and federal guidelines.

“We’re tying everything together with Qwest GeoMax and VoIP and also with services that run over GeoMax such as video,” Finstrom stated.

“The high bandwidth Qwest solution also enables us to do backups locally, eliminating the need to drive around the district to swap tapes,” Finstrom said. “GeoMax allows me to bring many administrative services back to our data center, where the environment is temperature and humidity controlled and ties in with my other services such as VoIP,” Finstrom stated.

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DEPENDABLE UPTIME

"A lot of our equipment was getting older, and uptime was an issue. With Qwest support and the reliability of Qwest technology, we're able to meet the needs of our users 100 percent of the time," Finstrom said.

COST AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

"High-capacity GeoMax service has reduced our maintenance time and costs by allowing server consolidation. With the whole set of solutions including GeoMax and VoIP, we've standardized on hardware and on some software to reduce costs further. I've also been able to centralize some administration, saving additional staff time," Finstrom said.

QWEST SPIRIT OF SERVICE IN ACTION®

"Qwest customer service has been stellar. I know our Qwest team cares about our schools, they care about our technical environment, and they have the experience and expertise to help us meet the district's needs now and in the future," Finstrom said.

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