

Standardizing on HP is helping Collier County Public School District give all students access to technology



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– Dr. Russell Clukey
Executive Director of Technology
Collier County Public School District

Collier County Public School District





Located on the southwest coast of Florida, Collier County Public School District is in what is commonly considered a wealthy area, but somewhat surprisingly, almost half of its student population is actually economically disadvantaged. The School District has vowed to give every student equal access to the latest technology – eliminating any kind of digital divide – while delivering excellence in its curricula.

This mission is paying off. In its most recent evaluation by the State of Florida, Collier's percentage of 'A' schools – currently 57 percent – exceeds the State average of 48 percent. In addition, the School District is working hard to become a member of the Lighthouse School System, in which it will possess a strategic plan that supports the district's beliefs, vision and mission, the School Board's priorities, and the Superintendent's goals. As a Lighthouse School System associate, Collier will serve as a beacon providing guidance to other school districts.

Committed to technology in learning

There have been challenges to attaining this success, Dr. Russell Clukey, Executive Director of Technology for Collier County Public School District, explained, "We wanted to make the School District more attractive to students and parents. We set in place a goal to deploy leading-edge computer equipment as older devices come due for replacement every three or four years. To accomplish this we also had to find creative ways to make our IT budget cover the regular refresh of technology."

Collier has been committed to the use of technology in teaching and learning for some time. Today, most lessons involve its use. For example, every classroom has an HP LaserJet printer; in its elementary schools, there is a ratio of one PC to three students and within the middle and high schools, this ratio is one to two. "Three quarters of all our PCs are desktops, and the remainder are laptops. The desktop PCs are deployed across all of the classrooms and in some dedicated computer rooms. The laptops are on mobile carts," described Dr. Clukey.

He continued, "Our goal, over the next decade, is to reduce the ratio to one student per PC and transition to 100 percent mobile devices. This will enable our students to use the PCs both at home and at school. Again, we are faced with making the budget stretch that bit further, but we already have managed to deploy wireless networks in just about all of our schools, so we feel we are underway with the transformation to mobile computing."

Standardizing on HP

Five years ago, at the onset of its goal to deploy leading-edge computer equipment, the School District issued a comprehensive 'request for proposal' to major PC and server vendors. Dr. Clukey recalled, "At the time, HP was chosen because it put together an attractive package of affordable, reliable, and supportable solutions that made it the most appropriate vendor with which to partner and standardize on its devices.

"Since that time we have renewed the contract several times, with the last revision being in January of this year. With this latest contract, we will be leveraging an HP Financial Services lease agreement to help our budget go further. Starting this fall, we'll be able to bring in a three-year refresh cycle, down from the previous four-year one."

All of the School District's output devices are configured on the network. With each refresh cycle, the latest and most appropriately sized HP printer has been deployed, and current models within Collier include monochrome HP LaserJet printer models 1012 and 9050, and HP Color LaserJet printer models 3550n, 3700n and 4650n. The School District also utilizes HP Scanjet 5550c scanners.

Collier currently has over 15,000 desktop, 5,000 laptop, and 25 tablet PCs. Its primary desktop model for this year is the HP Compaq dx5150 Microtower Desktop PC, with a three-year warranty. Dr. Clukey elaborated, "When refreshing equipment, we always select a model that can be serviced for a minimum of four years so we can be

assured of getting replacement parts. Since standardizing on HP, we have never had an issue supporting the implemented models – we’ve always been able to get the spares as soon as they have been needed, which has been a really important and positive aspect of our relationship with HP.”

The School District’s mobile labs – one per school at present – are currently equipped with cart mounted HP Compaq nc6120 Notebook PCs. The carts are for students to use during specific class projects, experiments, and even outdoor assignments. For those projects that need comparative assessment, the laptops enable students to have access to a central store of previous classes’ work.

Dr. Clukey has just introduced HP Compaq tc1100 Tablet PCs to Collier, and these devices are being used primarily by faculty members to assess how they might best be leveraged in the classroom. In addition, a few Tablet PCs have been given to students with alternate learning needs to enable them to more fully participate in class assignments.

HP ProLiant DL360 G3 Servers – ultra dense two processor servers – host Collier’s core administrative software. “We are in the process of deploying Fiber Channel network links between the schools and the District offices, and very soon all of the distributed servers will be removed from the schools and relocated in a central data center,” noted Dr. Clukey. “For more efficient support and comprehensive reporting purposes, all of the core administrative functions will then be combined. Even though we’re still waiting for the new network to go live, we are already underway with implementing clustered servers in the central data center. By centralizing and consolidating the administrative functions across all of our schools, we will save many thousands of dollars this year.”

Making the ‘A’ grade

“HP has helped us tackle the budgetary constraints from a number of angles. First, it delivers affordable and low maintenance products, which enables us to buy in greater volume, while keeping service costs to a minimum. It also has supported our attainment of ‘self maintainer’ status – we have a repair team that has been trained and certified by HP – and we handle our own warranty repairs with HP paying us to perform this service. Finally, the HP Financial Services agreement will save us a huge amount of money and effort because as part of the contract, HP will come in and set up the new equipment,” Dr. Clukey commented.

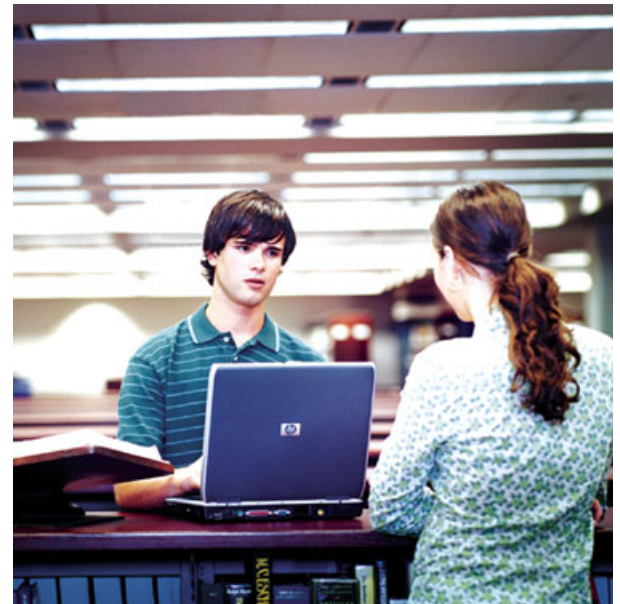
Sensitive to its high proportion of economically disadvantaged students, Collier makes available its PCs that are being removed for refresh to enable families to have access to technology at home. “It’s been an excellent way of connecting the School District with our families in a very positive manner,” observed Dr. Clukey. “We also give our older laptops to low income students who have made it to college so that they have the tools to be successful in getting their degrees.”

Collier leverages the HP Bonus Point program – which gives points for every dollar that the School District

spends on HP solutions – and uses them for Learning Pack software for those families that have received donated hardware so that the entire family can easily come up to speed with using a PC.

“The support that we get from HP is incredible. The value for money aspect ranks very highly for me. We get a very good cost benefit. HP stays right on the cutting edge for technology, which fits right in line with the School District’s philosophy of maintaining a leading edge infrastructure and giving access to 100 percent of our students,” reflected Dr. Clukey.

He continued, “I like the fact that HP is interested in our input. We’ve had the chance to comment on aspects of the technology, and we’ve seen HP internalize those suggestions and bring out new models with our ideas incorporated in them. By sharing the product roadmaps and collaborating on product design, HP is keeping our educational needs in mind as it develops new solutions. We have a very collaborative relationship, and it’s extremely rewarding to partner with HP in this way.”



Dr. Clukey concluded, “HP is very supportive of educational needs at large, and we respect them for this. Collier County Public School District, and every student within it, have benefited enormously from the standardization on HP solutions at all layers of our infrastructure, delivering an integrated, simple to maintain environment in which all students have equal access to the latest technology. We have been able to centralize our business operations, simplify core functions, such as printing – by having networked devices readily available in each classroom – and initiate the transformation to a one-to-one student to PC ratio with regular refresh cycles. We are very proud to be among the top five percent of school districts in the country for extensive use of technology in teaching and learning. This access to technology is helping more and more of our students and schools to score ‘A’s each year.

At a glance

- **Organization:** Collier County Public School District
- **Location:** Naples, Florida
- **Size:** 2,800 teachers; 40,293 students – 19,965 PreK-5, 9,321 middle, and 11,007 high school – across 40 schools
- **Telephone:** 239-377-0001
- **URL:** www.collier.k12.fl.us
- **Primary focus:** To become a member of the Lighthouse School System, and consequently serve as a beacon providing guidance to other school districts.

Challenges

- Find ways to enable IT budget to embrace higher volumes of technology.
- Deploy leading edge computer equipment as older devices come due for replacement.
- Increase student access to technology by reducing the ratio to one student per PC.
- Enable Collier's transformation to mobile computing.

Solution

- Standardized on HP for affordable, reliable, and supportable solutions:
 - HP Compaq dx5150 Microtower Desktop PCs
 - HP Compaq nc6120 Notebook PCs
 - HP Compaq tc1100 Tablet PCs
 - HP LaserJet printers, monochrome models 1012 and 9050
 - HP Color LaserJet printers, models 3550n, 3700n and 4650n
 - HP Scanjet 5550c scanners
 - HP Proliant DL360 G3 Servers
 - HP Financial Services agreement

Results

- Budgetary constraints overcome via:
 - Affordable and low maintenance products;
 - 'Self maintainer' status keeping desktop costs low;
 - Installation and disposal costs are included; and
 - Money will be saved by centralizing and consolidating administrative functions.
- Simplified core functions such as printing by having networked devices readily available in each classroom.
- The School District is connected with its families in a very positive way thanks to the donation of replaced desktops and laptops.
- Collier continues to maintain a leading edge infrastructure for students.
- Initiated transformation to one-to-one student to PC ratio.
- Access to technology is helping more students and schools to score 'A's each year.

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