



Enhancing Connectivity for the Students and Staff of Calhoun County School District

Expanded Wireless Connectivity

Adtran and Calhoun County School District

At a Glance

Company Name

Calhoun County School District

Industry

Education

Location

Anniston, AL

Website

<https://www.calhouncountyschools.com>

About

Calhoun County School District (CCSD) is located in Anniston, AL. It is comprised of 19 schools, serving over 8,600 students. Each school has outdoor sporting areas, field houses, classrooms, and administrative spaces for daily operations, which express unique internet connectivity needs. Even the parking lots joined the list of spaces upgraded for enhanced internet access.

The Challenge

Like many rural school systems, Calhoun County School District had a growing need for high-speed internet access. Faculty and students not only needed better Wi-Fi connectivity in the classroom, but also at sporting venues and adjunct remote classrooms located further from primary buildings. Secure access for vendors was another part of the agenda, to make sure guests had network permissions for their operations. Additionally, due to the lack of home internet access for some rural students, the advent of at-home learning created another critical challenge for the district. With these unique connectivity needs at hand, CCSD looked to Adtran for solutions.

The Solution

A broad portfolio of Adtran solutions addresses these unique challenges, allowing CCSD to focus on what matters most.

- Fixed wireless access solutions grant athletic venues internet access, giving faculty equivalent connectivity across campus
- Outdoor access points equip parking lots with access, enabling students without home internet to continue their studies
- Upgraded switches are used power the LAN infrastructure
- Refreshed routers will accelerate connectivity
- Wi-Fi upgrades will enhance classroom connectivity, providing better coverage and faster downloads while minimizing technical distractions
- Guests and vendors can use the network securely, with a restricted level of access

The Benefit

The deployment of Adtran's comprehensive solution will ultimately provide all CCSD stakeholders with high-speed internet access — everywhere on campus. Technical distractions have been minimized, and home Wi-Fi disparities have become less of an obstacle. Faculty can access the network, from anywhere on campus, and guests and vendors can access the network without imposing security risks. With the help of Adtran, CCSD will be top of the class.

The Gap for Rural Communities

As internet access becomes further engrained in day-to-day society, the gap between urban and rural internet access becomes a bigger problem. Rural residents and organizations alike are impacted by the gap, and though infrastructure rollouts to rural communities have begun, solutions are needed now. This is especially difficult for the students of these communities, who are expected to learn within a standardized system.

Modern education revolves around eLearning. When students enter the classroom, their first objective is to open their laptop, not a textbook. From assignments to testing, students and faculty are expected to operate within a standardized system, reliant on internet access. More critically, the advent of at-home learning instigated a new challenge for those students lacking at-home internet access.

This soon became a multi-phase project, to address the need for reliable, secure internet access all over campus. From offices to parking lots, and classrooms to ball fields, all stakeholders needed enhanced access. Having relied on Adtran solutions for over 11 years, CCSD had a partner to rely on.

The Solution

The pandemic driven challenges were priority one. Students felt the gap more strongly with heavy reliance on home internet during this time. This abrupt shift required creative problem solving.

To address this issue, CCSD equipped school parking lots with Adtran outdoor wireless access points, deploying much-needed Wi-Fi for students without home internet services. Students could now access the internet in the parking lots to continue their coursework, enabling them to refocus on what matters most — their education.

Internet Access for All

The schools in the district also had a pressing need to extend internet access beyond the main school buildings. Sporting venues and outbuildings needed reliable access for both faculty and guests. The Adtran fixed wireless solution enabled CCSD to provide internet access to sports complexes and ball fields, granting athletic offices and adjunct remote classrooms equivalent access. This solution also provided guests and vendors secure access to the network, with appropriate levels of permission.

“It is vital that Calhoun County students have reliable internet access. Adtran delivered on its promises, by implementing exceptional indoor and outdoor wireless connectivity.

– CCSD IT Director Lance Driskell

Enhancing the Student Experience

The next phase of this project will be a Wi-Fi upgrade for all classrooms within the district. Over 1,000 Adtran access points will outfit classrooms, and wiring closets will harbor new Adtran switches to power and refresh the LAN infrastructure. These solutions provide greater range and help alleviate network congestion. The network refresh combined with the Wi-Fi upgrade will allow students and teachers to take full advantage of their school's internet resources and streamline their learning experience.

The Benefits

With reliable and readily available internet access, students are able to focus on their studies, faculty are able to work seamlessly at any location on campus, and guests and vendors can operate without imposing security risks. With the deployment of this comprehensive solution, the stakeholders of CCSD will have a state-of-the-art network, designed for their mission.



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