Case Study

\Orchestrating a brighter world NEC

NEC Projectors and Digital Signage Energize Lessons in Little Rock School District

Facility:
- Little Rock School District

Vertical:
- Education

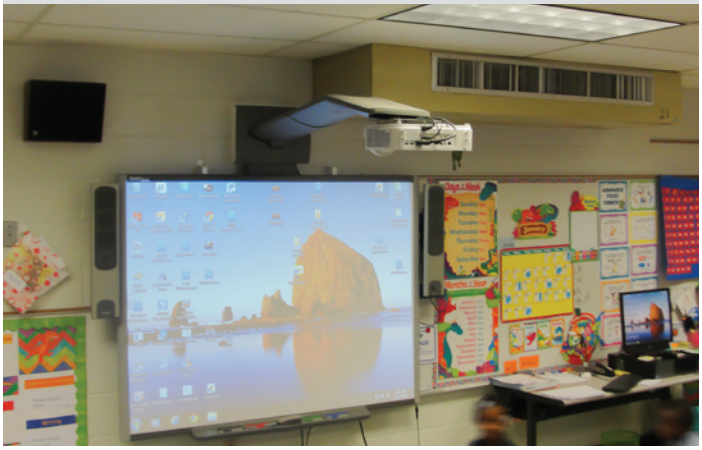
Location:
- Little Rock, Arkansas

Challenges:
- Modernizing more than 2,200 digital projectors across Arkansas' largest school district.

Solution:
- NEC M332XS and NEC M352WS projectors and NEC 55" V552 and NEC 55" E554 displays

Result:
- High-quality technology throughout the classrooms, cafeterias, gyms and hallways of the school district.

Date:
- 2014 to present



As the largest school district in Arkansas, the Little Rock School District (LRSD) has a responsibility to be a leader in bringing state-of-the-art technology to its students.

With 48 elementary, middle, high, nontraditional and alternative schools, the district serves 24,714 students each day. Each classroom is equipped with a projector and smart board. But after seven years, the projectors were past their supported life and no longer shone images as brightly.

The projectors, which teachers used to share interactive lessons, videos and student work, had become a beloved part of the teachers' curriculum. The district also recently implemented a 1:1 iPad and laptop initiative, so each student, in fourth and fifth grades at 16 schools, has a tablet that teachers wanted to be able to connect to the projectors via WiFi. The district needed to find a solution that easily allowed them to continue integrating multimedia lessons into the classroom.

The Challenge

LRSD had great success with the projectors it previously used, but as they ended their supported life, teachers began to experience problems. The teachers had come to rely on the projectors so fully that as they one by one stopped working, they told LRSD's director of instructional technology Barbara Williams that replacements had to come fast.

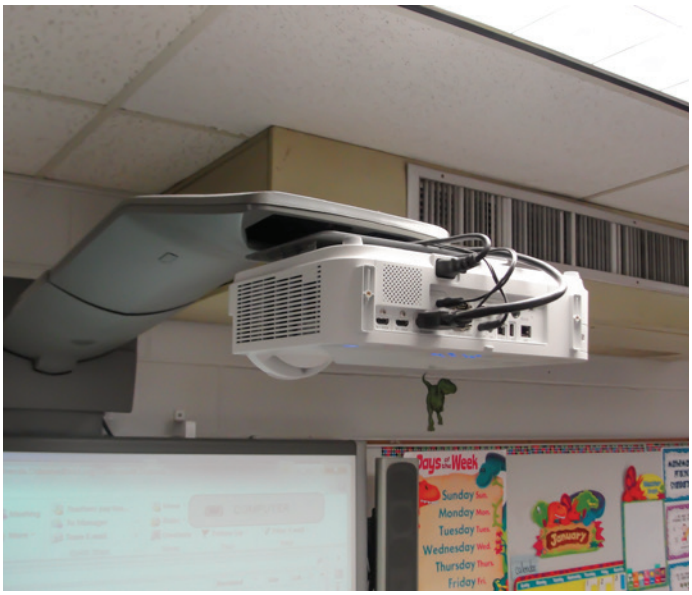
"The message was they couldn't teach without projectors," she said.

Some of the projectors stopped working entirely, while others suffered a variety of maladies, including lines on the screen and blurry images. Dust got into the projectors' delicate interiors, causing the images to flicker.

"That's the death of a projector," Williams said.

Because of its size, the district needed more than 2,200 projectors to be able to serve every classroom. The projectors would be such a large investment that administrators needed to find a solution with longevity so they wouldn't have to replace them again anytime soon.

The district also needed to update digital signage it had in cafeterias, hallways and gyms so that administrators could quickly disseminate information, including changes to bell schedules, special events and morning announcements. It sought new screens that would be bright and reliable, as well as easy to update.



The Solution

The district had worked with Piraino Consulting the last time it installed projectors, so it approached James Piraino once again for this project. Piraino recommended NEC Display Solutions as the provider because of his extensive experience and positive results with NEC.

"NEC's products are top-notch," he said. "The pictures are always clear and they have the reliability you need in a school setting. I've always had a positive experience in the 15 years I've worked with NEC."

Piraino and the district committee selected NEC M332XS and NEC M352WS projectors for the classrooms, as well as NEC 55-inch V552 and NEC 55-inch E554 displays for the cafeterias, gyms and hallways.

The projectors have all the functionality the district sought, including a bright, clear picture and easy-to-use interface. The images are vibrant enough to stand out in classrooms where teachers might not be able to turn off all the lights. Sealed chassis prevent dust from getting into the optics and causing a flickering image.

The dual-HDMI hookup and wireless capabilities make it easy for teachers to connect smart boards, Apple TV and Chromecast to the boards to make classroom lessons more interactive. Now that the district has implemented the 1:1 iPad initiative, the projectors also make it easy for students to connect their tablets via WiFi.

Piraino installed the projectors using a custom retrofit kit designed by his firm. The kit makes it possible for Piraino's team to install the projectors in 10 minutes or less. That speed has proved critical considering the number of projectors being installed in the district. Since May, Piraino's team has installed about 100 projectors a month, tackling the massive installation on a rolling basis.

As for the displays, officials have added 25 screens throughout the district to share upcoming events, cafeteria menus, reminders, photos and more. The displays provide a lively, vivid image that helps catch students' attention and quickly spreads information. A third-party software lets the district create content and push it out to all of the screens at the same time.

"It's pretty exciting to bring all of this high-quality technology into the schools," Piraino said.

While the projectors are still being installed on an ongoing basis, Williams said that she's gotten the best feedback she could ask for from teachers: They're silent because the projectors work flawlessly.

NEC Display Solutions of America
866-NEC-MORE
www.necdisplay.com

©2016 NEC Display Solutions of America, Inc. and the NEC logo are registered trademarks of NEC.
All other brand or product names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective holders.

Rev. 10.18.2016