

Case Study

Bethpage Union Free School District, New York

When Bethpage Union Free School District in Bethpage, New York, switched to thin-client computing, they expected to lower the cost of technology for the district and improve reliability in the classroom. In addition to these benefits, they discovered that the ClassLink system improved teaching and learning with 24/7 access to a virtual desktop for each teacher and student.



ClassLink

T O O L S F O R L E A R N I N G

Simple • Reliable • Affordable • Portable

District Background

The Bethpage School District serves 2900 students and employs 250 teachers. There are three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school in the city. Located on Long Island, Bethpage is a small, tightly-knit community with a sense of history. The school district engages in community learning projects with the local history and aviation museums as well as the local senior center.

Support for a Small District

Bethpage had used technology for learning since the early 1980s, but older equipment had become unreliable and had to be regularly upgraded or replaced. When Director of Technology Terrence Clark and his team looked at purchasing new equipment to expand access, they realized that adding more computers would mean adding more resources in the future. As a small district, Bethpage could not increase their technical staff, but the current system required hands-on support to desktop computers throughout the buildings. Rather than purchase more PCs, they switched to low-cost, low-maintenance thin-client devices. "We were looking for thin-client solutions and interviewed a number of vendors familiar with the corporate market," said Clark. "But they didn't talk our language. We came upon ClassLink and heard about students on task, portfolio and rubrics. They understood education and how technology can be a solution."



ClassLink

T O O L S F O R L E A R N I N G

Simple • Reliable • Affordable • Portable

ClassLink Solution

ClassLink Technologies offered Clark and his staff at Bethpage more than a technology solution. The ClassLink System 2000™ is a suite of software and services tailored to K-12 school settings. ClassLink installed thin-client devices in school labs, because they require no hands-on maintenance or upgrades and offer a secure desktop that teachers can rely on. Both the thin clients and older computers connect to servers utilizing ClassLink and Microsoft application server software for consistent access and performance. ClassLink tested and installed all of the educational and productivity software applications used by the district to ensure top performance on the system.

Once the technology was in place, ClassLink education experts trained every student and teacher on how to use the system. Students received instruction on how to log-in, launch applications, and save their information in a student folder. Teachers learned to create shared folders for class assignments, view student folders, manage their own files, and shadow student desktops. Everyone learned to log-in from home using their own computers and Internet access, creating seamless access to school resources.

Improved Student Learning

According to Clark: “What we didn’t realize and now see as the biggest benefit is that the ClassLink solution provides 24/7 access to our files and applications. Students, teachers, and administrators log onto our web site, click the link and they are virtually in the building.”

As a result of the seamless access, student work quality has improved. They spend more time on assignments and receive more one-to-one instruction from teachers. Teachers are eager to have thin clients deployed to classrooms now that they are accustomed to the system in the labs. While Clark’s staff still spends time in the PC lab repairing desktop hardware, they never



ClassLink

T O O L S F O R L E A R N I N G

Simple • Reliable • Affordable • Portable

...continued

touch the thin clients. ClassLink monitors the network and server performance remotely to fix problems before users become aware of them.

Results

"I love the lab," said Way. "When I take students to the lab to do Web Quests and research, the students don't have as much to tinker with. I can set up hot lists and the students can access the same information." Way uses shadowing to check student desktops and make sure they are on task as well as for peer tutoring. When a student solves a problem in an interesting manner, Way shadows the desktop on the presenter station to show the whole class.

"ClassLink allows us to zero in on our mission," said Clark, "educating children not maintaining PCs. This is a home run with our community, parents, and kids"

Technical Specifications

Applications: Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Macromedia Dreamweaver, Geometer Sketchpad, Macromedia Flash, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Publisher, Encarta

Stations: 1600

Thin client devices: 400

Servers: 12