



CASE STUDY

Maywood Public Schools

SOLUTION SUMMARY

SITUATION

- Inefficient emergency communications system did not provide the level of safety required or the ability to go into lockdown
- Current system neither provided telephony in every classroom nor allowed staff to find someone quickly
- Old paging head-end unit and inadequate speaker coverage created dead zones throughout the buildings, limiting the ability for emergency messages to reach all the occupants of the school

SOLUTION

- MiVoice Connect
- E911 application
- Paging head-end upgrade with additional speakers
- LENS from Eastern DataComm

RESULTS

- E911 and LENS technology integrated to offer a comprehensive emergency communications solution
- Teachers can activate lockdown themselves from any classroom Greatly improves internal and external communications for both day-to-day communication
- Build-in intercom feature on the phones for an Easy-to-use interface for every classroom, allowing for one-to-one communication with the teacher instead of a page-all
- New technology, efficiencies and peace of mind delivered within a limited budget
- Real life use of emergency technology demonstrated its effectiveness and reliability

Maywood Public Schools was seeking to implement updated emergency communications while also streamlining collaboration between staff, teachers and parents. Mitel and partner company Eastern Datacomm were able to provide the perfect mix of integrated solutions, pairing MiVoice Connect and E911 with Eastern DataComm's Lockdown Emergency Notification System (LENS).

Teachers at Maywood Public Schools were struggling to communicate with their colleagues given that only office spaces were equipped with phones. If staff were searching for a student or trying to contact a parent, precious time was wasted getting access to a phone.

"What we wanted to do was allow staff to have the ability to communicate with each other room to room and also have the chance for staff to communicate to the outside, whether it be a parent, a vendor or whatever the case may be, from the luxury of their classroom," remarks Michael Jordan, Superintendent of Maywood Public Schools.

Larger concerns were weighing on the district as well, particularly the inefficiency of their emergency communications technology. Their legacy provider was not providing the level of safety they wished to offer students and staff, including the ability for teachers to put the school in lockdown mode from their classrooms.

Staff and teachers are now not only more secure, but can easily communicate with each other and parents from the convenience of their classrooms or office spaces thanks to MiVoice Connect.

This legacy equipment was not automated, relying too much on the human element for activation—not ideal during a crisis situation. It also lacked the ability to notify the police and everyone on school grounds of the emergency in a time efficient manner.

The school district turned to business communications equipment provider **Eastern DataComm**, who offered a comprehensive safety solution called LENS (Lockdown Emergency Notification System) (LENS). LENS paired seamlessly with the business communications platform, MiVoice Connect, and the E911 application from Mitel, creating an end-to-end communications system offering next-level protection for students and staff.

“The representatives that we dealt with from **Eastern DataComm** were top notch,” comments Michael, noting the Mitel partner’s attentive customer service and unique ways to address the district’s efficiency and safety concerns.

Maywood Schools’ new communications solutions provide teachers with a reliable phone system and optimal security during emergencies, on top of the cost-effectiveness they needed on a tight education budget.

LENS and E911 not only integrated with each other, but also with a third-party application the district had deployed on staff and teacher smartphones. Thus, **Maywood Schools** is able to continue leveraging their existing investments while experiencing seamless integrations across all their communications solutions.

Michael specifically noted **Eastern DataComm’s** reliability and attention to detail as the technology was installed, saying, “The deployment couldn’t have been any smoother. There have been absolutely no hiccups whatsoever along the way. It was phenomenal, absolutely phenomenal.”

RESULTS

Staff and teachers are now not only more secure, but can easily communicate with each other and parents from the convenience of their classrooms or office spaces thanks to MiVoice Connect, which brings communications and collaboration tools together into one easy-to-use interface. This has improved productivity and saved staff valuable time each day.

“They have that phone in the room and the ability to communicate one-to-one,” remarks Michael. “It takes a lot of the everyday stressors off your table.”

He also elaborated on the importance of efficiency in a school, saying, “From a school district’s perspective, cost savings come into play when you think about efficiency, and I can tell you that our main offices are much more efficient.

I can tell you that our staff is utilizing our technology much more efficiently because they have it at their disposal now.”

Perhaps the greatest improvement is seen in the district’s new emergency communications, with teachers now able to activate a lockdown themselves simply by dialing a code on the phone. Once dialed, both the 911 dispatch and the local police are directly contacted with a prerecorded message that the school is in lockdown. Additionally, everyone on school grounds is immediately notified by a prerecorded lockdown message over the PA system, strobe lights, calls to desk phones, calls to cell phones, PC screen pops, emails and text messages. And all this happens automatically and simultaneously, allowing the teacher to focus on getting their kids to safety with the assurance that everyone else, including the police, will be notified of the danger in seconds.

“Teachers feel so much more secure,” observes Michael. “They feel so much more trusted and emboldened by the fact that now they don’t have to worry about getting a message to the main office. They can activate things themselves and take ownership when they see something or when they hear something.”

The efficacy of the LENS and E911 solutions were put to the test only days after it was first installed, when a teacher’s young son mistakenly pressed a panic button in the hallway after classes had ended for the day. Notifications to police were immediately put out and the school went into lockdown, with strobe lights and audio notifications directing the teachers and students to lockdown.

Police soon arrived and discovered it was only a false alarm, though they were impressed with the effectiveness of the technology. While the school district was thankful a real emergency had not occurred, they felt additionally secure having seen the emergency communications technology successfully in use.

“Unless something like this is utilized, you just don’t understand how powerful it is,” stresses Michael. “They [police] literally were just singing the praises of the system.”

In addition, the scalability of the solution means it will expand and evolve with the school district, keeping its students and staff safe at any location they add.

“We will be involved in an expansion project pretty soon,” comments Michael. “There’s no doubt in my mind that anything that we do expansion-wise is going to include this [technology].”