

Ridley School District

Looking for one of the most communication savvy school districts in the United States? Visit the amazing Ridley School District in Folsom, Pennsylvania. In honor of its achievements, the Pennsylvania School Board Association has given Ridley its School Board Management and Service Education award every year for the past five years.

Communication savvy Ridley School District selects Alcatel

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Don Otto

Director of Data Processing
and Network Services
Ridley School District

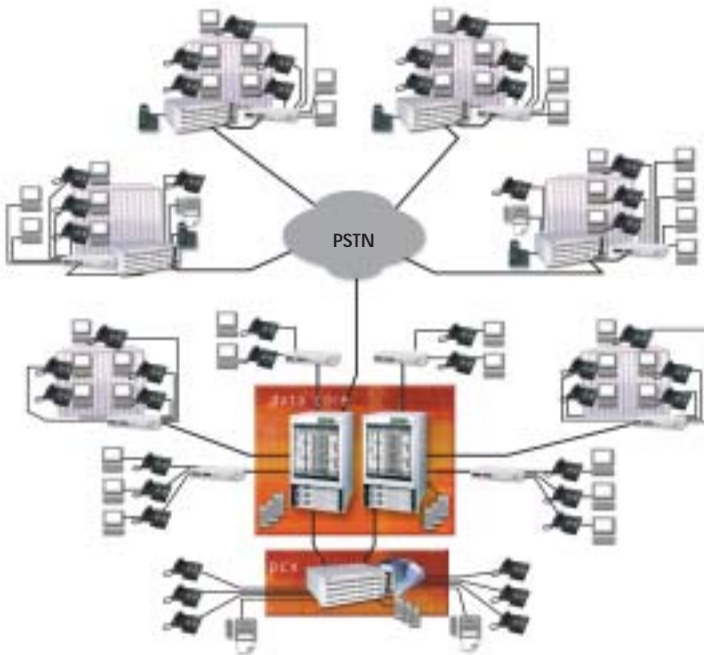
Ridley was the first school district in the country to completely automate its daily attendance, interim progress reports, and grade reporting functions. And internal communications have been significantly enhanced through the use of e-mail. Ridley's 6,800 network users at its nine schools generate 75,000 e-mails a week! Curriculum is being written to include the Internet as a resource and the district has a virtual high school accessed by students across the country.

Ridley partners with Alcatel

This amazing school district recently went shopping for a new voice communication system. At about the same time its data network provider announced it would no longer support enterprise networks. Ridley unexpectedly found itself looking not only for a voice but a data partner as well. The district chose a company that could do both. Alcatel.

Don Otto, director of data processing / network services at Ridley recalls, “We evaluated the costs involved in extending the lease on our existing voice system and determined that an investment in IP based telephones would save us significant dollars. We decided to purchase Alcatel's OmniPCX 4400. In addition to cost savings, we have improved our quality of service.”

Otto indicates it was extremely important for the district to protect its investment in existing systems. He states, “We needed the ability to grow our voice system past



Ridley School District deploy a voice and data converged network across the district. The OmniPCX 4400 serves 680 users, with mix of IP, digital, and analog phones. Voice features include voicemail, auto-attendant, transfer, and group call and pickup. The Gigabit Ethernet backbone has 25 centralized servers and serves 6800 users in 10 buildings, with switched 100 to the desktops.

five years. Our choice needed to be modular and expandable. The OmniPCX 4400 UNIX based platform accommodated all of our needs. The architecture of the OmniPCX 4400 was the wise solution."

Alcatel helps Ridley's network grow

Email, Internet browser traffic, and telephony services are the most popular applications supported by Ridley's network. The district's database servers and student and financial management systems are also well used. To keep up with its ever-growing networking needs Ridley installed Alcatel 6024 switches throughout the district. The district also chose Alcatel's robust OmniCore 5022s to handle the collapsing of multiple gigabit lengths. Alcatel's OmniCore 5052 provides centralized routing for all the district's buildings and enables all the network devices needed for the OmniPCX 4400 telephony services.

Alcatel a partner in Ridley's future voice and data communication plans

In the near future Ridley plans to add more IP phones to the district's elementary and middle schools. The district is planning to re-deploy most of its IP phones to remote buildings that don't have copper connectivity options. Ridley is also looking at the

possibility of adding Alcatel's onsite wireless phones to its new high school.

Ridley will soon integrate a system that will allow parents to access their children's records online. To handle requests for more computers in classrooms with network connectivity, additional data ports will be installed. Alcatel network switches will be added to accommodate these ports. The district is also looking at providing distance learning and video on demand applications over the network. Otto says, "The Alcatel gear we have today provides for those types of applications."

Alcatel delivers results

What would Otto say to someone considering Alcatel? "Alcatel has a really good solution. The commitment is there. There is always a quick response when we need assistance. The sales force was people oriented, easy to work with, and very professional. Plus the price was good."

Otto's advice for someone who wants to improve their voice or data system network? "You need to have someone with both voice and data background because the two areas are merging."

Alcatel

26801 West Agoura Road
Calabasas, CA 91301

Contact Center

(800) 995-2612 - US/Canada

(818) 880-3500 - Outside US

www.alcatel.com/enterprise

