

## K-12 District Improves Classroom Safety and Parent-Teacher Communications

### CUSTOMER NEEDS

- Telephones in every classroom
- Better communication between teachers and parents
- More efficient communication between staff
- Leverage existing data infrastructure and avoid costly cabling
- Simplify phone system and reduce need for technical intervention

### SOLUTION COMPONENTS

- Survivable Mitel 3300 Integrated Communications Platform (ICP) distributed solution with embedded voice mail
- Mitel 7100 Management Access Point
- Mitel OPS Manager
- Mitel Programmable Key Modules (PKM)
- Mitel IP sets with resiliency and power-over-Ethernet

### RESULTS

- Added more than 200 telephone extensions without need for additional lines
- Improved security and safety for students and teachers
- Facilitated better communication between parents and teachers
- Achieved a high-reliability phone system with minimal need for technical intervention
- Saved more than \$200,000 dollars on the cost of upgrading a traditional phone system
- Survivable IP phone network with resiliency for all sets



What does a cost-conscious independent school district do when it wants to put telephones in every classroom? It uses its data network, of course! “Upgrading our key phone systems was going to cost upwards of \$40,000 for each of our five sites,” remembers Kerry Hancock, Technology Director at Glen Rose Independent School District (ISD). “We didn’t have the necessary copper wiring infrastructure in any of our campuses, but several years back we had upgraded our data network to fiber.” With that in mind, Glen Rose ISD started looking into IP solutions to leverage its data network – and never looked back. After evaluating seven IP-based systems, the district chose a Mitel® solution from ICS Telephones located in Dallas, Texas.

### Practical Considerations Drove Purchase Decision

“The primary reason for a new system was that we didn’t have two-way classroom communications throughout the district,” says Hancock. “Some classrooms had one-way intercoms and some had nothing. In one case, a teacher collapsed in the classroom – thankfully, she had a cell phone to call the office.”

The district also wanted to improve communications between teachers and parents. With all teachers in a school sharing the same phone there was little privacy, and without voice mail, teachers were difficult to reach directly.

In addition to these considerations, Hancock laid out his technical criteria. The solution had to be reliable, “With our old key system, unless lightning struck it, it worked and we didn’t have to maintain it. We wanted the same reliability in an IP-based system.” With that in mind, Hancock set out to find a solution with a stable operating system like VX Works, which is the basis of the Mitel solution. A survivable solution was critical to ensure that each school could stand alone if a connection between schools was lost, and resilient phones would be required in particular for the high-need phones at each school.



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# Customer Experience

## → Glen Rose Independent School District

### ABOUT GLEN ROSE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Type:** K-12 school district

**Location:** Dallas, Texas

**Students:** 1600+

**Employees:** 260+

**Facilities:** Four campuses and one administration building

**Website:** www.grisd.net

*“The Mitel phone system performs exactly as we wanted. Since installing the solution we have been through lightning storms and power outages and have had no downtime. We wanted a ‘set-and-forget’ system and that’s what we got. Most importantly though, we’ve improved the security of our teachers and classrooms.”*

– Kerry Hancock, Technology Director, Glen Rose ISD

Ease of use and maintenance were also key, as the district’s three-person IT department would not be able to support hundreds of telephones if it meant they would still have to physically “chase down wiring and reprogram phones onsite every time there was employee turnover or when staff switched schools.”

### Reliable, Hands-Off Solution

Today the old Glen Rose 48-line key system has been replaced with more than 200 IP telephones – without the need for additional phone lines. A primary Mitel 3300 Integrated Communications Platform (ICP) serves the high school, where the most phone traffic is received. The elementary, intermediate, junior high and administration sites are connected into the primary system through full-featured 3300 remote survivable gateway over the district’s Cisco fiber network.

“The Mitel solution fit very well with the Cisco network,” Hancock says, “and the implementation of the phone system was smooth. Once the network was ready, the IP phone system layered in very easily.”

Each classroom has a telephone and the district’s staff and teachers each have phones accessible through four-digit extensions. The phones are resilient – should one school’s platform go down, the phones simply roll-over to another school’s and continue to work seamlessly. The district chose Mitel’s embedded voice mail, which is easy to learn and use.

Some staff members, including Hancock, use the unified messaging option to receive voice messages through their email inboxes. Messages left in their voice mailbox on the system are forwarded to their email account. This is particularly useful for mobile staff but has also had unexpected security benefits: “Once, we had a caller leave a threatening message in a teacher’s mailbox. We simply dumped that message to email and forwarded it on to the authorities as a .wav file.”

As for his technology goals, Hancock says those have been admirably met, too. “The Mitel phone system performs exactly as we wanted. Since its implementation we have been through lightning storms and power outages and have had no downtime. We quadrupled our number of phones but we haven’t increased our workload – we wanted a ‘set-and-forget’ system and that’s what we got. Most importantly though, we’ve improved the security of our teachers and classrooms.”

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