

Do more with less with managed services

3 ways schools can benefit from managed network services from a trusted provider.



Doing more with less has become almost a cliché. Yet, for many K-12 IT employees, it's simply business as usual.

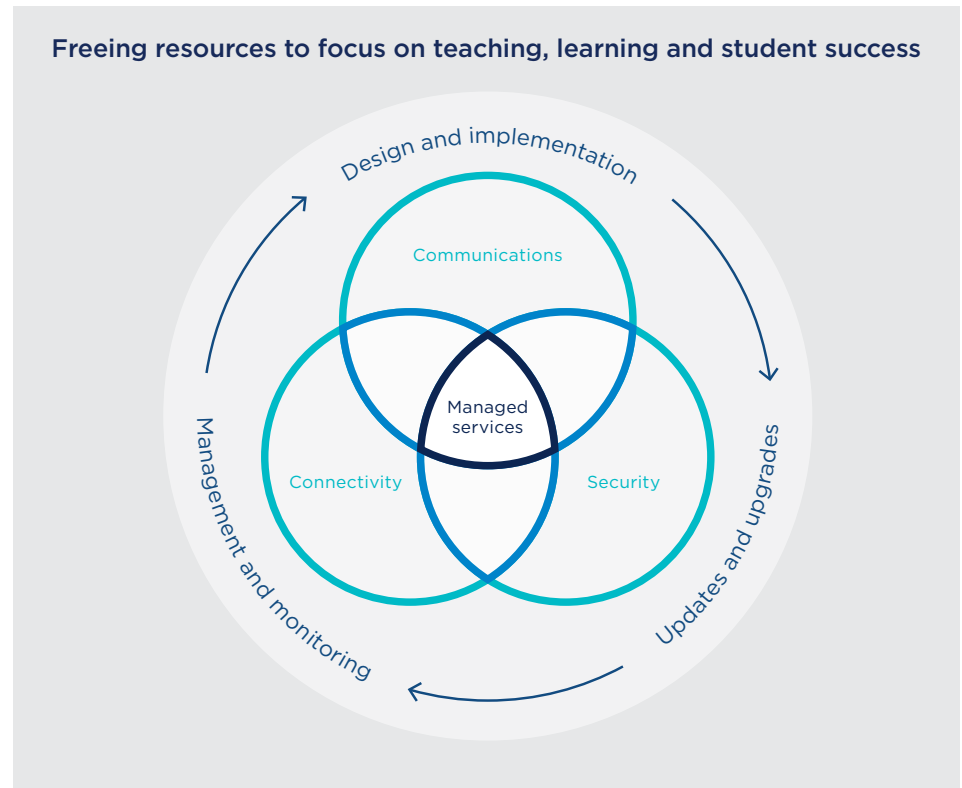
School district IT departments must implement and support an ever-growing number of hardware and software applications. There are systems for teaching and assessing, for analyzing and reporting on student performance and for running back-office enterprise software. Then, there is the underlying IT infrastructure that transmits and stores all of this information. K-12 technology departments are tasked with making sure these various systems work together seamlessly and are used effectively to improve education.

With managed services, K-12 IT departments can keep up with rapidly evolving needs without investing in costly equipment that's quickly obsolete.

With each new system that's added, there is rarely a proportional increase in IT resources. The IT departments in most K-12 school systems are chronically understaffed and this affects their ability to integrate and support new technologies — as well as train teachers and other personnel how to use them.

Managed network and security services can help schools solve this challenge, empowering IT staff to truly do more with less.

With managed services, K-12 IT departments can keep up with rapidly evolving needs without investing in costly equipment that's quickly obsolete. They can extend the capabilities of their IT staff, allowing team members to focus on more strategic priorities. And they can achieve predictable costs, making it simpler to budget for IT needs.



Keep up with modern needs

K-12 connectivity needs are growing exponentially. As districts undergo a digital transformation, the average school district nationwide has seen its need for bandwidth grow by at least 50% year over year.¹ More than one-fourth of school systems haven't yet achieved the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) goal of at least 1 Gbps of bandwidth for every 1,000 students in any of their schools.²

Looking ahead, cybersecurity and network infrastructure are the top two priorities for school district IT staff.³ To meet their growing connectivity needs, schools districts need upgrades:⁴

- 99% say reliable WiFi is "extremely" important to fulfilling their mission.
- 54% report they should have upgraded their WiFi networks at least a year ago.
- 21% say they'll need to upgrade their WiFi within a year.
- 17% expect their bandwidth needs to increase at least 75% in the next three years.



the amount an average school district has seen its need for bandwidth grow year over year.⁵

Purchasing and installing network equipment locks schools into using the same technology for at least three to five years, and maybe more. If leaders have planned wisely and correctly anticipated their future needs, that might be fine. But even then, school systems might be paying for more capacity than they initially need.

A managed approach to network technology allows K-12 leaders to invest in a solution that matches their current demands but can easily expand to accommodate future requirements.

Instead of owning equipment that might become obsolete in a few years, leaders can be secure in the knowledge that they'll always have access to the latest technology — and a solution that meets their exact needs at any given time.



Extend the capabilities of IT staff

K-12 districts face many challenges in staffing their IT departments. Tight budgets frequently prevent them from hiring the full cadre of employees they need to support IT effectively. Even when they do add more staff, they're often competing with the private sector for top talent, making recruitment and retention more difficult. In light of these challenges, school district IT departments often have trouble adequately meeting all of their needs.

The Consortium for School Networking's annual IT Leadership Survey has revealed staffing shortages within K-12 IT departments in every year of its existence. In the 2023 survey of school district chief information officers (CIOs):⁶

- 56% said they don't have enough staff to support classroom technology use.
- 37% lack the staff to support their district's IT needs effectively.
- 29% struggle to maintain network systems.

Managed network services can reduce the burden on overextended IT departments. With a managed solution, knowledgeable and highly qualified experts are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to maintain, support, troubleshoot and update network infrastructure. This enables districts to keep their networks running smoothly without having to commit their own IT personnel.

Working with a managed services provider would give the quarter of school systems that struggle to maintain their networks immediate support for mission-critical operations. For districts that can support their networks, a managed solution would allow them to redeploy IT resources to address other strategic priorities they rarely have time for — like implementing new IT systems or training teachers how to use technology effectively for instruction.

Challenges of in-house IT staffing

Shortage of qualified applicants

Many school systems struggle to find IT employees with the right qualifications.

Salary constraints

Few K-12 districts can match the IT salaries offered in the private sector.

Lack of training for IT staff

Only 33% of school districts provide in-person training and 28% provide online training for IT staff. Nearly four in five IT employees (78%) say they are self-taught.⁷

Benefits of using outside, managed talent

A pool of talented professionals

Working with a managed services provider gives you immediate access to an on-demand pool of IT experts, ensuring that services are always supported.

An extension of your team

Managed service providers act as extensions of a school system's IT team, taking on basic maintenance so your staff can focus on more strategic priorities.

Advanced training and certifications

When you entrust your network services to a qualified provider, you know their staff is always equipped with the latest industry knowledge and certifications.

Select managed services are E-Rate eligible

Managed internal broadband services (MIBS) are E-Rate eligible in Category 2. This includes services provided by a third party for the operation, management, and monitoring of eligible broadband internal connections components.⁹ Eligible expenses include the installation, activation and configuration of eligible components — as well as on-site training on their use.

Achieve predictable costs

Budgeting for technology has been the top IT challenge facing school systems for years.⁸ Taking a managed approach to network services can help district leaders budget more effectively by trading unpredictable, intermittent IT expenses for fixed and regular monthly costs that are easier to plan around.

Traditionally, school district IT departments have purchased and installed network technologies through large capital expenditures. The downside to this approach is that strategic IT planning can become contingent on the availability of new funding. As a result, districts might be stuck with outdated equipment until they can raise the capital they need for a network refresh cycle.

A managed services approach can support more stable and consistent IT budgeting. This helps leaders successfully predict and manage their network expenses, including the cost of routine maintenance. There are no more unpleasant surprises when a piece of equipment fails and no more scrambling to find the money to replace an aging router or wireless access point.



Managed solutions that meet schools' needs

From flexible wide-area networks to wireless connectivity and multiple security options, Spectrum Enterprise® offers a wide range of solutions to help schools build and maintain a secure, reliable network infrastructure from a single, trusted provider. From installation and management, to maintenance and user licensing, Spectrum Enterprise works alongside you to support your school and district.

Solutions include



Ethernet Services

Promote collaboration across your district and its classrooms with secure, high-capacity, low-latency wide area network (WAN) connectivity, backed by a 100% uptime service-level agreement (SLA) guarantee.



Managed WiFi

Optimize diminishing IT resources by allowing us to install, manage and support a ubiquitous WiFi solution for optimal coverage that advances your education objectives.



Dedicated Fiber Internet

Dedicated Fiber Internet offers dedicated, high-speed, scalable, nationwide internet connectivity, with symmetrical upload and download speeds and bandwidth up to 100 Gbps. The service is backed by an SLA that guarantees 100% uptime all the way to the hand-off point at your location.



Managed Router Service

Ensure your district-wide network is up to date and operating properly by relying on our fully managed routing solution offering design, implementation and monitoring.



Spectrum Business Internet®

Offer students and staff a reliable, scalable internet service with speeds up to 1 Gbps while enhancing performance and productivity over coaxial cable.



DDoS Protection

Identify and stop malicious traffic before it reaches your network via a scalable distributed denial of service (DDoS) solution that easily and seamlessly expands as your needs grow.



Managed Network Edge

Powered by Cisco Meraki, create a highly efficient network that can support a wide range of traffic and reliably connect multiple buildings or public cloud locations. Includes all the networking services you need, like secure SD-WAN, networking equipment, security, remote access and more. Gain a comprehensive view of your school grounds using Managed Network Edge smart cameras and environmental sensors for improved security and monitoring.



Managed cloud security

Protect your school devices, users and locations through trusted, cloud-based secure solutions that include zero trust network access (ZTNA), multi-factor authentication (MFA), a cloud-based firewall and identity management.



Enterprise Network Edge

Enhance your network experience and streamline IT operations with an all-inclusive platform, including SD-WAN, and offering the advanced security and flexibility to support hybrid networks and multi-cloud strategies.



Unified communications solutions for K-12 education

Seamlessly communicate and collaborate with calling, videoconferencing, messaging and more in a single application.

“It’s critical that our classes have access to the internet because that’s where content is being delivered to our students. So it’s good that we can rely on the stability of Spectrum Enterprise connectivity to all our classrooms.”

**CRAIG BLACK, IT PROJECT
MANAGER, THE SCHOOLS OF
MCKEEL ACADEMY**

Partner with a proven provider you can trust

With Spectrum Enterprise, you don’t just get a technology vendor, you get a proven partner who can meet all your connectivity needs. As your managed services provider, we offer an extensive, modern fiber network; a highly qualified team of IT professionals; local support teams; and an industry-leading SLA that offers a 100% uptime guarantee.*

Extensive K-12 education experience

For more than 20 years, our public sector team has partnered with K-12 schools of all sizes to provide tailored education technology services and help secure critical funding.

Top-notch talent working for you

We recruit and train highly qualified network technicians, acting as an extension of your IT team to help you keep pace with the speed of innovation. Our team includes 1,200+ MEF certified professionals and specialists on call at all hours — freeing your staff to focus on more strategic IT initiatives.

100%, 24/7/365 U.S.-based support

Enhance operations with protection and unmatched 100%, 24/7/365 U.S.-based support. As a single provider, we bring connectivity and managed services together to create an experience that’s reliable, scalable and efficient.

Learn how you can leverage funding programs for managed services that support the creation of a technology and digital education-rich learning environment.

[Learn More](#)

*100% uptime SLA guarantee applies only to Dedicated Fiber Internet, Ethernet Services, Cloud Connect and Enterprise Trunking.

1. “[K-12 Bandwidth Goals](#),” EducationSuperHighway.
2. “[2023 Report on School Connectivity](#),” Connected Nation and Funds For Learning.
3. “[2023 State of EdTech Leadership](#),” Consortium for School Networking (CoSN).
4. “[2023 E-Rate Trends Report](#),” Funds For Learning.
5. “[K-12 Bandwidth Goals](#),” EducationSuperHighway.
6. “[2023 State of EdTech Leadership](#),” CoSN.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. “[Eligible Services Overview](#),” Universal Service Administrative Co.

About Spectrum Enterprise

Spectrum Enterprise, a part of Charter Communications, Inc., is a national provider of scalable, fiber technology solutions serving many of America’s largest businesses and communications service providers. The broad Spectrum Enterprise portfolio includes [networking and managed services solutions: Internet access, Ethernet access and networks, Voice and TV solutions](#). The Spectrum Enterprise team of experts works closely with clients to achieve greater business success by providing solutions designed to meet their evolving needs. For more information, visit enterprise.spectrum.com.