

# Forsyth County Public Schools Leads the Way with Xirrus High Performance Wireless Arrays



Established in 1860, Forsyth County Schools (FCS) was one of the first free public school systems in Georgia. Today, it's the largest employer in the county with over 5,600 full time and substitute teachers who serve close to 36,000 students on 35 campuses.

To fulfill their technology-driven learning initiatives and pave the way for the integration of future advancements in education, FCS needed to deploy a full-scale wireless initiative. Over several years, FCS vigorously tested and evaluated all the traditional wireless vendor products in their search for a solution that exceeded their density and coverage requirements. Only the Xirrus wireless network was capable of supporting hundreds to thousands of simultaneous connections per school.

## Leader in Education Innovation Installs Xirrus Wireless Arrays

As a leader in education innovation, Forsyth County Schools has made technology a focal point in order to meet the needs of "today's" students. For them, mobility is the new norm. Primary and secondary students are growing up around wireless connectivity. To support students in an increasingly mobile world, schools like FCS must integrate wireless into their connectivity strategy and deploy a solution that is fully upgradable to 802.11n. Xirrus delivered the wireless performance and user density FCS needed to support hundreds to thousands of simultaneous users.



Forsyth County Schools serves close to 36,000 students and is the largest employer in the county with over 4,100 full-time employees and 1,500 substitutes.

### Infrastructure requirements included:

- Support 36,000 students and 4,100 staff members across 35 campuses
- Wireless coverage to support roaming laptop carts and 1:1/BYOD initiative
- Reliability to service thousands of simultaneous users

### The Xirrus solution provided:

- Improved device and user density and throughput with 4 to 16 radios per Array
- Greater coverage with high-gain directional antennas
- Distributed intelligence in each Array with no central controller
- A modular platform for simplified capacity expansion and field upgrades
- Easier installation and network integration with on-board switch, firewall and management
- Increased RF security with a dedicated threat sensor in each Array

### Benefits:

- Xirrus delivered the performance and user density needed with the same quality of service as a wired network.
- Xirrus delivered robust wireless for laptop carts and 1:1/BYOD initiative, servicing thousands of devices.
- Xirrus delivered a simple, efficient and cost effective solution, with scalability for future technology advancements.

Compared to competitor's estimates, the Xirrus wireless network provided more reliable wireless access with approximately 70% fewer devices, which reduced both implementation and management costs.

The difference? Compared to conventional thin APs plus closet controllers, the unique Xirrus Arrays integrates 4 to 16 radios, high-grain directional antennas, a multi-gigabit switch, controller, firewall, and threat sensor into a single access device. Together this provided 4X the coverage and up to 8X the bandwidth and capacity, which is perfect for high user density and throughput needs in auditoriums, classrooms and residence halls. When it comes to wireless networking for education, no company does it better than Xirrus.

"Let me say it straight—if you are thinking about putting a wireless network in a K-12 educational environment you should have Xirrus on your short-list for evaluation. We did extensive testing over the years and determined that Xirrus was the best fit for our extensive educational enterprise," stated Bailey Mitchell, CTO and CIO for Forsyth County Schools. "With Xirrus, we are able to provide our students, teachers, and faculty high-performance broadband wireless access throughout our district - enabling them to pursue new methods of teaching and communicating without worrying if the infrastructure can handle it."

To illustrate the challenge, Xirrus was the only wireless vendor willing to work with Forsyth County Schools as a partner to help them plan, implement and execute their wireless vision.

"On top of the resource savings, Xirrus performed active site surveys at all our schools, took the time to sit with us and plan the implementation, and then carefully executed the installation alongside us at no additional charge. Many vendors talk about partnerships, but Xirrus actually delivers on it. Xirrus took the time to educate us," said Mark Klingler, director of technical services at Forsyth County Schools.

### The Xirrus Advantage

With the explosion of smartphones and tablets, mobility has become ubiquitous. People expect to connect wirelessly. Organizations depend on high-bandwidth to send and receive voice, video and data, from any device to any one. And no one delivers better than Xirrus. Our array-based solutions are unique. They draw from cellular tower design principles to provide wired-like reliability, increased user density and capacity plus superior security. They perform under the most demanding conditions and have lower infrastructure requirements. When integrated with business and IT objectives, they help you do more than ever before.

At Xirrus, we apply the "best practices" of wired networking to wireless infrastructures by distributing the intelligence to the edge and outfitting the Array with dense multi-state radios in the same manner as a wired switch. That's how Xirrus delivers the best performing, most scalable wireless solutions in the industry. It's a strategic IT infrastructure advantage that fuels organizations. Because Xirrus does wireless networks right.



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