

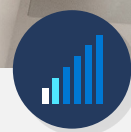


## Transforming education through greater accessibility and adaptability

Wichita Public Schools, part of the Wichita Unified School District (USD) 259, is the largest school district in the state of Kansas serving nearly 50,000 students. The district includes 7,000 teachers and staff serving across more than 90 schools and special program sites. In 2020, during the pandemic shutdown, the school required an agile and scalable communications platform to enable virtual learning, remote working and reliable collaboration between students, staff and parents, and to do so quickly.

The solution had to allow parents and students to connect and engage with the online classroom experience. Teachers had to communicate with parents to offer encouragement and provide educational resources. Instead of using personal devices and home phones, the IT department wanted to transition to Microsoft Teams for the district's teachers and support staff who had difficulties communicating outside of the school's infrastructure while working from home.

Additionally, the solution had to integrate with the school district's existing UC infrastructure and have the flexibility of supporting a reliable hybrid work environment.



A scalable, fully integrated system that combines voice, unified messaging and unified communications



Future-ready the school for unexpected disruptions, weather emergencies and other fast-changing circumstances



Rapid deployment to a user base of 7,000 employees in 4 short weeks



Access to a secure and highly flexible hybrid work environment

### INDUSTRY:

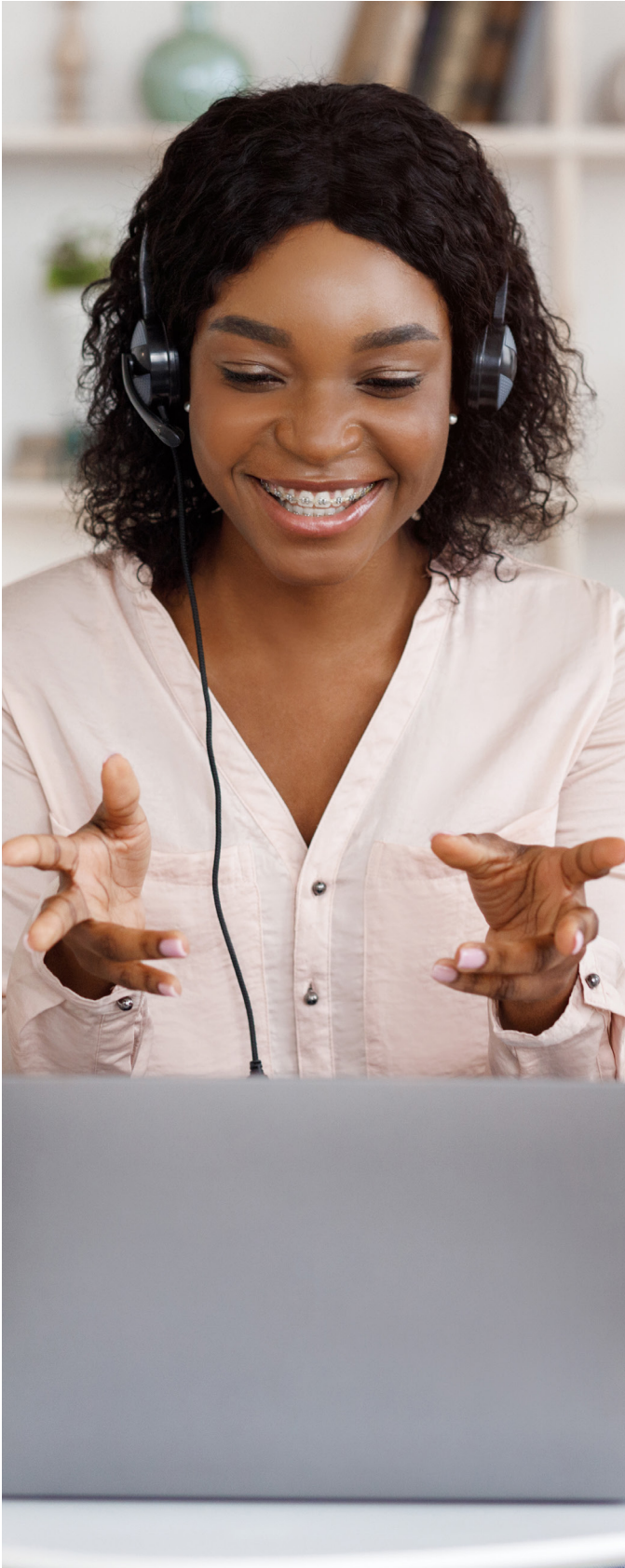
Education

### VERTICAL:

Public schools

### INDUSTRY SCENARIO:

Allow for virtual learning, remote working alongside reliable parent-teacher interactions using a shared system accessible with a low barrier to entry.



## Finding the right route to collaboration

Initially, the school district considered providing users with mobile phones to allow them to operate from home, but the cost proved prohibitive from both an initial investment standpoint and monthly recurring cost. This was further complicated by the logistics of publishing new mobile phone numbers for all the teachers and staff.

As the school was already using NEC's on-premises Unified Communications (UC) system and Microsoft Teams, the IT department asked NEC to develop a solution. The result was a Microsoft Teams-Certified NETWORK CONNECT direct routing solution along with a calling plan that provided PSTN access to all users from their Microsoft Teams applications. Teachers and staff could route their calls to existing DIDs (direct inward dialing) to Teams as well as to their NEC UC platform's desk phones.

The Microsoft Teams Direct Routing with NEC NETWORK CONNECT provided the school with required elements of the PTSN integration, visibility and control over their entire telecom/UC platform, including Microsoft Teams connectivity, down to the individual call. It also included all carrier connect services, leveraging machine-to-machine (M2M) and artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms to provide unmatched carrier redundancy, regulatory compliance, and automatic failover for high availability.

The solution developed in collaboration with NEC took only four weeks from start to finish and provided the school with a modern approach to hybrid accessibility and academic achievement. It empowered faculty, staff, students and parents, providing them with next-generation technology and access to skills development and learning. It ensured that the school could maintain rich home teaching, remote advising and teacher collaboration during the pandemic, and now ensures that all users can continue to work seamlessly and independently from anywhere.



## An education innovation

The NEC solution uses hundreds of PSTN carriers and routes calls through the most cost-effective carrier network in real-time for consistent cost savings. Without any upfront investment or changes to daily operations, the school could switch to the platform and experience reliable service, increased network availability and a centralized and consolidated network management solution.

The platform offers the school enhanced security with compliance for emergency calling within a fully scalable system that can adapt to meet changing academic requirements. It is compliant with Kari's Law and the RAY BAUM's Act and has given the school the reliability it needs to ensure consistent service delivery.



Our students are being empowered. During the pandemic, nearly 50,000 students switched to virtual learning. In four weeks, 7,000 Wichita USD 259 employees moved to NEC's intelligent call routing, NETWORK CONNECT, integrated with Microsoft Teams. Our students are being empowered with 21st-century skills and knowledge. The silver lining during these difficult times is that we're better prepared for disruptions, weather emergencies, and other fast-changing circumstances thanks to our partnership with NEC."

**said Rob Dickson,  
CIO of Wichita Public Schools.**



# NEC

## About NEC Corporation of America:

NEC Corporation of America (NECAM) is a wholly owned subsidiary of NEC Corporation ([www.nec.com](http://www.nec.com)), a global technology leader with a presence in 120 countries and \$27 billion in revenues. NECAM is a leading technology integrator providing solutions that align with our customers' priorities to create new value with a special interest in safety, security and efficiency. One of these solutions is NETWORK CONNECT, which provides PSTN connectivity and reliability for Microsoft Teams users.

## About Wichita Public Schools:

Inspiring future leaders and empowering each student with the 21st-century skills and knowledge necessary for success drive "Team 259" toward greatness every day. Wichita Public Schools provides unparalleled opportunities for students - in the classroom; by participation in service and extra-curricular activities; because of extraordinary and safe school facilities; regardless of ability, language needs, background.



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