

Berkeley County Schools in West Virginia — Case Study



BERKELEY COUNTY SCHOOLS COUNT ON THE SPEED
AND DEPENDABILITY OF FRONTIER'S COMMERCIAL ETHERNET

Berkeley County is located in the Eastern Panhandle of W.Va., about 65 miles northwest of Washington, D.C. The county has a population of approximately 110,000 and continues to grow as a bedroom community for commuters who work in the Washington/Baltimore metro area. Berkeley County Schools serve a student population of over 18,600 with four high schools, six middle schools, six intermediate schools and 16 elementary schools. Their mission is to “provide educational excellence for all.”



Berkeley County Schools put out a request for proposal (RFP) in 2013 for Commercial Ethernet and other communications services. David Kenney, Director of Research & Technology, notes, “We published this RFP for two reasons: The Federal Trade Commission’s E-rate program requires us to get

competitive bids to qualify for funding, and our state also requires us to get bids for projects over a certain dollar amount.”

Frontier Helps Ease Education Challenges

“We’re a fast-growing school district. We added 400 students this year — a big jump — and while this growth is wonderful, it does present budget challenges. The amount of tax money coming in is decreasing because real estate and home prices are decreasing,” explains Kenney.

Frontier was selected by Berkeley County Schools following the RFP. Explains Kenney, “Frontier’s Commercial Ethernet service provided the fiber technology and professional services we needed at an excellent value.”



Speeds for Today and Tomorrow

The entire school system is now equipped with Commercial Ethernet service from Frontier. Speeds at the sites were selected according to the number of users and devices:

- 11 sites with 30 Mbps
- 14 sites with 50 Mbps
- Nine sites with 100 Mbps
- Three sites with 1 Gbps

Kenney says, “Frontier provides these dedicated amounts to each school and the ‘pipes’ are meeting our needs today. If we have to increase speeds in the future, Frontier Commercial Ethernet makes that easy to do.”

Prior to coming to Frontier, Berkeley County Schools had a shared WAN with 1 Gbps, used by all the schools, plus a 200 Mbps connection from the district office to the state. Says Kenney, "Those old speeds were not adequate. With Frontier, we increased the 200 Mbps connection to 1 Gbps."

Working Together for a Smooth Transition

Berkeley County Schools experienced a smooth transition from their previous Ethernet provider to Frontier. "I was impressed by how well Frontier met our deadlines. Our schools absolutely had to be online by July 1 or sooner and Frontier put plenty of people on our project to make this happen. Frontier went the extra mile for us by installing fiber to one of our schools that didn't have it previously. For 6-8 weeks, Frontier's people worked closely with a couple members of our Berkeley County Schools team and this cooperation helped make it such a successful project," notes Kenney.

Manny Arvon, Superintendent of Berkeley County Schools, remarks, "Access to high-speed broadband is now a vital infrastructure component of the K-12 school environment. Frontier provides state-of-the-art technology, scalable bandwidth architecture, and an incredible corporate commitment to our state and county that is necessary for a world-class business partner."

24/7/365



Dependability and Responsiveness

Kenney greatly appreciates the dependability of Frontier's Commercial Ethernet. He says, "Our users within Berkeley County Schools generally only give feedback when there's a problem. We've had no complaints from users since our switch to Frontier, which is great."



Very responsive customer service was also a welcome change for Kenney following the school district's switch to Frontier. He explains, "With Frontier, it's easy for me to get in touch with our account executive whenever I have a question. This was not our experience with our previous provider. Frontier is working hard to meet our needs, which will change over time. For example, we've built new schools and are now doing a major remodel in one of our middle schools. I know Frontier will be with us every step of the way."

“For 6-8 weeks, Frontier's people worked closely with a couple members of our Berkeley County Schools team and this cooperation helped make it such a successful project.”

— DAVID KENNEY, DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY, BERKELEY COUNTY SCHOOLS

To find out what Frontier Business Edge can do for your school or learning institution, visit us at frontier.com/businessedge.

