



# CASE STUDY: EDUCATION/E-RATE SOLUTIONS

## East Central BOCES implements Distance Learning for equal access learning in 18 rural school districts



The East Central Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) in eastern Colorado faced the daunting challenge of providing member school districts with equal access to advanced educational opportunities for students in rural school districts. East Central BOCES is a consortium that provides educational support services to 21 school districts in central eastern Colorado.

To achieve this objective, the consortium partnered with Affiniti, Colorado State University, Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado University and the Colorado Department of Education to bring a state of the art distance learning video conferencing network to each school. The project was initially funded with a Rural Utilities Service grant and support from member school districts. Mark Ricken, a driving force behind this project since its inception and superintendent of the small, rural school district of Arriba/Flagler says, "To survive in our small and isolated school districts, we have to think outside the box. This distance learning system will allow us to bring in quality foreign language and upper-level classes that we might not otherwise be able to provide."

The Video Network for Education and Training Services (VNETS) WAN connects 18 rural school districts. The WAN's unique design uses fiber and wireless to provide 1 Gbps on the fiber side to 100 Mbps connections on the wireless side. Affiniti was selected through the RFP process to assist in engineering and implementing the project. Affiniti continues to service the VNETS WAN 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, under a leased managed agreement.

"This allows the districts to concentrate on educational opportunities, curriculum and instruction, and let those with technology expertise worry about making sure the bandwidth is available and operating correctly," says David Van Sant, superintendent of schools in Strasburg, Colo.

### ► Challenge

Wanted to provide equal access to advanced education to rural students (NCLB)

Limited bandwidth and lack of QoS would not support distance learning

### ► Solution

Hybrid fiber and licensed wireless WAN delivers QoS enabled bandwidth to support technology initiatives.

### ► Results

Distance learning allowed:

- Instructor to be shared across district boundaries
- Students to attend college level classes
- Students attend virtual fieldtrips around the world

[www.affiniti.com](http://www.affiniti.com) / 866-949-6631