

Case Study

Kingsland Elementary School and High School

Spring Valley, Minn.

Schools improve clock system reliability, integrate building systems and experience more efficient scheduling with American Time.

Kingsland Schools Quick Facts

American Time solution: SiteSync IQ 10-watt wireless clock system with Ethernet time sync

Systems Integrator: Sound and Media Solutions, Rochester, MN

Number of clocks: 80 wireless clocks

Number of students: 479

Square footage: 135,701

Overview - Kingsland Elementary and High School are located in southeastern Minnesota. Their 479 students attend classes in separate wings of the same building, and operate on five schedules: regular day, early out, morning assembly, afternoon assembly and late start.

Challenge - The schools had a 2008 wireless clock system from another clock company that did not work well for their needs: Signal strength was weak and programming was cumbersome. For example, the grounds director had to adjust the bell schedule on a laptop, then carry the laptop up two flights of stairs, stand on a ladder and plug the computer into the master clock to download the bell schedule changes. Additional schedule changes had to be made in an entirely different part of the building that housed the intercom system.

In addition to that hassle, the battery packs were exclusive to the manufacturer and therefore expensive, as well as difficult to get in and out of a clock's battery cavity.

The final decision to search for a new synchronized time system was made when the grounds director discussed the programming problems with the clock manufacturer's tech support representative. The response from tech support was simply "good luck."

Solution - The frustrating discussion with tech support moved Kingsland schools to action. It chose an American Time SiteSync IQ 10-watt wireless clock system with Ethernet, which provides time synchronization via an Ethernet connection. This type of system provides pinpoint accuracy with NIST (the official world time), and is easily scalable for expansions or renovations. It also allows Kingsland to remotely schedule the timing of multiple building systems, including clocks, buzzers, bells and more.

The schools selected 80 wireless clocks that automatically update for daylight saving time changes twice each year and come with a five-year battery life. Kingsland worked with a third-party integrator, Sound and Media Solutions, to ensure that the connections between the clocks, tone generator and P.A. system were correctly working together and synchronized.

"We knew that the American Time system would give the schools the signal strength they needed for the secondary clocks to reach all areas of the school," said Marv Oesau, sales and design, Sound and Media Solutions. "When we demonstrated the system to the school and they saw how the coverage would be improved and how easy it would be to program the bell schedule, they knew they had the right system."

Results - Kingsland schools now have a reliable system in which every clock shows the same time, and schedule changes are simple and straightforward. In addition, a countdown moves students efficiently through the halls in between classes: Three tones ring when classes are dismissed, five tones when there is one minute remaining to get to class, and three tones ring again to let students know that they should be in the classroom.

"The American Time signal strength is so much stronger," said John Dols, building and grounds director, Kingsland Elementary and High School. "The teachers love the wireless clocks. Every clock, phone and computer is the same and there are no more arguments about time."

Programming the bells and tones to adjust to the school's differing schedules takes a fraction of the time that the old system required. "All the secretary has to do is pull up the Remote Connect web interface and set a reminder for a schedule change," said Dols. "That's all we need to do."

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