



## K-12 School District Implements LifeSize HD Video Conferencing Technology to Inspire Students, Enrich Learning Experiences

Barrow County Schools in Georgia is inspiring other districts across the state with its innovative approach

### Organization

**Barrow County Schools, Winder, Georgia, USA**

Located in a suburb of Metro-Atlanta, Barrow County Schools is a public school district comprised of eight elementary schools, four middle schools, three high schools and three learning centers. Headed by Superintendent Dr. Wanda Creel, the district educates nearly 10,000 students across the county.



Several different educational initiatives have been put in place throughout Barrow County Schools that utilize HD video conferencing from LifeSize.



### CHALLENGE

In order to provide the interactive, engaging learning experiences that teachers desired for their students, the school district knew that HD video conferencing technology was the solution and sought the right vendor to meet their specific needs.



### SOLUTION

Barrow County Schools implemented a mix of LifeSize® Express 220™ and LifeSize® Team 220 endpoints on portable carts throughout their schools. LifeSize® Video Center is also being used to stream/record staff meetings. LifeSize® Bridge™ is also being deployed in order to connect even more classrooms on a video call.



### RESULTS

Video conferencing technology is now being used in every grade level throughout the school district. Several different educational initiatives have been put in the place to ensure that video is providing the highest quality of education possible for students of all ages.



## Challenge

The inspiration to implement video conferencing technology in Barrow County classrooms stemmed from the single idea of one teacher. If a student asked a question that the teacher did not know the answer to, or believed an expert in that particular field could provide a more-thorough response, there was no simple way to call upon such resources. However, the teacher had an idea called “instant expert” which would be just that – a way for students to learn from leaders in their educational field. As her idea was refined by the decision makers of the school district, they realized that the best way to bring influential individuals into the classroom was through video conferencing.

However, video conferencing itself was not enough. The district sought high definition video quality, in order to make virtual instruction feel as lifelike as possible.

“The first time I saw an HD transmission, it was a live orchestra performance in Cincinnati,” said Caroline Bucky, instructional technology specialist, Barrow County Schools. “I remember the feeling of being in awe as I looked at the huge display in front of me. It felt like a personal concert, just for me. I want to recreate that feeling for students when they are in the classroom.”

### Barrow County Schools’ Key Requirements:

**HD Quality:** Images that are so sharp and immersive, students feel as if they are in the same room as their instructor.

**Price Performance:** By choosing an affordable solution, more schools throughout the district can benefit from HD video conferencing technology.

**Portability:** The video systems must be able to be wheeled from classroom to classroom with ease.



“Video conferencing technology allows our students to see things that they would have never experienced any other way.”

– DR. WANDA CREEL, SUPERINTENDENT, BARROW COUNTY SCHOOLS



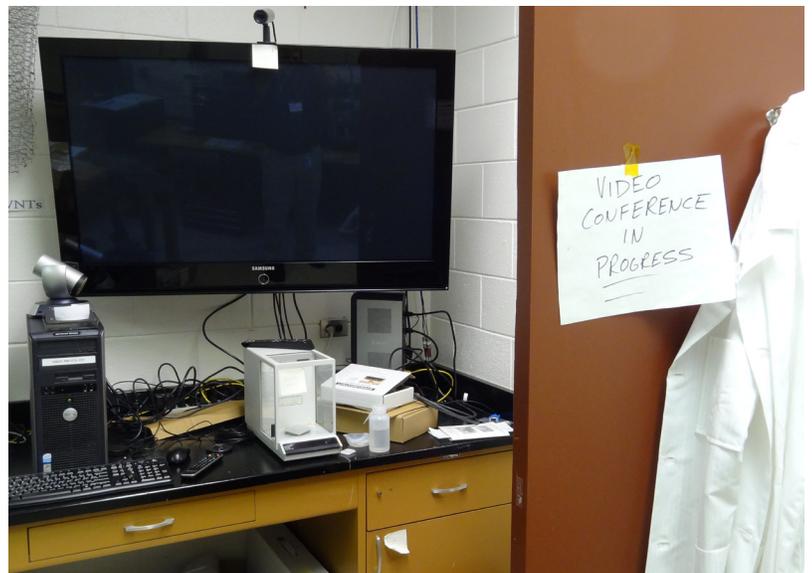
## Solution

When it came time to choose a video conferencing solution for an initial group of teachers, the school district did not have to endure an extensive evaluation process.

“Five years ago, when we first implemented video conferencing technology, LifeSize was the only vendor that provided a high definition codec,” said Ed Morrison, special project specialist, Barrow County Schools. “In order to get the quality we were seeking, the choice was simple. Even though other products in the industry have evolved, LifeSize maintained a price point that was attractive for the classroom, so we have continued to utilize it throughout the years.”

Soon, every elementary, middle and high school was equipped with LifeSize solutions.

Because the plug-and-play systems were so simple and intuitive, teachers found themselves using them on a daily basis. LifeSize Express 220 and LifeSize Team 220 endpoints were fastened to portable carts, so all classrooms could engage in video collaboration whenever needed. For teachers, all of the video lessons are aligned with existing curriculum to make the material even more engaging and interactive.





## Results

Every student in the school district is able to receive exceptional learning experiences through HD video conferencing.

In pre-kindergarten, a state senator visited a classroom for a storytelling hour. This lesson was simultaneously shared with three other schools in the district over HD video, allowing the special day to be enjoyed by even more children in more places.

In celebration of U.S. Veterans' Day, a first grade student was able to connect with her father who is currently deployed in Afghanistan with the United States Army. The entire class was able to ask him questions about his tour of duty, sing songs and share a special thank you message, all over HD video conferencing.

For a year-long project on nanotechnology, a high school science class collaborated with a professor at Georgia Tech University for guidance on their projects and to view examples of carbon nanotubes in such crystal-clear quality that the students felt as if they were in the professor's lab with him. In fact, one student was so inspired by the project she applied to attend Georgia Tech University to study nanotechnology, a dream that may have never been realized if it were not for this assignment.

"Video conferencing allows our students to see things that they would have never experienced any other way," said Wanda Creel, superintendent, Barrow County Schools. "For this county in particular, it is critical to show these students the options, opportunities and potential they all have."

Barrow County Schools is not just a collection of educational institutions; it is a K-12 research district, making strides in almost every field of academics. Whether a class is collaborating with a world-renowned scientific expert or simply hearing their favorite story, video conferencing technology is now a staple in all of the classrooms throughout the district.

"We are starting to turn heads. We have even inspired neighboring districts to adopt video collaboration solutions because of the success we have experienced from it," said Morrison. "We truly believe the best ideas come out of the classroom and with LifeSize, we are inspiring a new generation of innovators."



**In Barrow County, students of all ages utilize HD video conferencing.**



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