



Solution: NetCloud Service for Mobile ■ **Industry:** Public Sector — K-12 ■ **Use Case:** Fleet

Cradlepoint Helps California School District Ensure No Child is Left Offline

Coachella Valley Unified School District launches LTE-based 'WiFi on Wheels' to rural community



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Dr. Darryl Adams,
Superintendent for the Coachella Valley Unified School District

Summary

It's disturbing to think that still today five million households with school-aged children are not connected to the Internet — a resource that can be critical for families and student success. The Coachella Valley Unified School District (CVUSD) in California is eliminating the digital divide with Cradlepoint NetCloud Service for mobile, including routing, a WiFi access point, content filtering, GPS and telematics integration, WiFi-as-WAN, and cloud configuration. Through Cradlepoint's service, CVUSD delivered "WiFi on Wheels" across the second poorest school district in the U.S. to ensure no student is left offline.



We wanted to make sure that our students have 24/7 access to the Internet — because learning does not stop at the end of the school day. We realized we had to provide this service to our students in order for them to compete in the 21st century.”

Dr. Darryl Adams,
Superintendent for the Coachella Valley
Unified School District

Business Needs

Most families in the CVUSD live below the poverty line. They struggle just to pay rent, so at home Internet service is a luxury many go without.

“We have families that are very economically challenged. 100% of our students are on free or reduced lunch. Some of them are living at trailer home parks or in abandoned railroad cars. It’s just unbelievable some of the challenges they face,” said Dr. Adams.

This digital divide was putting CVUSD students at a real disadvantage when it comes to connected learning and educational success. Dr. Adams continues to believe that technology is critical to families and made it a priority to get his students online — but he knew this would be a challenge.

Company Profile

The CVUSD is situated just 30 minutes west of Palm Springs and sits on a vast and isolated desert. Its mission is to educate and assist students in realizing their full potential as responsible, productive, contributing members of society by providing an educational environment in which students are challenged, excellence is expected, and differences are valued. However, economic and geographic challenges make it very difficult for the CVUSD to prepare its 20,000 students for college, career, and citizenship.

Solution

Dr. Adams and the CVUSD decided to leverage resources they already had on hand — 100 school buses. The school district created an always-on learning environment by putting Cradlepoint’s cloud-managed LTE-enabled, in-vehicle routers with WiFi on its buses to keep students connected during their commute. The district then parks those buses in the most rural or disadvantaged areas to provide Internet access to students’ homes. The buses cover the school district’s 1,250 square miles — larger than the state of Rhode Island.



The equipment is powered by solar panels and funded by a community-based \$45 million bond measure passed in 2012 to fund the mobile learning initiative over 10 years.

The Cradlepoint solutions are compact, ruggedized, and highly available, making it ideal for the school bus environment. The solutions have an extensive list of safety and hardening certifications, and are engineered to protect against extreme temperatures, humidity, shocks, vibrations, dust, water splash, reverse polarity, and transient voltage. Because the solutions can be cloud-managed, it makes it easy for the school district to scale deployments and manage the bus networks in real time.

Benefits

As a result of the “WiFi on Wheels” initiative, students are becoming more engaged with their school work and the CVUSD’s graduation rate has jumped from 70% to 80%. Additionally, Dr. Adams would like to go beyond connecting students and connect everyone in the area.

“We found some of the third-party Internet service provider companies are not willing to go into some of the areas where we serve. So, in the long run, we would like to become our own Time Warner or Cox Communication and provide this for our students. It’s too crucial for them to have this access for us not to go down this path,” added Dr. Adams.



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