



Beech Grove City Schools

A small IT staff at Beech Grove City Schools needed to manage a disperse infrastructure both efficiently and cost effectively. With Novell® Open Enterprise Server running on SUSE® Linux Enterprise the district has consolidated servers by 75 percent, reduced administration time by 80 percent and significantly improved uptime.

Overview

Beech Grove City Schools is a school district for the City of Beech Grove, located within Indianapolis. The district has 2200 students and 300 teachers and its schools have received several awards for academic achievement.

Challenge

As in many school districts, Beech Grove City Schools has a limited IT budget. As a result, its small IT staff needs to efficiently manage its infrastructure across five schools and several administrative locations. The district wanted to consolidate its 22 servers scattered across these locations to provide efficient, centralized management.

The district also lacked a centralized help desk and had no efficient way to log user issues and respond to requests. Teachers often left notes or voicemail for the IT staff. Standardizing and centralizing the management of its servers and desktops would allow the staff to better serve its users.

Solution

Beech Grove City Schools selected Novell Open Enterprise Server running SUSE Linux

Enterprise to standardize and consolidate its IT infrastructure. Working with Integrity, a Novell Gold Partner™, the district standardized and simplified IT management.

“We like the stability of Linux and the ability to use virtualization,” said Teresa Kratzer, technology supervisor at Beech Grove City Schools. “Novell Open Enterprise Server running SUSE Linux Enterprise gives us all the networking services we are accustomed to from Novell but now on a Linux platform.”

Using the built-in Xen* virtualization in SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, the district consolidated 22 servers to five physical servers running multiple virtual servers. The district is running many of its applications on Linux*, including Moodle, Novell Teaming + Conferencing, Novell GroupWise®, Novell ZENworks® and a helpdesk application.

“We have seen an enormous increase in uptime with Novell Open Enterprise Server running SUSE Linux Enterprise,” said Kratzer. “We used to experience downtime at least twice a month. We now have a much more reliable operating system and can provide much better user support.”

Beech Grove City Schools at a glance:

City school district in Indiana

■ Industry:

Education

■ Location:

United States

■ Products and Services:

Novell Open Enterprise Server
SUSE Linux Enterprise Server
Novell Storage Manager
Novell ZENworks
Novell Teaming + Conferencing
Novell GroupWise

■ Results:

- Consolidated servers by 75 percent
- Reduced administration time and costs by 80 percent
- Transformed the helpdesk from reactive to proactive reducing support costs by 20 percent
- Improved collaboration among teachers and eliminated e-mail downtime

“Novell ZENworks frees us up to train teachers how to use new software, instead of spending our time fixing machines. We’ve really changed from a reactive to a proactive IT team.”

Teresa Kratzer

Technology Supervisor
Beech Grove City Schools



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Teresa Kratzer
Technology Supervisor
Beech Grove City Schools

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Novell ZENworks helps the district's small IT staff manage its servers and desktops from a central location. Using policy management, the IT staff has standardized workstations across all locations and can image a lab of 30 machines in just 30 minutes—without leaving their desks. They can also respond quickly to teacher requests to install new applications on their desktops.

“Novell ZENworks frees us up to train teachers how to use new software, instead of spending our time fixing machines,” said Kratzer. “We've really changed from a reactive to a proactive IT team.”

Novell Teaming + Conferencing gives teachers a virtual workspace to collaborate on projects on their own time, without the constraints of scheduled meetings. This allows teachers to remain in their classrooms, while working with teachers throughout the schools.

“Novell Teaming + Conferencing brings the benefits of social networking to a professional environment,” said Kratzer. “Our users are already familiar with social networking and this allows them to collaborate in teams without having to send e-mails to multiple team members.”

The district has also integrated Novell Teaming with Novell GroupWise, making it easy to share calendars to schedule meetings or lab times. This integration allows teachers to collaborate without having to leave their desks. With the help of Integrity, the district migrated 1,000 desktops in a matter of hours.

“With Novell GroupWise, it is easy to show the cost benefits compared to other solutions as it requires far less administration,” said Kratzer. “The product is extremely reliable and we only need one post office. We run Novell GroupWise on a virtual Linux server and haven't had a minute of downtime.”

The district also plans to move its desktops to a thin-client solution and use the OpenOffice.org Novell Edition to dramatically reduce software costs.

Results

With Novell solutions, Beech Grove City Schools can run its district more efficiently and cost effectively with less staff. The district has consolidated servers by 75 percent and greatly increased uptime. Centralized network management has reduced administration time and costs by 80 percent.

Novell ZENworks has allowed the help desk to be proactive, rather than reactive, which has reduced support costs by 20 percent. Novell Teaming + Conferencing greatly improves collaboration and has dramatically reduced the time teachers spend in meetings or traveling to other locations. OpenOffice.org Novell Edition will help the district reduce desktop licensing costs by more than 90 percent. Overall, the district estimates that its Novell solutions paid for themselves in the first six months.

“Without Novell, we would need a lot more money and people,” said Kratzer. “Novell has been eager to help us and offers solutions that really address our challenges.”



Contact your local Novell Solutions Provider, or call Novell at:

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