



Miami-Dade County Public Schools Use Portable PA System to Improve P. E. Instruction

Issue

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS), the fourth largest district in the country, has approximately 370,000 students, and many schools qualify for Title 1 funding. With 90 percent of its students coming from a culturally diverse background, comprehensive instruction and technology integration is essential to overcome learning barriers and provide students with a well-rounded, robust education.

Jacquelyn White, district supervisor of health education for MDCPS, is responsible for providing educators with support for curriculum implementation & development. She receives regular feedback on the technology teachers need to foster learning and development, & to provide clear instruction for physical and health education programs.

"Our teachers identified the need for flexible PA systems," said White. "They asked for a product that was easy to use and effective for field activities outdoors, as well as activities performed inside in a gymnasium."

After receiving multiple requests, White researched portable PA systems that could be used at all middle schools throughout MDCPS. Of the key benefits, White looked for a product that would prevent teachers from straining or losing their voices, be simple to operate and that was flexible enough to be used both indoors and out.

Implementation

In collaboration with Community Health of South Florida, Inc., White purchased 12 Wireless **PowerPro SD systems**, made by Califone International, Inc. The purchase was made possible through a **Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP)** grant, which provides funds to enhance physical education programs.

Each PowerPro package provides educators with a complete PA solution, including the main PowerPro SD speaker, a wireless companion speaker, a wireless handheld mic, wired mic, remote volume control, two tripods, and mic stand. Its flexible feature set can accommodate activities and events for groups of up to 2,000 people.

"For myself, and for many of our physical education teachers, there was a need for an instrument that would help project verbal instructions to large groups of students while allowing us to model desired behaviors," said George Malvestuto, physical education teacher at Homestead Middle School in Homestead, Fla.

In addition to meeting teachers' immediate needs, the Wireless Power Pro system is equipped with built-in, computer-like storage capabilities, allowing it be used not only for live instruction, but also to play pre-recorded programs and music with its CD player and full-speed USB interfaces. The PowerPro PA system also can transmit audio 300' to other wireless Califone companion speakers, allowing it to be used for a variety of large indoor and outdoor functions.

Case Study: Homestead Middle School Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Miami, FL



Results

"The single most important feature of this product is the ability to amplify my voice through the headset, leaving my hands-free for demonstration," continued Malvestuto. "This allows me to effectively teach and model a desired behavior to a large group of students."

The Wireless Power Pro systems are being used in all middle schools within Miami-Dade County Public Schools. *"Since some of the middle schools don't have gyms, many of the daily P.E. activities are held outdoors," commented White. "With the outside noise, it can be hard for teachers to be heard. Having the new PA systems, teachers are thankful to have something that helps alleviate the vocal stress of amplifying their voices."*

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In addition to eliminating vocal strain, the PA packages also help the teachers effectively demonstrate specific fitness techniques. *"Using the PA package has made specific activities that require modeling instruction, such as group calisthenics, easier," said Malvestuto. "It's allowed me to move about the fitness room while still being vocally efficient during instruction."*

The SD card and USB functionality facilitate the use of certain pre-recorded programs for verbal instruction and pre-planned activities. In his fitness classes, Malvestuto uses a variety of CD program, including **Play60**, developed by the National Football League (NFL), **FitnessGram**, developed by The Cooper Institute, and Get Fit. He also uses the Nutrition 101 and Fat Loss podcasts from **TheFitCast.com** and Diet and Fitness podcasts by **diet.com**.