



Networking & Wireless

Cypress Fairbanks ISD Upgrades Wireless for BYOD

- By **Leila Meyer**
- 06/17/15

Cypress Fairbanks Independent School District (CFISD) in Houston, TX has replaced its wireless infrastructure with a new 802.11ac system to support a bring-your-own-device (BYOD) policy for students, faculty, staff and guests.

The district serves more than 113,000 students and employs approximately 14,000 teachers and staff. With its new BYOD policy, it anticipates supporting nearly half a million wireless devices, with elementary students bringing one device each, middle school students bringing two and high school students bringing as many as three devices each. "To do this successfully, we need a reliable, high speed infrastructure that can scale, can deliver uninterrupted coverage across our schools and in the classrooms and can authenticate and provide secure access for all of these devices," said Frankie Jackson, chief technology officer for CFISD, in a prepared statement.

The district selected 802.11ac technology from **Aruba Networks** to replace its existing wireless network infrastructure. When the installation is complete, the network will include more than 8,000 Aruba **200 Series** access points both indoors and outdoors, **7200 Series** mobility controllers, **AirWave** network management and Aruba's **ClearPass Policy Management** platform.

According to the company, "ClearPass was a key factor in CFISD's decision to select Aruba." Because the wireless network will support personal devices from a wide variety of users, including students, staff and guests, the district is concerned about security, authentication and policy management. With ClearPass, the district will be able to identify each device on the network and control access to network resources based on the type of user, whether it's a student, teacher, administrator or guest.

With the network upgrade, the district hopes to "not only increase the use of technology in the classroom, but to improve overall academic achievement by allowing students to collaborate,

communicate, problem-solve and engage in creative and critical thinking," said Jackson in a prepared statement.

The district is working with **Layer 3 Communications** in Houston to implement the network upgrade. They are currently installing the system in the middle and high schools and plan to install it in the elementary schools in the fall.

About the Author

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