



## Cobb County School District

## Case Study

### The Challenge

Create efficient cooling for distributed network serving large school district in Georgia

### The Solution

The Liebert Foundation™ MCR (Mini Computer Room)

### The Liebert Difference

- Product design and quality
- Local support

### The Partners

- Joe Powell & Associates
- Corporate Network Systems

## Network At Cobb County Schools Keeps Cool With Liebert Foundation Mini Computer Rooms

### The Situation

Many of the servers on the Cobb County School District's wide area network were running in dangerously hot environments, according to tests conducted. Temperatures in 49 of the 102 cabinets tested – one at each school building – were found to be above 93° F.

The WAN had become an integral part of the operations of the Cobb County School District – at 96,000 students, the second largest in Georgia and the thirtieth largest in the U.S. Connecting all the schools with the central office, the WAN is used by teachers and staff for administrative tasks and by students for instruction, research, and out-of-class assignments. The WAN supports e-mail for 10,000 employees, 20,000 computers, 2000 printers, and hundreds of fax machines over T1 lines.

“The network is the lifeline of the school system,” said Phillip A. Hibbert, the district's chief information officer and assistant superintendent. “We couldn't take a chance on jeopardizing the network.”

### The Solution

Hibbert asked Paul Osterholt, the project manager who had conducted the tests, to come up with a solution to the cooling challenge. Osterholt's final recommendation was Liebert's Foundation Mini Computer Room with integrated air conditioning. Foundation Mini Computer Rooms had originally been proposed by Jack Harmon of Corporate Network Systems (CNS), an integrator working with the school district on another project.

Working with Joe Powell & Associates, the Liebert Rep in Atlanta, Harmon arranged for Osterholt to see the Foundation Mini Computer Room in a demanding application – keeping servers and computers cool in the Delta maintenance hangars at the Atlanta airport.



*"I'm very happy with the results. Any other solution would have taken months longer and cost much more."*

Paul Osterholt,  
project manager,  
Cobb County Schools

While the Cobb County schools were air conditioned, their HVAC systems were designed for intermittent occupancy, not 24/7 WAN electronics. In the newer buildings, the heating/cooling units served large areas. Throughout the year, they turned on in time to have the buildings ready for the workday and turned off as people went home. It would be too costly to cool a major portion of each building just to keep an electronics cabinet at the right temperature. Shutting the servers down overnight and on the weekends would have generated severe operating problems for the WAN. Exhaust fans on the existing cabinets were tried, but didn't do the job.

Liebert Foundation Mini Computer Rooms proved to be exactly the solution that was needed. They not only solved the cooling problem, but provided a complete support solution, integrating cooling with UPS power protection, physical security and monitoring options.

### **The Results**

"The Liebert Foundation Mini Computer Room was just what we needed," said Osterholt. "Installation was easy and required fewer trades than custom roof-top additions. And each enclosure is portable."

A single Foundation Mini Computer Room was ordered to test system performance. It consistently maintained an optimum interior temperature. That demonstration was followed by an order for 48 units and then an additional order of 14 units.

CNS warehoused the enclosures, delivering them as needed to designated school buildings. A typical installation took about two hours, usually during the morning, and was preceded by the installation of a new electrical circuit and data drops.

"I'm very happy with the results," said Osterholt. "Any other solution would have taken months longer and cost much more."

Just as important, he concluded, "Our Foundation Mini Computer Rooms have been very reliable."



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Printed in U.S.A. 0104

