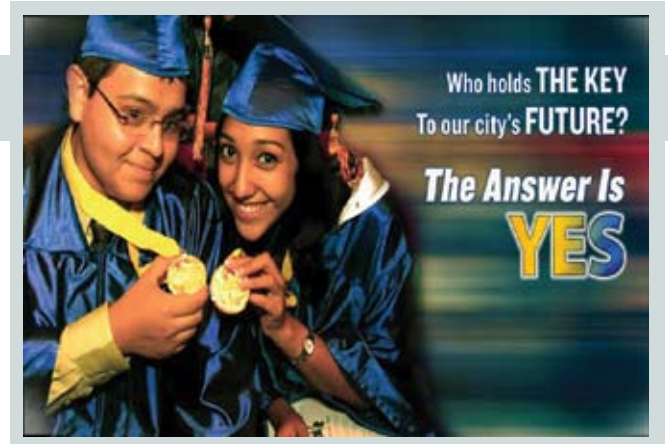


### YES Prep Public Schools

**YES Prep Public Schools** began in 1995 as a district charter school program called "Project YES" in Houston, TX. The school has now grown into a charter school system that today serves 7,600 students on eleven Houston area campuses in grades 6 - 12 while an impressive 80% of Students that attend YES Prep Public Schools are expected to graduate from college.



### The Challenge: Implement a Digital Media Solution to Improve Learning



YES Prep Public Schools adopts an education model with a rigorous college prep curriculum, small class sizes, and enrichment opportunities as well as a community oriented culture. Students gain admission to the school by a lottery held twice per year. Because it is a public charter school, students attend for free. Many of the students who attend are disadvantaged economically; the schools have 90% eligibility in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), which means that 90% of the student population is eligible for free or reduced cost school lunch. The schools are planning exponential growth in the immediate future; with a goal to reach 13 campuses and serve 10,000 students by 2014. In order to meet that aggressive goal the schools needed to implement some new technologies in order to share resources across the campuses.

### The Solution: A Hybrid Lifesize/VBrick Multimedia Solution Funded through E-Rate

Troy Neal, The Director of IT at YES Prep Public Schools, decided to pursue funding for this project through the E-Rate Program. This federally funded program makes discounts available to eligible schools and libraries for telecommunication services, Internet access, and internal connections. The program is intended to ensure that schools and libraries have access to affordable telecommunications and information services. Such a program is a benefit for schools in areas with high NSLP eligibilities as it provides the same level of technology to both the teachers and students as offered by school systems located in more affluent towns.

The school decided to deploy a pilot a distance learning program at 6 of their campuses. Their solution consists of 2 LifeSize Team 220 multipoint High-Definition (HD) Video Conferencing systems that are mounted on mobile carts located at each campus. The mobile carts allow for the systems to be moved between classrooms thus providing a significant saving versus installing fixed endpoints in each classroom. With these systems in place, schools can now share valuable resources and save on travel time.

Along with the LifeSize System, YES Prep Public Schools also implemented a VBrick Streaming Solution. Initially purchased to provide digital signage for the campuses; the school also uses the VBrick system to record, store, and playback lessons and other Video assets.

### YES Prep Public Schools

**“The planned growth** for YES Prep Public Schools is now more of a reality with a solution in place to easily share our resources across campuses,” said Troy. “In order to visit all of the school campuses you would need to drive 100 miles in a day, now we can greatly reduce travel costs and are more efficient with our time.” For example, the school has several specialized instructors that would travel between schools in order to teach classes. With the LifeSize solution in place, the teacher can use video conferencing technology for live classroom instruction, as well as share resources and collaborate with students and colleagues. The system is currently being used in Math, Language Arts and ESL courses. YES Prep Public Schools has also implemented a Video Lab where students can learn about and create video productions.



### The Benefit: New Technologies and New Teaching Methods to use Everyday



The Staff and Students had no problem accepting this new technology and new methods into their everyday use. Staff is very open to technology and use a variety of teaching methods; in fact, there was no resistance at all among the teachers. For students, they find it entertaining, and are very used to different kinds of technology being introduced to their classrooms.

In the future the school plans to deploy this solution across more of their campuses and increase the reach of their specialized instructors. In addition, they are planning to use the systems to allow Campus Directors to manage more than 1 campus at a time. Using the Video Conferencing technology will allow them manage their teams remotely. The school also plans to expand into

Instructional Coaching where student teachers can record their classroom

lessons and make them available for mentors to view and provide feedback. Likewise, mentors can make their own classroom lessons available for student viewing so they can see their mentors in action. Lastly, the school is exploring an alternate education program for students who may be under disciplinary suspension or whom otherwise cannot attend class in person.

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