

# BENBRIA

A WesleyClover COMPANY

## BlazeCast for K-12 Schools

APPLICATION NOTE

School administrators face shrinking budgets and increased safety concerns. It is more important than ever to find communication solutions that improve sharing of critical information between administration, staff and parents, while lowering administrative burden.



### Key Benefits

#### Convenience

- » Automate routine communication like absentee notification
- » Centralize communication to an entire school board

#### Minimize disturbances

- » Flexible zones for targeted broadcasts to specific areas and classrooms

#### Lower Maintenance

- » Consolidate bell scheduling, daily announcements, teacher/parent notification into one easy-to-use system
- » Save on costly maintenance with IP speakers
- » Know your paging system is wholly working without manual testing

### A Truly Integrated Communication System

School districts see improved ROI by unifying overhead paging, phone systems and bells onto one network, saving on wiring and maintenance costs.

BlazeCast can be used for day to day announcements, bell scheduling, and routine or emergency notification. Announcements can be recorded ahead of time or broadcast live. Announcements can be made from any phone, even mobile phones in an emergency situation.

BlazeCast can also be used as a notification service; notifying students and parents of snow days, school closures, or if their child was absent from class.

BlazeCast replaces phone trees and allows school administrators and teachers to focus on other tasks rather than spending a lot of time manually calling parents about routine notices.

Administrators can also use BlazeCast to quickly conference with departments, security teams, or principals of other schools, by calling out to participants and automatically bringing them into a conference without the need for bridge numbers or separate calls.

### Maintenance Made Easy

The use of BlazeCast and IP speakers such as Benbria BlazePoint, can save on expensive maintenance costs. Since these speakers are regular devices powered over Ethernet on the IP network, dedicated electricians are not needed to maintain the system, as is the case with analog speakers. Regular IT staff can install, configure, and replace IP speakers as needed. Speakers can be easily added or moved, growing with the needs of the school.

BlazeCast is also able to monitor the status of each speaker, and notify through the central web interface of any speaker failures. This reduces need for recurring extensive maintenance routines, yet ensures the paging system is always working in its entirety.



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## Increase Parental Engagement

Building a strong school community of engaged parents requires frequent, meaningful communication. Schools cannot rely on newsletters sent home with students to reach parents. BlazeCast reaches parents by phone, e-mail and other devices with key messages, and provides a real-time audit trail. It means that schools can confirm that report cards and other key messages have been received, ensuring their parents are involved with the school. Additionally, for information that requires confirmation, like a change in school hours, BlazeCast provides a record of parents confirming they have received the information, saving staff time since school administrators do not need to follow up with parents individually.

When inclement weather requires that a school be closed early, all parents need to be contacted to pick up their children or provide alternative arrangements and a clear audit trail confirming that each parent received the notification is required. When a school closure is required, BlazeCast reduces response times and improves communications.

## Improve Student Safety

In an emergency, it is critical to reach the staff, parents and students in a timely manner. Since students and staff may not have access to phones or email in class, BlazeCast's IP paging module and PC desktop alerts are two very effective ways of communicating to classrooms. BlazeCast helps enforce lockdowns and evacuations.

Additionally, pre-recorded messages for fire drills and school lockdowns reduce errors. However, this method is ineffective in communicating with parents, and other off-campus stakeholders. By integrating overhead paging with notification to personal devices like phone, SMS and e-mail into a unified interface, BlazeCast ensures administrators can communicate emergency messages to all stakeholders quickly, and effectively.

## Improve Student Achievement

One of the easiest ways to improve student achievement is by increasing attendance. BlazeCast's unified notification platform can be used to notify parents when their children are not in class and confirm that the parents received the message. School districts have seen an increase of up to 5% when parents are notified of their children's absences.

Reducing classroom disruptions is another simple way of boosting student achievement. BlazeCast includes an integrated IP paging controller enabling overhead paging to be targeted to only those locations that need to hear the message. For instance, it has the ability to page only certain classrooms, only hallways, or any other configuration. BlazeCast delivers your message as needed, while allowing other classes to continue without disruption.

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