



Corporate
Social
Responsibility

21st Century Schools Initiative

Brings Technology to Classrooms, Helps Transform Teaching, and Improves Student Engagement



The issue

Hurricane Katrina devastated school districts in Mississippi and Louisiana, displacing nearly 400,000 students, destroying schools, and delaying the school year



Cisco and innovative educators worked together to build a model for 21st-century education, using technology to better engage and educate students.

After Hurricane Katrina damaged schools and displaced students in 2005, Cisco invested US\$80 million in cash grants, product grants, and employee time to help eight school districts revamp their long-term priorities and improve student performance by introducing technology to classrooms. The four-year Cisco® 21st Century Schools Initiative (21S) equipped schools with Internet connectivity and interactive tools; trained teachers to integrate those tools into classroom instruction for greater student engagement; and helped school leaders craft a long-term vision to prepare students for a global, technology-driven economy.



Networks

Human Networks:

Cisco employees, school districts, nonprofits, technology corporations, academic institutions, parents

Technology Networks:

Network infrastructure, networked applications, network security, network management, unified communications, unified wireless, Flip Video® cameras, Cisco TelePresence® solution, Cisco MeetingPlace® solution, Cisco WebEx® solution

In Mississippi and Louisiana



100+

interns helped teachers put new technology tools into practice

54 schools equipped with interactive technologies

3500+

educators trained to use technology in classroom instruction

22 Cisco Leadership Fellows relocated to Gulf Coast region

60,000

students better prepared with 21st-century skills

Student Outcomes



16%

increase in eighth grade scores on state math assessment test in Jefferson Parish, LA *

64%

decline in student behavior incidents from 2008 to 2009 in Harrison County, MS **

50%

decline in drop-out rates in Hattiesburg, MS ***

* "Investigating the Impact of the Cisco 21S Initiative on the Jefferson Parish Public School System: Summative Report," Educational Development Center, October 2009
 ** "Investigating the Impact of the Cisco 21st Century Schools Initiative on Harrison County School District: Summative Report," Educational Development Center, Inc., October 2009
 *** "Investigating the Impact of the Cisco 21st Century Schools Initiative on Hattiesburg Public School District: Summative Report," Educational Development Center, October 2009

you + networks = impact^x



The Issue

Even before Hurricane Katrina devastated schools in Mississippi and Louisiana, students were not acquiring the skills needed to compete in a global, technology-driven world. Most classrooms lacked Internet connectivity, and instruction was not easily adapted to the way young people learn today. Because students were missing opportunities to use technology as part of the learning experience, they were also missing opportunities to develop vital critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and collaboration skills.

Human Networks

Cisco partnered with universities, businesses, and nonprofits to transform eight school districts, and moved 22 Cisco employees to the Gulf region as Leadership Fellows to help school system leaders plan, implement, and evaluate the program every step of the way. Digital Opportunity Trust trained and placed 100 interns in 21S schools to help teachers integrate technology into classroom instruction and provide technical support. Families in 21S districts were able to purchase affordable home computers thanks to micro-loans from Cisco and assistance from One Economy. Corporate partners like IBM, Pearson, and Promethean (maker of interactive whiteboards), provided classroom equipment and materials that facilitated engaging, student-driven activities. To help teachers explore new ways of delivering classroom instruction, Cisco brought in educational institutions, including Harvard University, November Learning, Schlechty Center, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, to provide professional development and technology training.

“Students are becoming immune to traditional teaching methods. They need something that keeps their attention. We can use technology to create relevant, hands-on learning experiences that stimulate their curiosity and interest.”

- Tom Sumrall, physics teacher and science department chairperson, Forrest County Agricultural High School, Brooklyn, Mississippi

Technology Networks

The 21S Initiative equipped classrooms with powerful technology tools—such as interactive whiteboards, handheld student response devices, mobile laptop carts, projectors, video cameras, and video editing software. Teachers used these tools to incorporate activities like podcasting, blogging, and moviemaking into classroom instruction, fostering heightened student engagement and greater parental involvement. Cisco TelePresence, MeetingPlace, and WebEx enabled teachers and administrators to attend professional development sessions and district meetings remotely, saving time and money.

More Information

For more information about 21S:
www.cisco.com/go/21s
contact-csr@cisco.com

Impact^x

The 21S Initiative introduced the latest technology tools to 60,000 students, many of whom had little technology experience and were without computers or Internet access at home. Through professional development and training provided by various universities and nonprofit partners, 3500 educators learned how to incorporate the most current digital tools into their classroom instruction, enabling them to engage students in powerful new ways. Designed to be a model for similar transformative programs, 21S has since been replicated in California, New York, and Sichuan Province in China.

cisco.com/go/csr 

Cisco Corporate Social Responsibility

We believe that businesses have a responsibility to operate in ways that respect and ultimately benefit people, communities, and the planet we live on; we call this Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Our core CSR philosophy is that impact multiplies whenever human and technology networks combine to solve a problem.

This is why we approach CSR the same way we approach business—by applying our technology, employee expertise, and partnerships. We are focused on four primary goals: improving the well-being of people and communities around the world, reducing our environmental impact and helping our customers do the same, conducting our business ethically, and creating a workplace where our employees thrive.