REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT (RSU) 25

10x
increase in bandwidth

100%
increase in wireless devices

54%
coverage improvement

When a small school district in Bucksport, Maine, decided to modernize its technology infrastructure, it faced a common challenge: how to bring high-speed wireless connectivity to buildings constructed as early as the 1930s. For Regional School Unit (RSU) 25, with 1,100 prekindergarten through 12th grade students spread across six buildings, aging network infrastructure created technical and educational headaches.

The buildings made modernization especially difficult. Thick brick walls blocked wireless signals. One building was essentially a 275-foot tube stacked on itself. Another spread out like a starfish, with four wings extending from a central library—designs that complicate wireless deployment. The district needed a robust, reliable and easily manageable network solution to overcome these obstacles.

Meeting modern educational needs

RSU 25 needed a network solution that could support growing educational technology demands in multiple buildings. With 16 homeroom groups across four grade levels conducting state testing and increasing device usage throughout the district, a resilient, dependable network became essential. The district's two IT staff members needed an efficient way to manage connectivity for 1,350 users.

Finding a solution

RSU 25 sought a network that would work reliably, grow with the district's needs, and stay within budget. Using federal E-Rate funding, RSU 25 partnered with New England Communications to install RUCKUS® equipment throughout the district's five buildings. The new system included:

- 101 wireless access points (WAPs) that could handle modern devices
- 33 switches that could manage increased traffic
- Two on-premises SmartZone™ network controllers that provided a clear view of the whole network
- Fiber cabling for fast, reliable connections
- No recurring licensing fees that would strain future budgets

The RUCKUS system delivered efficient network management and reliable performance. The IT team gained comprehensive visibility through a single dashboard, enabling quick troubleshooting and maintenance. The system proved especially resilient during Maine's frequent power outages, automatically restoring network services across the district.

"The centralized management lets us monitor and maintain the network from anywhere," said Jim Morrill, RSU 25's director of technology. "We can quickly address any issues right from a laptop."

Growing without growing pains

The true test of the RUCKUS network came as the district expanded its technology programs. When RSU 25 doubled its number of student devices and added interactive panels and conference hubs in every classroom, the network handled the increase without strain. RSU 25 even upgraded from analog to digital security cameras and expanded wireless coverage to outdoor spaces—without needing major network upgrades.

"We kept adding new technology, and the network just kept saying 'yes,'" Morrill said.

Keeping everyone safe and connected

The new network also solved a crucial security challenge: keeping different users and systems separated safely. Students, staff and guests each have their own secure network space. Special programs like the engineering lab and adult education have private networks. Even building heating and ventilation systems stay isolated and secure.

While esports has soared in popularity, RSU 25 has gained other benefits from the RUCKUS deployment. Esports requires a strong, high-performance network connection. To achieve this, most firewall filters need to be removed, and consoles must be able to communicate freely with each other—something Morrill wouldn't want for the rest of the district's network.

"Thanks to RUCKUS, we can make this setup work securely in the middle of our high schools," he said.

Key benefits of RSU 25's network upgrade

RSU 25's network upgrade delivered:

- Centralized management capabilities
- No recurring license fees
- On-premises housing and management
- Built-in redundancy
- Scalability for future expansion

Smooth sailing

The district's 1,350 users connect reliably, whether they're in century-old classrooms or modern labs. Students can take online tests from their regular classrooms. Teachers can try new technology without worrying about network problems.

"The system's reliability lets us focus on what matters most," Morrill said. "Our team can dedicate more time to helping teachers and students use technology for learning."

RSU 25's success has spread beyond the schools. The bus facility in Orland, Maine, and the town of Bucksport have adopted similar solutions.

About RUCKUS Networks

RUCKUS Networks designs and builds truly purpose-driven network infrastructure that meets the strictest requirements of all kinds of enterprise environments. Together with our dedicated go-to-market partners, we enable customers to deliver exceptional network experiences, making RUCKUS Networks one of the most trusted brands in the business—a loyal companion ready to help get the job done whatever it takes. RUCKUS Networks is backed by the corporate resources of CommScope, which powers many of the world's most advanced networks.

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CS-119916-EN (04/25)

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