

TANDBERG

# CUSTOMER PROFILE



Broward County  
Public Schools



- Enhance students' access to first-rate educational resources
- Expand students' cultural horizons with virtual field trips and international study programs
- Develop distance learning curriculum and connect hundreds of schools easily
- Expand the number and quality of service offerings
- Increase staff productivity

"Thanks to E-rate and TANDBERG, we're achieving our goals more quickly - and we're mentoring other school systems to do the same. And what's really exciting is that we feel we are just beginning."

DR. MARYANN BUTLER-PEARSON  
DISTANCE LEARNING COORDINATOR  
BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

#### THE CHALLENGE

Broward County had a vision - to use distance learning, based on visual communications technologies, to greatly enhance their pre-K through high school students' access to first-rate educational resources throughout their county and beyond.

By early 2001, they were well on their way to making that vision a reality. Relying on its own funding, Broward's achievements had been stunning. In only a few years, they expanded a pilot of two distance learning classes into what would become a robust program that included over 25 courses and weekly elementary and middle school programs involving more than 100 schools each year. The program has also orchestrated more than 300 field trips and special events that brought together leading experts, museums, cultural representatives, school teachers and students around the world (including schools in Europe, Africa and Asia.)

As the potential of video communications was realized, the program expanded to support adult education, staff development, administrative functions (including curriculum development and board member meetings), and more. The school system was able to expand their offering of services, increase the quality of services delivered, and increase productivity of staff (cost savings on travel and time away) - all by utilizing video.

However, with all they'd achieved, there was still much more to do. More equipment required a significant investment. Even with a highly supportive and involved executive team, there were only so many funds to be allocated. Then, in a single seminar, a world of opportunity opened up for the county. Dr. MaryAnn Butler-Pearson, Distance Learning Coordinator for Broward County Public Schools, describes it this way:

"I attended a seminar on grants and funding programs for school systems. I didn't think that E-rate funding would apply to my program - no one at our county's technology services department had indicated there was any available funding for videoconferencing. Then, under the section that listed approved hardware, I saw the word 'codec.' I nearly leapt out of my seat. This funding could directly help us realize our vision for Broward's Distance Learning program!"

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## TANDBERG Delivers An Ideal Solution

BROWARD COUNTY CHOSE TO OUTFIT THEIR SCHOOL SYSTEM WITH HIGH-PERFORMANCE TANDBERG EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING THE TANDBERG 1000 DESKTOP UNIT AND TANDBERG 880 SET TOP UNIT.

IN PARTICULAR, DR. BUTLER-PEARSON NOTES THAT BROWARD SELECTED THESE TANDBERG COMPONENTS SPECIFICALLY BECAUSE THEIR EASE-OF-USE, CONVENIENT CONFIGURATIONS, HIGH RELIABILITY AND SUPERB QUALITY MADE THEM BY FAR THE BEST FIT FOR THE COUNTY'S EDUCATIONAL VIDEO APPLICATIONS.

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## THE SOLUTION

From that moment, Dr. Butler-Pearson and her team pursued opportunities for gaining E-rate program funding for visual communications resources. Their goal was to help Broward achieve its distance learning vision for their geographically large, culturally and economically diverse school system.

"Our TANDBERG representatives were instrumental in helping us through the process of exploring, applying for, and receiving E-rate funding. There were several challenges. When we found out videoconferencing equipment qualified for the E-rate program, we had to educate our technology and grants application group and supply them with supporting information and justifications. There was a tremendous amount of information we needed to gather.

"At every stage TANDBERG helped us find the information we needed, clarify the benefits to our decision-making parties, and meet the submission deadline," concluded Dr. Butler-Pearson.

## THE RESULTS

The E-rate program and TANDBERG's support has had a significant effect on Broward County's ability to achieve its distance learning goals. In the first year of their award, the county received funding for more than 75 video communication systems from TANDBERG. This year they are applying for additional funds to continue the expansion of the program and their ability to reach out to more students. The end result is a better, richer educational experience that opens doors of opportunity for everyone involved.

"Students are more excited, involved, and engaged. Parents are confident their children are included in all the county's opportunities, no matter where they are in our highly diverse school system. Teachers are gaining the skills they need to expand the kinds of learning experiences they provide to their students. And organizations we approach, who didn't have any idea about making themselves available through visual communications, now not only contribute to Broward, but to many other 'linked in' organizations across the globe," said Dr. Butler-Pearson.

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