

# Verona Public Schools

## Strategic network transformation meant moving away from Cisco.

“Though Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise was new to us, I knew even the U.S. government uses Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise, and that was something — and it turned out to be a good choice.”

Eltion Ballaj, Chief Technology Officer,  
Verona Public Schools

Verona School District, located in New Jersey, serves more than 2300 students, and 350 staff and faculty across six campuses. The district is focused on empowering students to achieve their potential as active learners and productive citizens through rigorous curricula and personalised experiences.

The district’s strategic IT investments moved away from Cisco at its four elementary schools, one middle school and one high school to support their mission.

### CHALLENGES

When CTO Eltion Ballaj joined the school district in 2015, he discovered there was no Wi-Fi at the schools. A modern network for advanced learning - including Wi-Fi - was needed. Core to edge, upgrades were guided by a limited budget.

Verona schools explored vendor options beyond Cisco for better price and performance alternatives. Ballaj and team of three shifted to a new vendor with more local support to assure success. Since then, Verona has continued investing, including; deploying Chromebooks, creating remote access learning and building a top-notch secure LAN and Wi-Fi network that can be managed remotely.

### ACTION

Working with Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise solutions changed everything for Verona. As a valued vendor, ALE and its Sales Engineering team helped make the district’s technology transformation possible. ALE stepped in to support Verona’s IT staff, trained them and set them up for success with simplified management using the Alcatel-Lucent OmniVista® 2500 Network Management System, while delivering the cost and performance enhancements they were seeking. This year Verona Schools will deploy Alcatel-Lucent OmniAccess® Stellar Wireless Access Points across the district as part of a Wi-Fi upgrade to deliver enhanced performance and greater security.

### PRODUCTS AND SOLUTIONS

[Alcatel-Lucent OmniSwitch® 6860 Stackable LAN Switch](#)  
[Alcatel-Lucent OmniAccess Stellar Access Points](#)  
[Alcatel-Lucent OmniVista 2500 Network Management System](#)

### RESULTS

#### Technical Benefits

- Delivers performance and reliability with more than 100 OmniSwitches from core to edge
- Increased network bandwidth and security with an OmniAccess Stellar wireless network
- Delivers more secure MAC authentication and simplified product updates with OmniVista Network Management
- Supports voice communications network across district with OmniSwitch VLAN
- Deployed PoE across the district

#### Financial Benefits

- Affordable ongoing technology investment using ALE technology and E-Rate
- Affordable network refresh every 5-8 years

#### User Experience Benefits

- Teachers and students benefit from new teaching options such as remote learning
- “All are using the network without question because it works” - Eltion Ballaj
- IT staff is more productive with OmniVista Network Management platform

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### Customer Story

MARKET: **EDUCATION**

COUNTRY: **USA**

COMPANY: **VERONA  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

DEAL IMPLEMENTED: **SPRING 2022**

NUMBER OF USERS: **2300+**