



## FAST FACTS

**School:** Monroe County Schools

**Website:** [monroe.k12.al.us](http://monroe.k12.al.us)

**Location:** Monroe County, Alabama

**Enrollment:** 3,450 students in 7 schools

**Challenge:** Replacing old equipment with powerful new technology while reducing cost and simplifying teacher operations.

**Solution:** HoverCam Pilot 3

**Results:** Achieved long-term savings and increased student interaction by replacing traditional technology with HoverCam products.

**Contact:** Ms. Devlynne Barnes, Technology Director

## Stepping into Technology-Enhanced Classrooms

### HoverCam Pilot Digital Teaching Stations Transition Monroe County Public Schools into the Future of Learning



*Students are excited to learn with the Pilot 3 digital teaching podium*

As society becomes more data driven, students need to access, evaluate, and use information to be successful in college, the work force, and daily life. With that in mind, Monroe County Public Schools in Alabama is taking its goal of ensuring that students become effective users of ideas and information seriously by taking a thoughtful approach to incorporating technology into its classrooms. Because much of the technology in many of the rural school district's classrooms was reaching end of life, a strategic overhaul across the board was due. However, limited funds for the new equipment was at odds with the district's goal.

#### Searching for a Solution

"Almost 10 years ago, we were able to buy a laptop cart, an LCD projector, document camera, and a handheld interactive whiteboard for every single classroom in our district using a larger national grant," said Devlynne Barnes, Monroe County Public Schools' Technology Coordinator. "Since then, only some of our elementary schools have been able to make small upgrades with some Title 1 funding. But that funding doesn't go very far. In a years' time, we could equip maybe three or four classrooms. At that rate, it would take several years to equip an entire building, and by then the equipment would be end of life. And that's just one school."

With seven schools, nine campuses, and 3,450 students, the district needed a partner that could help identify how to make the best use of limited funds. In addition, since their high schools receive very little Title 1 funding, they needed a viable way to fund technology access for the rest of its schools. Finally, they needed purpose-built education solutions that would replicate the technology experiences students would encounter in the higher education and working world.

Monroe County partnered with Huntsville-Birmingham, Alabama-based dealer Teacher N Tools (TNT) to find a solution to meet all its requirements. TNT brought them a new, compelling option that

"This podium does it all. It does everything the teachers were already using, but it's in such a compact, efficient, and innovative way without the cable clutter that caused safety concerns. These are tools that I believe every single classroom needs to have."

~Devlynne Barnes, Technology Director, Monroe County Public Schools

would allow the district to expand its technology outreach: a Classroom Technology Management service contract. TNT is the first company in the United States to offer a service contract that allows schools to purchase new technology from their limited budget and spread the costs out over several years. The contract provides additional software, continuous training as well as maintenance of the equipment and software for the term of the contract.

What's more, TNT partners with innovative brands it trusts for enabling 21st century learning. To that end, the company recommended HoverCam's education solutions. TNT originally chose HoverCam in early 2010 as part of its exclusive distribution portfolio, making it the first dealer in Alabama to distribute the HoverCam's family of document cameras.

"Hovercam is very innovative in their energies and research for preparing classrooms for the 21st century," said Cynthia Lowery, President & COO at TNT. "Their document cameras are the best in the market, and over the years, we've seen them continue their commitment to enabling new levels of interaction and learning in the classroom with new solutions."

### **The Pilot**

For Monroe County, TNT recommended HoverCam's new Pilot 3 teaching station. It's the digital podium purpose-built for teachers to bring a new dimension and interactivity to the classroom by eliminating the complexity of disparate classroom equipment such as laptops, document cameras, microphones, video switching, and sharing systems that can be difficult to operate and disrupt valuable classroom time and student focus. A multi-award-winning solution, the Pilot 3 solves these operational and management hurdles by combining the audio, video, and digital content elements of these devices in an all-in-one wireless mobile podium. It gives educators a leg up on using advanced

technology that requires minimal training and is intuitive and easy to use. The Pilot allows them to seamlessly instruct the class from anywhere, not just from their desk or from the front of the classroom.

Pilot 3 integrates a Windows PC, 13MP document camera, and 21-inch touchscreen with wireless HD mirroring functionality, so any device content and touch annotations can be beamed to any interactive flat panel, projector, or TV in the room. The document camera's built-in microphone enables educators to capture high quality audio. And with HoverCam's ClassFusion classroom management software, every lesson, interactive whiteboarding, annotation, and desktop marking can be recorded and saved to the cloud for students to access anywhere, anytime, and from any device or browser — making it the perfect solution for both flipped and active learning classrooms that encourage creative thinking. The integrated classroom solution was exactly what Monroe County had in mind.

"The Pilot really is in a class by itself. It has the tools that teachers use the most, wrapped together in the most convenient, neat, and just efficient bundle," said Barnes. "Right now, our focus is trying to get students more engaged and participate in new ways, especially in our middle school and high schools where teachers are often just standing at the front of the room and presenting. With these tools, the students can get up, touch the screen, interact, and be involved during lessons."

### **Crowd Pleaser**

At the end of 2018, the district rolled out installation of the Pilot starting with all the classrooms at Monroeville Middle School and a few classrooms at Excel Public School. The Pilot has been met with enthusiasm, even from teachers who weren't keen on solutions put in place in the past.

"This podium does it all. It does everything

the teachers were already using, but it's in such a compact, efficient, and innovative way without the cable clutter that caused safety concerns," said Barnes. "These are tools that I believe every single classroom needs to have."

With TNT support, the district now has access to HoverCam, professional development, and technical support. Since the district is so small with only three people forming its technological staff, it was important to find an education solution that would be seamless to install, wouldn't require hours of training, and wouldn't require costly maintenance.

"The Pilot paired with interactive flat screens was a no brainer when we factored in the costs of the bulb replacements for the aging projectors in many of our classrooms and involvement of other solutions," said Greg Shehan,

superintendent. "With this package, we can quickly meet our goal of preparing our kids when they leave our classrooms and go on to technical schools or four-year colleges where they have this type of technology. We're preparing our kids to step right in and succeed."

Cynthia Lowery, President & COO, stated "the innovative thinking and planning of the Superintendents, Dr. Zickeyous Byrd, and Greg Shehan along with County Boards of Education has given the faculty, and most importantly, the students of Conecuh and Monroe County a major advantage. Regardless of the path these students may take in the future, having the advantage of such cutting-edge technology in the classroom will serve them well for many years to come. We are delighted to be a partner in these endeavors."