



# Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District Standardizes on Extron PoleVault® Systems

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**Bob Blackney**  
Director of Technology Educational Services  
Placentia-Yorba Linda USD

Since 2007, the award-winning Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District in Northeast Orange County, California, has made Extron **PoleVault Systems** a central component of its “smart classroom” program. The program, involving the adoption of 21st century technology in classrooms all across the district, has been driven by the district’s vision to promote active learning and student engagement. According to PYLUSD officials, the program has been a remarkable success. Teachers and students alike have enthusiastically embraced the new technology and the district has provided extensive hands-on training.

## 21st Century Classroom Technology

PYLUSD serves the cities of Placentia, Yorba Linda and parts of Fullerton, Brea, and Anaheim. Geographically, it’s a large school district, covering 45 square miles and including 22 elementary, 6 middle, and 5 high schools, in addition to 2 home schools. Total district enrollment is approaching 30,000 students. Installation of the new classroom AV technology in every classroom in the district was completed last year.

Each classroom is outfitted with a projector, interactive white board with student response system, document camera, DVD player, and PC. Projector mounting, signal input switching, audio, and control are all handled through the PoleVault System. Each room was designed with two easy-to-use Extron MediaLink® controllers, which allows the teacher to control the classroom AV system from either the front or back of the room.



"I don't know if there is another school district in the country that has all of these features available in 1,000 classrooms," says Dr. Dennis Smith, Superintendent of Placentia-Yorba Linda USD. "We are so proud of the opportunities these technologies are creating for our students."

School officials considered many factors in the selection of AV equipment for the classroom, including features, specifications, and the cost of acquisition, installation, and operation. "We reviewed solutions from other manufacturers and Extron PoleVault Systems provided the best overall value," says Bob Blackney, Director of Technology Educational Services for Placentia-Yorba Linda USD

**Enhanced Audio**

Voice amplification in each classroom is provided by the Extron **VoiceLift Microphone**, an infrared wireless microphone system that enables teachers to be heard clearly throughout the classroom. The rationale for the voice amplification system is very simple: How well students hear a teacher affects how well they learn. The more they hear, the less they have to strain and guess, and the better chance they have of understanding the lesson.

Teachers and students alike benefit from the quality of the audio system. "The VoiceLift system is providing benefits for both our faculty and students. Teachers say they have more energy by not having to project their voice all day, and students comment that they do not have to work as hard at listening," says Blackney.

**Enthusiastic Reception**

One of the key reasons for PYLUSD's success with the technology is the district's commitment to provide professional development and training for the teachers. Many teachers have participated—on their own time—in courses designed to help them learn to use the equipment.

"One key benefit of Extron Classroom AV Systems is their transparency," says Bob Blackney. "They never go down and are so easy to use that our teachers hardly recognize how much technology is happening behind the scenes."

The training classes are taught by Placentia-Yorba Linda USD teachers who have already been using the new systems in their own classrooms. Teachers who participate in the training receive experienced direction on best practices for incorporating the new technology into their teaching plans.



Each classroom features two easy-to-use MediaLink controllers, allowing the teacher to control the classroom AV from the front or back of the room.



The VoiceLift Microphone works in concert with the PoleVault System amplifier and speakers to evenly distribute the teacher's voice throughout the classroom.



With PoleVault Systems, switching and audio amplification equipment are securely mounted above the projector.



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