

# Wiring A Campus for Student-Centered Learning

for Kaohsiung American School



**In order to prepare students for the future, they have to be equipped for the future.**

## Overview

Kaohsiung American School (KAS) is a private, non-profit, co-educational PreK-12 institution located in Kaoshiung, Taiwan.

In the spring of 2013, KAS began plans for the construction of its new campus, a next-generation learning environment for 560 students. At the time, the school's network served approximately 600 nodes/clients (75 desktop and 425 laptops/tablets). By prioritizing ubiquitous access and associated wireless connectivity, KAS aimed to deliver the finest 21st century-ready education in the region.

## Challenge

“The way the IT needs were set up didn't even match where we were, even then in 2013,” says Victor Boulanger, Director of Learning Technology at Kaohsiung American School. At the East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS) Leadership Conference in 2013, Boulanger met with 21CLI, asking us to oversee the integration of technology into the KAS building plans and to recommend IT standards for the new campus' classrooms, offices, and learning areas.

Our mission: to design a technology-friendly campus that would empower the school's philosophies of transparency and student-centered learning.

## Our Approach

We began our engagement by embedding with KAS, observing how the school operated and noting how we could bring the campus' technology plan into close alignment with its values. Here's what we learned:

### Our Approach

The new campus was designed to be open and collaborative, facilitated by abundant natural lighting. How would we integrate technology without altering the building designs?

The design of the new campus placed an emphasis on transparency, perhaps best embodied by the media center and library located at the center of campus. The space would be completely covered by windows, allowing the community to witness ongoing activity from all directions. Similarly, classrooms would boast windows on either sides, facing both outside of the building and the corridor.

To underscore this theme of transparency, we landed on a wireless solution, which could allow the infrastructure to be directly integrated and hidden into the building itself.

### KAS Fosters a Flexible, Student-Centered Environment

At KAS, students are encouraged to take control of their own learning. How would we design flexible classrooms in support of that goal?

21CL explored technologies and building designs that would help KAS support its emphasis on student-centered learning. With students often being encouraged to take leadership roles by leading discussions or presenting to their peers, it was paramount that we designed classrooms with flexibility in mind. Strong wireless systems and connectivity would allow students to easily access the network with their own personal devices to take control of their own learning.



### KAS fosters a flexible, student-centered environment

The small IT department went without an office in the original designs. How would we create a technology support center to better suit their needs?

We immediately recognized the unmet needs of the IT department. Unlike schools with large technology departments that separate IT and learning technology operations, KAS only retained a lean staff of three employees at the time. We hypothesized that centralizing all tech-based learning within one hub would build continuity between the effective delivery of IT learning experiences, dedicated technical support, and the involvement of the rest of the school's community.

"21CLI spent more time researching the school, understanding the plan, and the school mission. They did an excellent job. They did not come in to impose their vision on us. They really worked with us. Together, we drafted a solution. They really listened to us."



**Victor Boulanger**

Director of Learning Technology, Kaohsiung American School

## Results

21st Century Learning worked closely with the IT department to review and discuss their building designs, reviewing all related aspects from the wall finishing and furniture to the technologies and professional development opportunities. Together, we established IT standards for classrooms, offices, and other learning areas balanced for both the current and future technology needs of the school.

"In laying the plans for our new campus, we realized that technology was a driving force requiring expert advice to make informed decisions. With the knowledge and experience of 21st Century Learning on our team...we know we did our homework well and used accurate data to personalize the design of our technology infrastructure and strategic plan for KAS. We will truly have a state of the art facility designed to meet the needs of our students and staff."



**Tom Farrell**

Superintendent, Kaohsiung American School

Today, the new KAS campus boasts state of the art technology infrastructures designed to suit the needs of the students and the staff — with the ability to support a 1-to-1 environment where every student is provided with a laptop. It's a setup that enables active learning, equipping its community with the technical and infrastructural support systems to achieve more.

Most of all, this setup effectively aligns with the school's dream of growing an educational community that is open and engaged.

"Technology is one piece of it. Enough space was given to the students, to allow them to be so much more creative with the things they do. Our art teacher had his art students create gladiator-style costumes and do a mock fight Roman-style on one of the patios we have. The entire school could perch themselves on the balconies and look down on the area to cheer them on. That's impossible if you don't have the facilities. We already had a really incredible school, but it just didn't show well. We were in the crummiest of facilities. The building has caught up with the quality of the people inside."



**Victor Boulanger**

Director of Learning Technology, Kaohsiung American School

A successful school requires both hardware and software designed with the next generation in mind. 21st Century Learning is proud to help Kaohsiung American School realize its vision of success based on flexibility and innovation — ingredients of the future.

## **Client**

**Kaohsiung American School**

## **Location**

**Kaohsiung City, Taiwan**

## **Services**

**Technology Audit**

**Review & Planning**

**Acquisitions & Implementation**

## **About 21st Century Learning**

21st Century Learning International (21CLI) is run by highly experienced educators and delivers world class conferences and events. 21CLI also provides consultancy services for schools and school groups with a special emphasis on the use of technology for administration, learning and teaching



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