



OHIO MID-EASTERN REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY



Industry: Education Technology

Organization: OME-RESA (*Ohio Mid-Eastern Regional Education Service Agency*)

OME-RESA is one of the Information Technology Centers (ITC) of the Ohio Education Computer Network, and today serves 55 school districts and related agencies in its region. Primarily serving K-12 public, private and charter schools, OME-RESA is instrumental in the pursuit of technology-enabled education, providing internet services and financial support to school districts as well as maintaining and delivering student information services and software.

High-quality, cost-effective technology is quickly becoming key for students and schools that want to access the best learning resources and opportunities. As a long-standing institution in the state's educational evolution (OME-RESA has been serving the state since 1974), the role and importance of this organization to the 10 counties and nearly 60,000 students it supports in southeast Ohio has grown significantly over the years. Especially in such a rural location, ensuring continued opportunities with the most up-to-date technologies and robust connectivity are paramount for student and administrative success.

Today, OME-RESA's array of educational and community technology solutions are a cornerstone of the region's continued digital development.

Horizon Solution:



Fiber Broadband

Business Challenge

As an institution dedicated to serving communities and schools throughout a segment of rural Ohio, OME-RESA is committed to being a trusted partner and provider of innovative services that enhance student learning and operations. Over time, schools sought to incorporate more online platforms for state-required testing, administration increasingly relied on their own software platform for school management, and desirable educational technology pushed the region's digital transformation further and further.

With these applications, reliable, secure and high-speed internet connectivity became non-negotiable. Without the proper foundations, these online platforms and resources couldn't be adequately leveraged by students, teachers or administrators, and the districts' legacy internet connections quickly became unsuitable for the new needs of students and administration.

Further complicating this digital transformation was the fact that, due to their rural location, these Ohio school districts were limited in their choice of internet service and telecom provider. Only one large telecom provider was present in the area, and its network reach was limited to the areas where they were sure they could achieve robust return on investment, leaving many rural areas underserved. Due to the remote nature of this large provider's teams and business locations, the schools that utilized this major provider suffered through outages that could last for days before a team from the network could ameliorate the situation.

OME-RESA knew that it had to build a partnership with a local, trusted network provider that was just as dedicated to community betterment as they are and could deliver the game-changing, robust connectivity their schools needed.

"Aside from the vast array of benefits we get from Horizon's local, customized partnership, it's really the culture that makes our collaboration exceptional. These are people that live in our area and that understand our situation. We enjoy a hometown feel from Horizon, and their team visits us, keeps us in the loop, and is very accessible. The communication is next-level, which makes the network deployments that much better, and we're simply not kept up at night with the troubles we used to have anymore," comments Adam Truex, Executive Director of OME-RESA. *"We look forward to helping all of our districts benefit from Horizon's level of service. We wouldn't want to be partnering with anyone else."*



The Horizon Solution

To efficiently and effectively meet the growing demands of school districts across the region, Horizon has helped OME-RESA revolutionize its connectivity with [high-speed fiber broadband](#). This delivers reliable, secure network connectivity — alongside extensive network support — for more than 55 school districts across the region.

With Horizon fiber in place, OME-RESA can deliver on its promise of providing access to next-generation educational tools and opportunities by leveraging a robust, future-proofed network foundation. Capacity can now always stay ahead of demand so that no school has to forego technology adoptions, and high-speed networking ensures that no applications or platforms suffer in their user experience.

For OME-RESA, this means harnessing the power to continue achieving its mission of supporting students, teachers and administrators with the most innovative resources, and unlocking new and valuable resources to support the very best education possible.

Results

After 15 years and countless projects, Horizon and OME-RESA are continuing to build out this robust connectivity to even more locations. Together, they have achieved 99.9% overall uptime in their districts with Horizon networking, and outages (if they occur) garner response within hours as opposed to days or weeks when compared to larger and more widely known telecom providers. Even more ideal is the fact that OME-RESA often doesn't even have to reach out about an outage — the Horizon team has already noted it and OME-RESA's support team already has its response in progress.

As for the future, OME-RESA hopes to soon achieve its goal of utilizing one provider across its entire footprint, and it continues to allocate more and more of its network resources under the Horizon umbrella. Despite the fact that when this collaboration first began Horizon did not have a presence in some communities where OME-RESA was providing services, Horizon's ongoing build outs ensure that it is available in a growing number of target markets. As a result, Horizon and OME-RESA are excited to continue to achieve cost-effective, robust networking results with both their current ongoing and future connectivity expansions.

The partnership between OME-RESA and Horizon has even extended beyond the classroom and associated school districts, and both entities are working together to extend these broadband networks further into surrounding communities. This offers a new choice for internet connectivity and network support to other stakeholders, businesses, families and organizations in the area, further closing the digital divide and expanding local opportunity.



Key Benefits:

- 100% state-of-the-art fiber-optic network
- Customized network and connectivity solutions for schools backed by 24/7/365 local support
- High-speed, highly secure and private broadband internet connection to support digital transformation
- Reliable connections for mission-critical teaching applications like online test-taking
- Guaranteed service through Service Level Agreements (SLA), ensuring standards for speed, bandwidth or uptime are met
- Dedicated troubleshooting from local experts reduces time to challenge resolution and keeps day-to-day operations as uninterrupted as possible

"We strive to deliver exceptional levels of dedication, partnership and service attentiveness with every project we accomplish, but our work helping OME-RESA connect its districts is close to our hearts," states Glenn Lytle, CRO of Horizon. "It might sound cliché, but children really are the future, and empowering their education with powerful connectivity and digital opportunity is not a job we take lightly. We're honored to be the provider of choice for OME-RESA's wonderful work in these communities, and we look forward to helping them achieve the benefits that come with a single-provider network footprint."

To learn more about additional Horizon solutions, visit HorizonConnects.com/business-fiber-solutions

