

APS modernizes the infrastructure behind 65,000 students' safety

How Albuquerque Public Schools modernized district-wide voice and life-safety connectivity with Lumen's IP infrastructure

Albuquerque Public Schools

www.aps.edu

- Modernized legacy POTS, T1, and analog circuits across 165 APS sites
- Migrated fire alarms, elevators, security alarms, and emergency call systems to IP and cellular gateways
- Projected to save more than \$1M annually across three modernization projects
- Built reliability into the foundation behind every classroom, alarm, and emergency call

Challenges

- Decades-old POTS and analog lines becoming unsupportable as carriers retired copper
- Rising costs and shrinking technician availability
- Mission-critical alarms, elevators, and emergency phones running on infrastructure with no modern redundancy
- A facilities portfolio ranging from a 1929 National Historic Registry elementary school to brand-new campuses

Solutions

- **Lumen® Specialty Lines** replaces legacy analog circuits with IP and cellular gateways for life-safety systems
- **Lumen® Voice Complete®** delivers modern, IP-based voice services across all 165 APS sites
- **Lumen® PRI / SIP Trunking** migrates legacy circuits to standardized call routing

Results

- Mission-critical life-safety systems migrated to modern, code-compliant infrastructure
- \$1M+ projected in annual recurring cost savings
- A foundation that protects 65,000+ students, 11,000 staff, and the families who trust APS every day



165 sites

Modernized across 300+ miles of fiber

~100,000

Connected devices supported daily

\$1M+ savings

In annual recurring costs projected across projects

Challenge

Quietly powering safety across 165 sites

Walk into Monte Vista Elementary, a 1929 building on the National Historic Registry, and the systems keeping kids safe are invisible – *behind the walls, in the ceilings*, threaded through nearly a century of construction. The same is true across all 165 Albuquerque Public Schools sites: fire alarms, elevators, security alarms, panic systems, and emergency phones all depended on legacy POTS and analog circuits that the carrier industry was actively retiring.

For a district that ranks 31st largest in the country, serves 65,000-plus students, and employs 11,000 people, that wasn't a back-office problem. NFPA fire code and elevator code require dual communication paths and 8-12 hours of battery backup at every site. A failing analog line was a compliance risk and a safety risk. With copper technicians becoming harder to find and POTS rates climbing every renewal cycle, APS leadership knew the analog era had to end on their terms, not the carrier's.

Solution

Sequencing modernization around what matters most

For APS, modernization wasn't one project. It was a three-phase journey, sequenced around what couldn't fail. The first move was financial: retiring the legacy T1 circuits that were quietly draining the operating budget. That phase alone returned roughly \$600,000 a year to the district – money that flowed back to classrooms. The second move was structural: consolidating call routing across all 165 sites onto Lumen® Voice Complete® and Lumen® PRI/SIP Trunking, replacing a patchwork of fragmented voice contracts with a single, modern IP foundation. Phase three was the one that mattered most: Lumen® Specialty Lines replaced the analog circuits behind every fire alarm, elevator, security alarm, and emergency phone with IP and cellular gateways, three-carrier failover, and code-compliant battery backup.

Behind the technology was a partnership that stretched well beyond the products themselves. Lumen's relationship with APS reaches back through Mountain Bell, Qwest, and CenturyLink. Long enough that both sides know each other's buildings, schedules, and stakes. IQ Wired brought more than two decades of experience working alongside Lumen to support customers through telecommunications change – supporting large-scale deployment coordination, anchoring a delivery model built on collaboration and accountability, and giving APS reliable, consistent support through every phase of the transformation.

Solution Set

- [Lumen® Specialty Lines](#)
- [Lumen® Voice Complete®](#)
- [Lumen® PRI / SIP Trunking](#)

"A second-to-none security portfolio doesn't happen by accident – it happens by combining the right technology, the right partners, and a clear bar."

– **Dr. Antonio Gonzalle**

Deputy Superintendent of Operations, APS

Results and Future Plans

Invisible infrastructure, visible peace of mind

With Lumen's infrastructure in place, Albuquerque Public Schools operates its life-safety and communications environment with greater confidence across all 165 sites. Fire alarm panels, elevator phones, emergency call boxes, and area-of-rescue systems run on IP and cellular gateway technology engineered for code compliance – including three-carrier cellular failover and code-compliant battery backup engineered to meet NFPA fire and elevator standards.

Voice services have been consolidated onto a single modern platform, reducing the number of carriers, circuits, and support contracts the district's IT team manages day to day. PRI and SIP trunking carry district call traffic on infrastructure that scales with enrollment and program changes rather than locking APS into fixed-capacity legacy lines. Financially, the modernization is projected to deliver more than \$1 million in annual savings by retiring the district's most expensive recurring copper-based circuits and collapsing redundant vendor relationships.

Ultimately, APS now operates on a future-ready, IP-based network foundation that supports the safety systems students and staff depend on today and positions the district for the next evolution of K-12 connectivity.