

# Colorado school district improves hearing, listening, and comprehension with innovative Lightspeed audio solutions

## IF STUDENTS CAN'T HEAR, THEY CAN'T LEARN

It's that simple, which is why lead audiologist Dr. Massine has spent the past 23 years working hard to make sure the students in the Douglas County School District (DCSD), just outside of Denver, can hear their teachers, peers, and the multimedia used in the classroom. Massine and three other audiologists support the district's 300 students with hearing loss. They also work with principals and teachers to ensure that students are able to clearly hear, allowing them to fully engage in learning.

## BIG VICTORY! AUDIO SYSTEMS NOW A STANDARD PART OF CONSTRUCTION PLANS

When Massine first started in the district, she would meet with educators, parents, and principals to figure out creative ways to fund audio systems. Often, the school PTO would step in to fundraise. Sometimes a school would receive a donation from a local company or foundation. But things have changed a lot thanks to the dedication of Dr. Massine, one principal, and a special education director.

*“Students need access to spoken instruction. Every student, even those without hearing loss or auditory processing challenges, benefit from the Lightspeed audio systems. When students move from classrooms with this technology to classrooms or schools without it, they really miss it.”*

*Dr. Massine  
Lead Audiologist*

Ten years ago, this trio researched the importance of audio systems and approached the district's building committee with a proposal to include audio systems as part of any new school construction plan. The team succeeded. For the past seven years, all new elementary schools in DCSD have been built with fully integrated Lightspeed audio systems in every classroom.

## WIRED, WIRELESS, OR MOBILE? FINDING THE RIGHT AUDIO SYSTEM FOR EVERY STUDENT AND TEACHER

Even though the new elementary schools in DCSD are all now benefitting from audio systems, there are still other schools in the district that lack the learning advantages that the audio systems provide. Dr. Massine and her fellow audiologists continue to work with teachers and principals in older schools to find funds for retrofitting with products like Redcat wireless audio systems.



## DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT CASTLE ROCK, CO

### CHALLENGE

Ensure that students are able to clearly hear, allowing them to fully engage in learning.

### LIGHTSPEED SOLUTION

Whole-room wired systems, Redcat Access and Flexcat



### RESULTS

- Students have clear and consistent access to spoken instruction
- Multimedia resources are much more effective when students aren't straining to hear audio through a teacher's laptop speakers
- Teachers no longer struggle to comfortably project their voices loud enough for students to hear.
- Students who are chosen to be "audio assistants" feel empowered and engaged
- A Hearing Assistance Technology team makes sure that audio equipment continues to work properly

It's not only students who are benefitting from Lightspeed audio systems. In buildings without built-in systems in every classroom, many teachers struggle with vocal fatigue.

***“The Lightspeed audio technologies have become an integral part of our district. Our younger students take them for granted because they’ve never known a classroom without an audio system. That’s how much our students depend on the systems and how much they know they help them learn.”***

*Dr. Massine*

“It’s amazing the difference that an audio system can make for a teacher. A few teachers have told us that they thought they were going to have to consider other options besides teaching in the classroom because they could no longer comfortably project their voices loud enough for students to hear,” said Massine. “Lightspeed has allowed these teachers to continue comfortably and effectively teaching their students.”

#### **LEVERAGING AUDIO TECHNOLOGIES TO AID IN 21ST-CENTURY LEARNING**

Massine is excited to continue implementing audio technologies throughout the schools that she serves and to expand how these systems can assist teachers as they adopt new learning strategies such as project-based learning. Teaching philosophies are evolving to include greater student-centered learning and collaboration. Audio technologies such as the Flexcat, a group audio system, are an exciting addition to the field.

#### **HERE A FEW STRATEGIES THAT DR. MASSINE AND HER TEAM USE TO ENSURE THAT DCSD TEACHERS AND STUDENTS CAN EASILY USE THEIR LIGHTSPEED AUDIO TECHNOLOGIES.**

- **Recruit assistants.** Have teachers ask a few students to be their audio assistants. Teach the students how to turn the equipment on, charge microphones, and do basic troubleshooting. This helps teachers get going at the start of a busy day and ensures that someone is available to help substitute teachers use the equipment in the classroom. This strategy is also a great way to empower and engage students.
- **Have a substitute plan in place.** Make sure you have written instructions for substitute teachers and identify their student audio assistants.
- **Use pictures.** Younger students will find picture versus written instructions helpful in getting started with their Lightspeed equipment.
- **Create a HAT.** Recruit two to three teachers per building to join a Hearing Assistance Technology (HAT) team. The HAT team trains other teachers on how to use the technologies and is available to troubleshoot.