



What PDE and CCIU achieved with Elluminate *Live!*

Increased interaction for learning activities

Elluminate *Live!* enables both organizations to take communication, interaction, and collaboration to the next level—without a long learning curve

No more travel or meeting cancellations

With Elluminate *Live!*, participants can work together without traveling and meetings go on as scheduled—regardless of the weather

Reliable, complete multi- platform support

Elluminate *Live!* provides full support for Macs and PCs for all features and functions, so participants get a superior user experience—regardless of computer type

Elluminate Delivers Dynamic Online Interaction to Pennsylvania Department of Education and Chester County Educational Agency

One of 29 regional educational agencies in Pennsylvania, the Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU) works with the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and 12 local school districts that represent over 64,000 students and 6,000 educators. The agency provides services that can be most economically offered at a regional level, including special education and compensatory education programs, mentor training and staff development, technology initiatives, consortia for school business operations, and adult education programs.

The Challenge: Two Organizations with Single Need for Real-time Interaction

Adding interaction to meetings and online learning activities was key for both CCIU and PDE, and they worked together to select a live eLearning and Web conferencing tool.

“Our goal was to be able to share information and improve communication,” explained Michael Golden, Deputy Secretary, Office of Information and Educational Technology for the PDE. “Specifically, we created a statewide work group to develop a streamlined strategic planning process for every school district and needed a system that allowed us to communicate over the Internet via our desktops. In this way the group could come together to utilize the expertise, knowledge, and different perspectives of each individual.”

“One of the problems was finding a product that supported both Macs and PCs,” said Gail Kennedy, Supervisor of Education Technology at the CCIU. “We found that while some tools worked on both platforms, they didn’t support some features, such as application sharing on the Mac. We were impressed that Elluminate *Live!* provides full multi-platform support that works for all features. It also has specific functionality we were looking for, including the ability to load PowerPoint presentations, shared whiteboards, high-quality audio, evaluation tools, and, of course, application sharing. We agreed with the PDE that Elluminate *Live!* was the best product for our needs.”

The Solution: Multipurpose Virtual Classroom, Responsive Partner

The organizations first used Elluminate *Live!* for their Pennsylvania Technology Leadership Academy for school board directors and business managers. Funded by the PDE and developed by the CCIU and PDE Office of Educational Technology, the academy provided learning activities about the importance of technology in K-12 education, including a variety of Webinars presented using Elluminate *Live!*

“Each Webinar has between 30 and 40 attendees from around the state, and we have presenters from other states as well,” said CCIU Technology Support Specialist Diane Thomson. “With Elluminate *Live!* there were no travel costs for attendees or presenters, so it’s very cost-effective to use. This has been first time some of our



What makes Elluminate the clear choice for live eLearning?

- Crystal-clear audio with voice over the Internet
- User-friendly, intuitive interface that's easy to use and customize
- In-sync communications, regardless of connection speed and quality
- Universal operation in Windows, Mac, Java Desktop Systems and Solaris environments
- ESP (Elluminate Sensory Perception) Moderator Tool Set ensures best user experience
- Greatly reduced travel budgets
- No more costly, inconvenient conference calls
- Best-in-class return on investment, with no per-minute charges
- Accessible, responsive customer service

speakers presented in this medium," she added. "One presenter was so impressed that he looked into demonstrating the product to one of his classes at Harvard as another way that technology is used across the world."

"Initially, we had our hands full with running the events and using the new software," said Kennedy. "Elluminate's support staff helped with the Webinars, teaching us how to use the tool and coming online during the events to log in attendees, check microphones, and troubleshoot for individual participants. It would have been difficult to handle that many participants our first time out. Elluminate helped us get started so we could have a successful event."

"We're running on a Mac-based server," added Kennedy. "We started out using Elluminate *Live!* 5.0, and our recent upgrade to version 6.0 went very well, with no problems what so ever. The platform used is really transparent from both the server and client perspective. Not all our users are technologically savvy. With Elluminate *Live!* they can focus on the content, rather than the technology used. In fact, we have a retired school board director who overcame her initial hesitation to attend every Webinar. She even purchased a microphone so she could more actively participate."

The Result: Reduced Travel, Immediate Interaction, Unlimited Possibilities

"The Elluminate *Live!* evaluation tools enabled us to survey our Webinar participants," said Kennedy. "They were thrilled to sit in their offices and listen to presentations from another part of the country without traveling. They could ask questions and get immediate answers."

For the PDE, Elluminate *Live!* allowed team members to meet even when faced with a sudden snowstorm. "For our statewide strategic planning process workgroup, there were two separate occasions where unexpected bad weather made meeting face-to-face impossible," said Golden. "With Elluminate *Live!* we were able to have full attendance and participation with 40 people across the commonwealth."

"In the future, we want to find additional ways to use the product," said Kennedy. "We're training our CCIU staff on its use and want our internal teachers to demo it to our schools. We're also exploring integration with our course management system to add synchronous communication and discussion, as well as looking at additional Webinar topics for the PDE."

"Elluminate *Live!* has definite benefits for K-12 education as well, including reaching homebound or sick students," concluded Kennedy. "We haven't explored all the possibilities yet. Elluminate *Live!* can be used for just about anything because it's so accessible. All you need is Internet access. It's exciting to experiment with the product."

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