

# Deer Park Union Free School District



Deer Park Union Free School District Successfully Enters Third Year of One-to-One Computing Initiative with help from IT Support Provider Custom Computer Specialists, Inc.

Located in Suffolk County, New York, the **Deer Park Union Free School District** serves students and families in the Town of Babylon, on Long Island.

Deer Park Union Free School District is at the forefront of integrating instructional technology into its curriculum. The district uses tablets, laptops, interactive white boards and interactive learning tables in many lessons for certain grade levels and classes.

**Industry:** K 12

**Students:** 4,200

**Teachers:** 400

**Total Staff:** 750

### The Challenge:

The district's IT support staff was being stretched thin due to the increased use of technology and their current vendor was unable to service Apple MacBooks.

### The Solution:

Deer Park brought in additional technicians from Custom because they are an authorized Apple repair center and their staff is fully trained and certified in Apple technologies.

### Commitment to technology requires higher level of support

Deer Park administrators are committed to innovating education in their community through the use of instructional technology in and out of the classroom. The district uses laptops, interactive white boards and interactive learning tables in many lessons for certain grade levels and classes. In 2010, the district expanded the reach of instructional technology beyond the classroom by launching one of the area's first one-to-one computing initiatives. Each incoming fifth grader in the district receives an Apple® MacBook™ at the beginning of the year; the laptop accompanies the student as they move forward in the district. Currently, all fifth-, sixth- and seventh-graders have MacBooks.

"Technology is speeding forward, and we need to prepare students with twenty-first century skills," explained Susan Bonner, principal at John F. Kennedy Intermediate School. "We don't want there to be a gap between what they use at home and what they use in the classroom."

### The challenge

As the district and its students, teachers, staff and administrators increased their use of instructional technology, their support staff was being stretched thin. In particular, the MacBook initiative requires a lot of support resources. "Currently we have 1,050 laptops and we're adding 350 every year," said Andrew Choi, the district's Administrator for Instructional Technology. "This requires additional support resources that must scale to meet our changing needs."

There's more to the laptop initiative than simply deploying 350 new MacBooks each year. At the end of each school year, technology support staff collect existing laptops and re-image them based on input from teachers. They redistribute them at the beginning of the following year, a process which requires an asset tagging system. The laptops must also be maintained and repaired.

In addition, district technology staff must continue to manage and maintain the district's other instructional technologies, networks and telecommunications equipment, enterprise management systems and databases, and other technology-related tasks and resources.



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Fifth Graders Receive MacBooks



“We would not be able to handle all the different aspects of the one-to-one computing initiative, along with other technology tasks, without Custom’s assistance and the knowledge and talents that their techs bring to the table. Custom is very solutions-oriented. I have never heard them say, ‘no, this can’t be done.’”

Andrew Choi

Administrator for Instructional Technology  
Deer Park Union Free School District

### The solution

To supplement its three existing technology staff, Deer Park relies on Custom Computer Specialists (Custom), a Long Island-based technology provider that specializes in large-scale technology implementations, comprehensive support programs and IT support and solutions. “Last year, we had one Custom tech working with us,” said Choi. “We were impressed, not just by his extensive experience dealing with both PC and Mac issues, but also that he had access to all of Custom’s knowledge base at his fingertips.”

As the school entered its third year of deploying MacBooks, Choi wanted more access to Apple and Mac support. He decided to bring additional staff from Custom on board, because Custom is an authorized Apple repair center and their staff is fully trained and certified in Apple technologies. Now, three technicians from Custom work on-site to complement the district’s existing technology specialists. In addition to providing general PC and Mac support, Custom technicians assist the district with asset tagging, including checking MacBooks in and out to students at the beginning and end of every school year and imaging both student and teacher MacBooks between school years.

Custom also staffs an on-site help desk that they have set up at the district to handle maintenance and repair, troubleshooting and resolving MacBook hardware, connection issues and other laptop access problems. This allows Custom to quickly respond to any issues that may arise. For example, when the district discovered their original vendor was unable to solve a web filtering problem, Custom’s on site staff quickly stepped in and evaluated and deployed another web filter that addressed the issue.

### The benefit

For each grade level, it takes three days to image the MacBooks—a pretty aggressive schedule given staff count and the number of laptops, said Choi. “Bringing Custom in has made the process of imaging a thousand-plus laptops more efficient in terms of speed and cost. We’re able to save district funds that were being putting aside for other uses,” he said. “As the number of MacBooks increases each year, we’ll continue to recognize even more time and budget savings.”

“Working with Custom means that we have access to more diverse IT experience. We aren’t limited by the experience of the individuals,” he added.

“If we’re hung up on a problem and don’t have the in-house knowledge to solve it, all we have to do is call Custom and tap into their knowledge base.”



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### About Custom Computer Specialists, Inc.

Since 1979 Custom has been partnering with higher education institutions throughout the Northeast to maximize student achievement through the effective deployment of technology. We are committed to providing the technology that will make the 21st century classroom a reality.

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