



Client Profile /

PALM BEACH COUNTY (FLA.) SCHOOL DISTRICT

In U.S. cities big and small, a school often becomes the focal point of daily life in the community – not only for students and teachers, but for so many other residents that live in the vicinity. Schools in Palm Beach County, Fla., are a prime example.

In a concerted effort to not only comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but also ensure that its schools were places members of the community could come together and communicate clearly with one other, this South Florida school district recently completed an extensive, district-wide installation of Williams Sound Personal PA® FM listening systems.

According to Fred Cahill, Facilities Services administrator for the Palm Beach County Schools, the new ADA-compliant listening systems were installed with the requirement that they always be available for community events, for all events utilizing public address (PA) systems. They should be utilized even during events hosted by organizations leasing school facilities if PA systems are being used.

Cahill emphasized that these systems will greatly benefit the staff and general public who attend meetings, performances and workshops at all of the District’s schools and facilities. “People that have auditory impairments will be able to use the Williams Sound FM receivers and clearly hear everything that comes over our PA systems. Neckloop and blue tooth-type earpieces will enable sound and speech to be clearly and sharply heard from anywhere in a room that has a system”.

The introduction and installation of Williams Sound systems into the schools was indeed extensive – both number wise and geographically. This school district serves all of Palm Beach County, making it the fifth largest school district in Florida and the 11th largest school district in the United States. At the start of the 2011/2012 school year, Palm Beach County Schools operated a total of 187 campuses, with a total district enrollment close to 174,000. Palm Beach County is the largest county in of Florida in total geographic area (about 2400 square miles), and third

in population (about 1.3 million).

The integrator on the project was Audible Source out of Boca Raton, Fla. According to its director Andy Tusa, “The school district was already familiar with Williams Sound quality and reliability, as Audible Source had worked with them several years ago, providing communication solutions to such challenges as PTA meetings where a multitude of languages were, and continue to be, spoken by students and parents within the district.

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*Williams Sound PPA 377
FM Assistive Listening System*

During this latest install, Audible Source was responsible for upgrading and incorporating any existing, functional Williams Sound listening equipment; delivering/installing the new systems; and training staff at each Palm Beach County School location. “With only 60 days to complete the project, when a full school year is more often a typical timeframe, we had to bring in more installers to meet our deadline,” explains Tusa. “We qualified each and every one: They had to be certified and go through a thorough background check. We also prepped/trained them on installation and use of Williams Sound products. We then coordinated and followed through on the installations at close to 200 locations.”

Tusa notes that, “Tony Strong, national sales manager for Williams Sound, did a great job re-introducing Williams Sound technology to the Palm Beach County school board. And he continued to be a great resource for us throughout the process. We could not have completed this install without Tony’s ongoing knowledge, experience and energy.”

Strong returns the compliment, noting the extraordinary teamwork involved, “With extensive help from Audible Source, Williams Sound presented a number of possible technology solutions to aid in the school district’s efforts to meet ADA compliance and enhance communication within its facilities. Those solutions

included Digi-Wave™ digital, SoundPlus® infrared and Personal PA FM systems.” The Palm Beach County School District ultimately selected FM technology to meet their specific budgetary and communication needs.

Each school in the district received new Williams Sound equipment -- technology designed to meet ADA accessibility requirements for hearing assistance and tailored to meet each school’s specific communication needs:

Each High School received:

- (1) PPA T35 FM transmitter (permanently mounted in fixed seating auditorium)
- (1) PPA T27 transmitter (portable)
- (48) PPA R37 FM receivers

Each Middle School received:

- (1) PPA T27 FM transmitter (portable)
- (1) PPA T36 transmitter (body-pack)
- (32) PPA R37 FM receivers

Each Elementary School received:

- (1) PPA T27 FM transmitter (portable)
- (1) PPA T36 transmitter (body-pack)
- (16) PPA R37 FM receivers

End-of-school-year activities, such as proms, graduation ceremonies and

volunteer/retirement parties created a multitude of scheduling challenges. Notes Tusa, “Even with the short deadline and busy school calendars, the school system did a thorough job of communicating with each install location prior to our visit. This definitely helped expedite the process. I’m pleased to say we completed the work on time and on budget, receiving very positive feedback from a number of school personnel.”

Concludes Strong, “Obviously, with the large number of installation locations in Palm Beach County, many variables had to be accounted for. Each Williams Sound system had to be pre-configured to fit with each school’s existing audio system and venue seating capacity. Audible Source, successfully brought it all together with their extensive integration and audio-matching expertise.”

Strong continues, “This was a highly orchestrated project, spearheaded in a very timely and professional manner by the school district administration in Palm Beach County. They successfully aligned local support for installation, training for end users, and processes for ongoing use. The team’s objective was completion/ full ADA compliance by the end of the school year. All parties, working together, achieved that goal.”

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Palm Beach County Schools successfully achieved ADA compliance by incorporating the following Williams Sound technology in their schools:



- The Williams Sound PPA T35 installed in each high school is a professional, base station FM transmitter that features a powerful microprocessor, sleek digital display, and easy-to-use menu controls. The Palm Beach County Schools technical staff can easily choose between Voice, Music, or Hearing Assistance in the Application Preset menu. The PPA T35 configures itself to the appropriate setting, taking the guesswork out of complex audio installation. With an operating range of up to 1,000 feet, the PPA T35 is ideal for large, secondary education venues such as auditoriums, where superior coverage is essential.



- The Williams Sound PPA T27 -- now available in each elementary and middle school -- is a compact, portable, base station FM transmitter for broadcasting a speaker's voice, music program or audio service wirelessly up to 1,000 feet to a listening audience. The speaker simply connects a microphone with a 3.5mm plug into the unit to broadcast their voice. Unit also can connect to a sound system through a line-level (RCA) jack to broadcast music or other audio service.

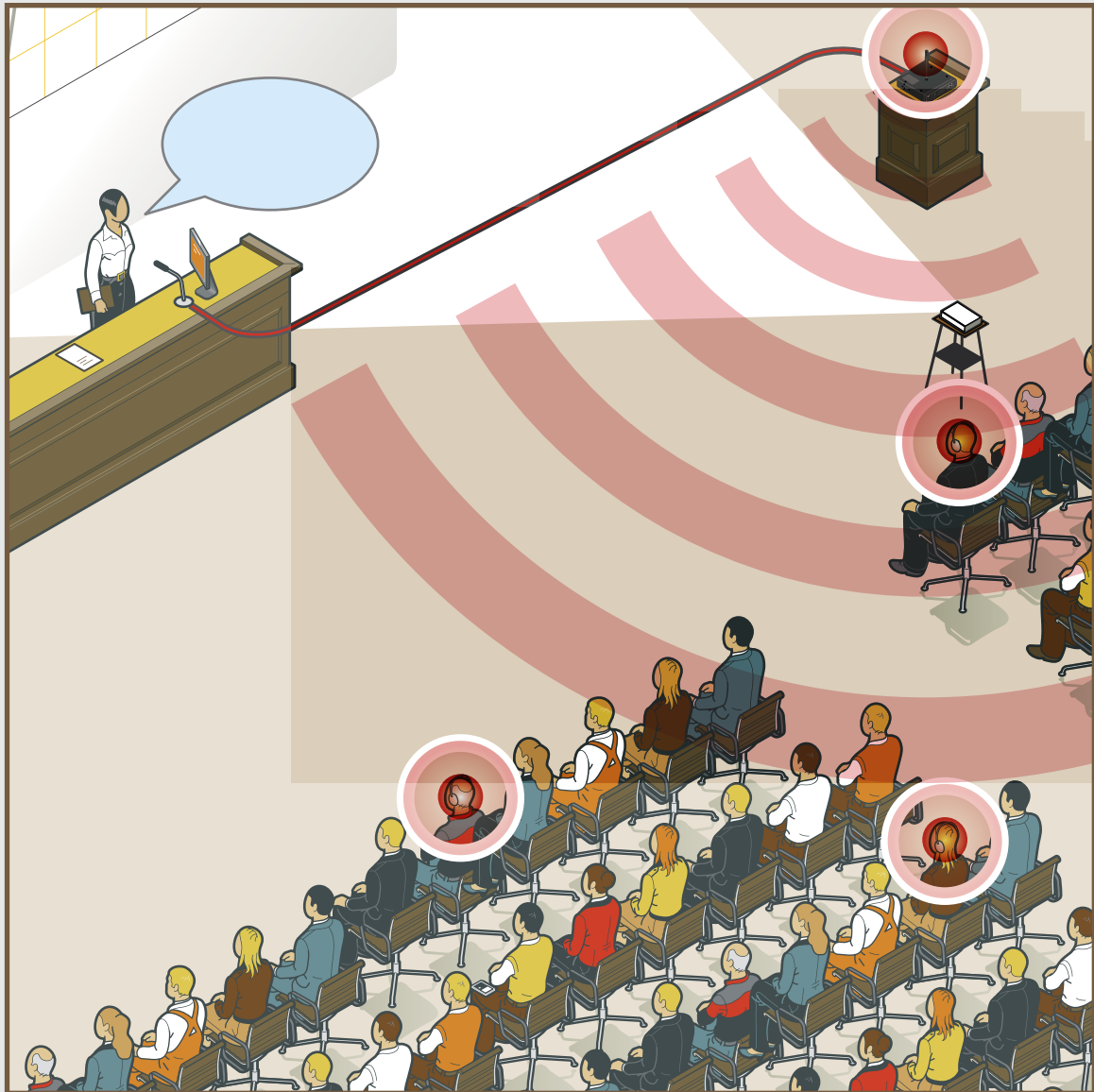


- The Williams Sound PPA T36 -- also available in each elementary and middle school -- will broadcast a speaker's voice or audio program on one of 16 available channels, 72-76 MHz, to listeners using a Williams Sound PPA R37 FM receiver. Lightweight and portable, this body-pack transmitter will operate at a range of up to 150 feet from the listening audience. It is ideal for providing hearing assistance to students in the classroom, participants on a campus tour, and teachers in a training session.



- The PPA R37 FM receivers -- now available at all schools in the Palm Beach County School District -- are flexible and simple, featuring easy-to-use, seek-button channel selection with access to 17 pre-set wideband frequencies between 72-76 MHz. They are compatible with all Williams Sound PPA T35, PPA T27 and PPA T36 transmitters.

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LARGE AREA FM LISTENING SCENARIO