



# **GATEKEEPER**

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Clovis Unified School District  
*Case Study*

# CLOVIS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT CASE STUDY



**THE CHALLENGE:** At Clovis Unified, as with many school bus fleets, transporting children safely and efficiently is a tough job when you consider one driver

must focus on the road while responsible for the safety of up to 80 children. Bullying, vandalism, theft, and false liability claims are realities on school buses today and Clovis Unified wanted tools in place to combat these problems to protect students, drivers, and bus property. The Clovis Unified School District's Transportation Department in Clovis, California, has a fleet of 131 school buses, including 56 special needs buses. These buses transport 6000 students to and from school each day. With a mission to provide safe, efficient, quality transportation to all students and employees, while offering and promoting an environment which enhances the learning abilities of each pupil, Clovis Unified turned to safety solutions from Gatekeeper Systems Inc.

**THE SOLUTION:** Clovis Unified chose technologies from Gatekeeper Systems Inc. to improve safety on their school bus fleet. A Gatekeeper customer since 2010, Clovis Unified upgraded to Gatekeeper's 3045D mobile digital video recorders (DVRs) with integrated GPS mapping throughout their fleet. Depending on the bus, the DVRs are connected to either four or eight 5350 Wide Dynamic Range Cameras with audio. The wide range cameras were chosen because fluctuating light conditions found in a school bus environment can affect video clarity. Gatekeeper's Wide Dynamic Range technology provides superior image quality in

fluctuating light and low light conditions. In addition, Clovis Unified's newer bus seats have a higher back with 3-point shoulder harness, which make it difficult to see students with standard 4-camera systems that simply look across the whole bus. S350 cameras that combine with 8 video channels of recording using Gatekeeper solid state digital recorders, allow viewing down into the seats as well. The video from the buses is downloaded to Gatekeeper's G4 incident management software that lets Clovis Unified quickly locate, save and share specific incidents.

With this technology Clovis Unified can capture high resolution video in any lighting condition and see everything inside the bus, as well as outside bus windows. According to Charlie Ott, Director of Transportation at Clovis Unified: The quality of picture and high resolution is better with the 304SD, and I get clear audio because I can isolate the audio by camera and listen to what went on in a specific area of the bus. Gatekeeper offers a very stable platform. Because buses are susceptible to low voltage there can be damage to the video files, but Gatekeeper's system is self-sufficient so no video is lost."

**THE RESULT:** For Charlie, Gatekeeper's onboard cameras are an extra set of eyes and ears, serving a multitude of purposes. As he explains, "We are able to protect the innocent with this technology. It's our job to get students to and from school safely so that they can focus on learning, and this technology helps us do just that. If there is bullying or a fight on a bus we can see who was involved, or if a child left their laptop on a bus seat and someone else took it we can see who it was." Charlie credits the system's

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Charlie Ott, Director of Transportation at Clovis Unified.

built in GPS functionality with letting him ensure buses are where they are supposed to be, when they are supposed to be there. “If a parent complains that their child missed the bus because it wasn’t at the stop at the scheduled time I can verify this with time-stamped data and see which children entered the bus at that stop.” In terms of cost savings, Charlie says Gatekeeper’s system saves them \$10,000 to \$20,000 annually on seat repair costs alone. “We have a policy where the family of the person who damages the seat pays, and with these cameras we are able to collect most seat damage costs back from parents. We also save thousands of dollars a year in false liability claims with these cameras.”

In one example, a vehicle came into a bus’s traffic lane and hit the bus before driving away, only to file a police report later claiming that the bus was at fault. Gatekeeper’s cameras captured the incident as

it unfolded outside the bus’s window. Clovis Unified gave this evidence to police, and were paid for damages. “Liability on the school bus is much higher than in any other part of the school district and this system protects us from the ‘what ifs,’” says Charlie. “98% of the time the system is there to protect my drivers from false accusations.” An unexpected benefit of the system is catching driver error. As Charlie explains, “I’ll be looking at an incident and notice that there is driver error and can then work with that driver to train them better. It’s a learning tool.” Looking forward, Charlie likes that the cameras are WiFi, 3G and Ethernet enabled because he sees using live streaming video in the future. “If a child calls their parents from a cell phone on the bus to say that an incident is happening it will be useful to have the ability to find that bus and camera and see the event in real time. It’s nice to know that the system is already set up to support this.”



*Mobile Video Solutions For Building Safer & Smarter Communities*

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