



WATKINS GLEN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

WATKINS GLEN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT USES ZONAR SMART FLEET MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY TO OVERHAUL SCHOOL BUS OPERATIONS AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Customer:

Watkins Glen Central School District

Industry:

Pupil

Location:

Watkins Glen, New York

Daily Ridership:

1150 Students, 20 School Bus Drivers, 18 School Buses

Business Impact:

Zonar Systems helped the Watkins Glen Central School District achieve:

- Increased return on technology investment
- Streamlined tracking and account management capabilities
- Improved compliance

Zonar Solutions Involved:

- Zonar 2020® mobile communications tablet with EVIR
- Zonar Z Pass with Student Rider Visibility

"If I have a parent call and ask where the bus is at, I can simply look it up and tell them. That's exceptionally important for parents so they can have that peace of mind."

– Michelle Clark, Director of Transportation

SCHOOL DISTRICT CHALLENGE

Watkins Glen Central School District is located at the southernmost tip of the Finger Lakes in the middle of New York State. The district primarily serves the Village of Watkins Glen, with a population of more than 2,500, and two schools; Watkins Glen Elementary School and Watkins Glen High School. Watkins Glen Central School District also serves several smaller, rural areas in nearby Schuyler County.

Watkins Glen is home to a series of significant valleys and hills, which proved to be problematic for their old radio communication system. As soon as drivers left the friendly confines of the main village, they began losing radio communication because the signal was not strong enough to navigate the uneven terrain. Drivers, who, by law, are not allowed to use their cell phones while on the road, were unable to flag issues in real time or have the school district track their location.

In January 2015, Watkins Glen Central School District began exploring options to revamp their fleet management technology with an emphasis on GPS capabilities, pre- and post-inspections, and student safety. Working closely with the Zonar team throughout the first half of 2015, the school district customized a fleet management package that leverages Zonar's 2020 tablet and Z Pass ridership verification solution. These solutions addressed their overall needs while ensuring the security and privacy of each student's personal information.

During the summer of 2015, Watkins Glen Central School District began implementing Zonar solutions across its 18 bus fleet in preparation for the start of school in August. The district fleet was outfitted with Zonar's Electronic Verified Inspection Reporting (EVIR®) tool to conduct pre- and post-trip inspections, reducing the amount of paperwork for drivers, ensuring timely and accurate inspections, while simultaneously streamlining the maintenance process.

Previously, drivers would forget to sign inspection documents, would skip sections of the paperwork, or would only fill in a portion of the information required. For example, drivers would only write the last few numbers of the odometer instead of the full count. With EVIR on the 2020, drivers have the ability to accurately report and log pre- and post-inspection results and can flag issues in real time with the simple click of a button. With the new technology, drivers have the ability to confidently complete their inspections without fear of inaccurate reporting. Instead of reviewing 30-40 pages of documents, a Department of Transportation inspector can look at one page and easily see that Watkins Glen Central School District is in compliance.

The 2020 with EVIR also allows Matthews Buses to access maintenance data in real time to determine what defects the buses may have and what their support technician needs to fix the issue. Previously, Matthews would've asked Watkins Glen's maintenance staff to troubleshoot the issue, or they would've had to send a service technician out for a fix. In some scenarios, the school district was forced to drive the equipment to the Matthews maintenance site, which is two hours away.

Zonar technology also helped the Watkins Glen Central School District improve operations, specifically with GPS tracking functionality. On the first day of school in 2015, and the first day the Zonar solutions were deployed, a parent called the Director of Transportation to ask why the bus didn't pick her daughter up that morning. After checking the GPS log, the school district was able to communicate with the family and share a report proving exactly when and where the bus stopped. With that data, the school district was able to prove to the parents that the bus arrived at the appropriate time, but the student was not there for pick up.

In the spring of 2016, Watkins Glen Central School District began testing its Z Pass solution with 6th and 7th-grade students. The full program is expected to roll out to the entire school district in early 2017 and will improve the overall safety, security and accountability by allowing parents and administrators to see when and where individual students get on and off the bus. This technology will provide everyone with a greater peace of mind, especially in scenarios such as when a bus is running late or when students are returning from a field trip on the weekends.

Throughout the partnership, Zonar has proactively worked with Watkins Glen Central School District to appropriately train staff and make sure issues were resolved as quickly as possible. Zonar has proven to be an affordable solution to the school district's GPS tracking and pre- and post-inspection issues.

SOLUTION AND RESULTS

Deploying Zonar smart fleet management technologies – including the 2020 with EVIR and Z Pass – the Watkins Glen Central School District has:

- **GPS tracking capabilities across the entire fleet:** Implementation of Zonar solutions has enabled the school district to monitor and support its fleet in areas their radio simply didn't reach.
- **Streamlined pre- and post-inspection:** By using the 2020 with EVIR on its school bus fleet, Watkins Glen Central School District can automate tracking, reporting, and maintenance work orders, thus reducing manpower hours required for tedious paperwork.
- **Improved compliance:** The ease of use and automatic reports generated by the 2020 with EVIR enable the school district to produce accurate, easily digestible reports for the DoT inspector.
- **Improved safety and peace of mind:** With the addition of GPS tracking and the pending implementation of Z Pass, Watkins Glen Central School District now provides parents and administrators with improved peace of mind, enabling up-to-the-minute tracking of buses and students.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR WATKINS GLEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Z Pass Implementation for K-12

CALL ZONAR:
877-843-3847

For more information about Zonar solutions, visit: <http://www.zonarsystems.com>

For more information about the Watkins Glen Central School District, visit: <http://www.wgcsd.org>