

## Consultedge Takes North Carolina Charter School on the Road

### Consultedge's John Freeze explains how the financing and integration of technology at North Carolina's newest charter school spells opportunity for Florida charter schools.

(Whippany, NJ) November 25, 2008 – Consultedge, Inc., a leading provider of voice and data communications solutions, introduced Florida educators to new ways of financing and using technology in charter schools at the 2009 Florida Charter School Conference. More than 400 attendees took part in the 2009 conference, which was held on November 20-21 in Orlando, FL.

John Freeze, Consultedge's Southeast Director, was a guest speaker at the conference. His presentation, "Fully Leverage IT Solutions and Other People's Money," spoke directly to the needs of charter school administrators and board members who face increasingly tight school budgets.

"Schools have never been harder pressed, not only financially but also technologically," said Freeze.

"Educators know that technology has become a critical learning tool for students but with tightening budgets, technologies like laptops and wireless access often wind up at the bottom of the list of demands. It's important for educators to know that there are alternatives to the traditional way of getting technology into the hands of students, teachers and school administrators."



In 2008, Consultedge partnered with the Board of Pine Lake Preparatory to develop a new, technologically advanced campus for the North Carolina charter school. Because charter schools are not provided state

funding for construction or facilities, they typically start up in existing buildings that require renovation. Pine Lake Prep worked diligently with private-sector companies including Beacon Partners and Consultedge in Charlotte to prepare a strategy that allowed them to design and build a purpose-built, state-of-the-art school.

"We were committed to opening our doors for the 2008/2009 school year to 1300 students, even though we only received approval for the school in mid-2007," said John Moloney, Chair of Pine Lake's Board. "We were equally committed to a true, integrated technology system that includes wireless access, broadband, IP phones and laptops for students and teachers.

Consultedge became our partner in making that happen. I don't think we would have achieved our goal if they hadn't been a key member of our team."

In addition to designing and implementing the school's communication system, Consultedge identified and facilitated financing for the project. Consultedge also served as project manager for the fast-track construction schedule.

Pine Lake Prep welcomed students to its standard-setting campus with fully integrated technology. Equally important, the school was developed in record time and at a total cost far below the price tag typical for public schools.

Moloney said, "We used the private sector to fund the project and relied on a private company to design, integrate and manage the technology program – and we were able to build a school smarter, faster and more affordably than would have been possible using a more traditional approach. That model creates a proven alternative for other charter schools caught between budget pressures and student needs."

#### **ABOUT CONSULTEDGE, INC.** ([www.consultedge.com](http://www.consultedge.com))

Consultedge, Inc. is a leading provider of voice and data communications solutions for the public and private sectors. Specializing in IP telephony, converged voice and data technology, messaging and network infrastructure, Consultedge provides comprehensive services ranging from initial needs analysis and program financing through system design, implementation, project management and maintenance. The company has been named to CRN Magazine's Top 100 Technology Solution Providers in each of the past four years.

Consultedge serves the southeast through offices in Charlotte, NC and Deerfield Beach, FL and has been ranked #15 in the Charlotte Business Journal's 2009 "Top Area Technology Consulting Firms." In addition to its NJ headquarters and its offices in North Carolina and Florida, Consultedge has offices in California, Maryland, Michigan, New York and Pennsylvania.