CASE STUDY · NOVEMBER 2024

Private School Restores IT in the Cloud After Hurricane Helene

An anonymous Florida private school restored IT services within 24–48 hours after Hurricane Helene using Azure Virtual Machines, SharePoint Online, and Intune.



Conceptual illustration only; not the customer’s production environment.

How Microsoft Azure, SharePoint Online, and Intune helped restore operations within 24–48 hours. This anonymous case study was published November 29, 2024; the Hurricane Helene disruption occurred in September 2024. The recovery timeline and outcomes are reported in the supplied project account, not guarantees for future incidents.

When Hurricane Helene destroyed a Florida private school’s facilities in September 2024, the institution lost the physical IT infrastructure supporting hundreds of students and faculty. Servers, local storage, and devices were destroyed, leaving the school without access to essential files, applications, and communications systems.

An emergency response moved the school’s IT environment to the cloud. Within 24–48 hours, IT services were restored, helping students and faculty resume the academic year without a prolonged interruption.

At a glance

Category	Details
Industry	Education — Private K–12
Location	Florida; school identity withheld
Disruption	Facilities and physical IT infrastructure destroyed by Hurricane Helene in September 2024
Previous environment	On-premises servers and local file storage
Solution	Microsoft Azure Virtual Machines, SharePoint Online, and Microsoft Intune
Reported recovery timeline	Full IT restoration within 24–48 hours
Reported results	Rapid recovery, continuity of education, and a more resilient cloud environment

The challenge

The hurricane struck shortly after the start of the academic year. With its facilities and physical technology infrastructure destroyed, the school could no longer access the systems needed to support teaching, collaboration, and administration.

Recovery required more than restoring servers. Faculty and students needed access to files and applications, and hundreds of replacement iPads and laptops needed to be configured for use.

The immediate priority was restoring essential services quickly. The school also needed an infrastructure approach that could support operations beyond its damaged facilities and improve preparedness for future disruptions.

The solution

Massive IT activated an emergency incident response plan and rebuilt the school’s IT environment using Microsoft cloud services.

Recovery workstream	Documented approach
Restore servers in Microsoft Azure	Backups of the school’s physical servers were restored as Azure Virtual Machines, bringing applications and server workloads back online without waiting to rebuild an on-site server environment.

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Move shared files to SharePoint Online	File server data was migrated to SharePoint Online, giving faculty and staff access to shared information and collaboration tools from available locations.
Configure devices with Microsoft Intune	Hundreds of iPads and laptops were redeployed and configured through Intune, supporting the return of students and faculty to their work.
Establish a cloud foundation	The recovery created a security-focused, scalable environment that reduced the school’s dependence on infrastructure housed within a single physical location.

The outcomes

Rapid IT recovery

The supplied account reports full IT restoration within 24–48 hours of the disaster. That timeline describes this engagement; it is not a general recovery-time commitment.

Continuity of education

Restored systems and configured devices helped students and faculty resume the school year without a prolonged interruption.

Infrastructure modernization

The school moved from on-premises servers and local storage to cloud-hosted workloads, online file collaboration, and centralized device management.

Greater flexibility and resilience

The new environment provided a foundation for future growth and improved disaster preparedness.

Recovery that changed the school’s IT strategy

The emergency response restored access to essential technology while establishing a new operating model for the school. By rebuilding with Microsoft Azure, SharePoint Online, and Intune, the institution supported educational continuity and strengthened its ability to operate through future disruptions.