Before Hurricane Matthew hit the Myrtle Beach area in October 2016, South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley mandated that all schools close in Horry County. In all, those area schools were preventatively closed for eight days. When it was deemed safe to reopen, two schools were still without power. Dennis McCrary, project management coordinator for the Horry County School District, determined generator power was necessary to reopen the affected schools.

“I made a phone call in the afternoon to Blanchard Power Systems and by sundown the following day they had all three generators we required, all of our hookup cables and everything was in place where it needed to be,” McCrary said. “Our staff came in on Saturday morning, and by 10 a.m. they were all running.”

As the largest county east of the Mississippi River with 45,000 students and 55 schools, the Horry County School District serves as a Red Cross emergency shelter at several school locations, which also required reliable power. Based on the experience with Hurricane Matthew, the district is applying for a grant to install automatic transfer switches at several of the schools designated as shelters, which will make connecting a mobile generator even simpler.

For more information, please visit cat.com/powergeneration