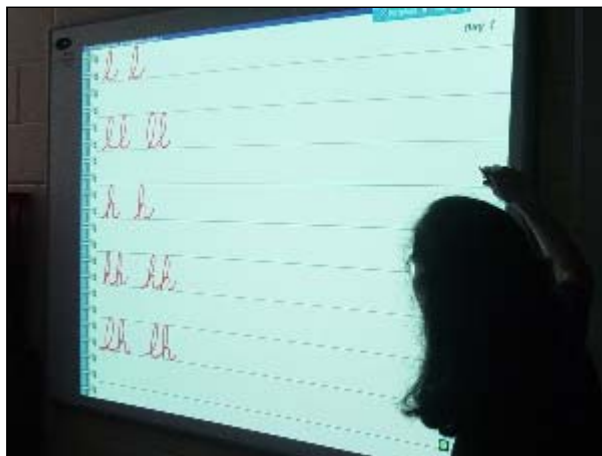


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CASE STUDIES

Georgia School District puts electronic whiteboards in every classroom - Thomaston, GA

By Charlotte Andrist
Eicher Communications
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ACTIVBoard Collaborative Classroom System Increases Student Response and Interaction

ATLANTA - Oct. 1, 2003 - First there was the blackboard, then the white board, and even more recently, the electronic whiteboard. And just as teaching is dynamic and ever changing, so, too, are the tools they use to turn students into life-long learners. And the Thomaston-Upson County School District in rural Georgia is riding the wave on this sea of change by becoming the first public school system in the state to install Promethean's ACTIVboard Collaborative Classroom System in every classroom in the district.

Considered by many to be the next generation of group learning devices, the ACTIVboard interactive whiteboard system is fast becoming an indispensable set of hardware and software tools designed specifically for the K-12 education market to enhance both the teaching and learning environment in today's schools.

"I've spent my career researching, purchasing and installing new technology in classrooms," said Mike Gatlin, director of technology and federal programs for the Thomaston-Upson County School District. "The ACTIVboard system is ostensibly the best teaching solution I've seen. It provides the truest integration between existing equipment, teacher usage and student acceptance."

Members of this small, but savvy school district's technology department first saw the ACTIVboard solution at a conference more than a year ago. At the time, they were seeking new tools to assist teachers in improving upon more traditional methods of teaching and as such, were contemplating the purchase of a competing product. But that all changed when they saw the ACTIVboard with its robust ACTIVstudio software in motion.

"It ignited our imaginations," said Dr. Howard Hendley, superintendent of Upson County schools. "Our schools are 'activated' - alive with learning -- you can see it, hear it and feel it when you walk the halls."

The original plan was to purchase one ACTIVboard system for each of the five schools in the district. That quickly escalated to seven portable boards per school to the current plan for one ACTIVboard system permanently mounted in every classroom by mid-year. In addition, the district saw the benefit of the collaborative effect of the system and purchased one ACTIVslate for each classroom and two sets of the ACTIVote wireless peripherals to be shared by adjacent classes. An ACTIVboard will also be installed in the district's boardroom to meet future staff development needs.

"The future is now, and the Thomaston-Upson County school district clearly understands the need for superior teaching and learning by integrating classroom technology cost-effectively," said Lisa Dubernard, Promethean's director of sales and marketing.

According to Gatlin, teachers, students and even parents have embraced this teaching solution. "Teachers love it because they do not have to redesign their existing lesson plans - only enhance them. Students love the multi-media scope of the ACTIVboard as it completely integrates with the classroom computers, VCRs and digital TVs. The system gets and keeps their attention. Even parents are talking about the ACTIVboard because their children come home from school raving about it."

About the ACTIVboard Collaborative Classroom System

Designed exclusively for the education market, ACTIVboard Collaborative Classroom System is the next generation of group learning environments for whole group teaching, interactive learning, and real-time assessment. The system includes the ACTIVboard, an interactive whiteboard for Macintosh and Windows; ACTIVstudio software, which offers

teachers an extensive library of image, background and annotation resources to present powerful, engaging curriculum to the entire class; ACTIVslate, an accessory which promotes real-time interaction by allowing teachers and students to direct and control the whiteboard from anywhere in the room, and ACTIVote, a wireless student peripheral that provides teachers with instant student feedback.

Additionally, the ACTIVboard Collaborative Classroom System includes the ACTIVtablet, giving teachers the flexibility to develop their lesson plans and flip charts when away from the board, or at home.

About Thomaston-Upson County Schools

Thomaston-Upson County is enthusiastic about education. Serving over 5,000 students with approximately 325 certified teachers and an additional 300 support staff, Thomaston-Upson County's school system offers a broad instructional program, meeting the needs of all its students, from the gifted, to college prep and vocational/technical students, and those with special needs. The system operates a comprehensive Pre-K through 12th grade program at five schools: three elementary, one middle school, and one high school. Approximately 40 percent of students are eligible to receive free and reduced priced lunches. All schools are accredited through the Georgia Accrediting Commission.

About Promethean

Developed by Promethean Ltd., a United Kingdom-based company with offices in the United States (Atlanta, Ga.), Germany, and France, the ACTIVboard Collaborative Classroom System commands a significant share of the U.K. electronic whiteboard market and is installed in more than 12,000 sites worldwide. Since its U.S. launch in 2002, the ACTIVboard Collaborative Classroom System has been implemented in schools across 30 states and captured a variety of education technology awards. A leading global provider of interactive whiteboard systems to the education market, Promethean Ltd. is part of the TDS House group of technology companies with electronic and computing experience spanning three decades.

SIDEBAR: LESSONS LEARNED

Mike Gatlin wants to share what he has learned during the past several years to assist those schools and districts planning for their technology-driven future.

First, wall mounting of the interactive whiteboard is key. The permanent placement of the ACTIVboard system in each classroom diminishes the temporary feel and creates teacher ownership. In addition, when the system is at the teachers' fingertips, it's as easy as turning on the lights - ease of use creates more use.

Second, be sure to spend the incremental dollars needed to obtain a higher resolution projector. A better image leads to superior presentations.

Third, staff development is critical. Promethean and the local reseller, Compu-trac piloted its new staff-training program, ACTIVinstruction, at our district. This showcased the ABC's of how to use the ACTIVBoard, while presenting ways the teachers can incorporate the use of the interactive whiteboard in each area of their current lesson plans. This made it fingertip ready for even the most technology reluctant teachers.

Finally, don't be afraid of the cost. Evaluate its cost-effectiveness based on the total system and its ease of integration with existing technology. And remember, when it comes to teaching and learning, you can't put a price on excitement.

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