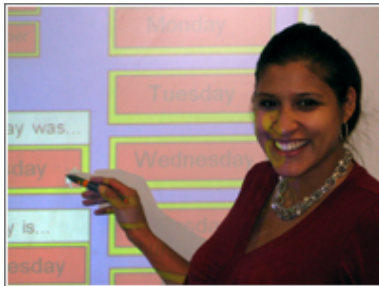


This article may be viewed in its entirety at <http://www.prometheanplanet.com>.

GIVING STUDENTS THE WORLD - ONE CLASSROOM AT A TIME

November 30, 2007

When Kindergarten teacher Elizabeth Barrick downloaded a flipchart on circles and colors from Promethean Planet, she had no idea she was about to discover just how enthusiastic her students could be about learning.



"I introduced the Activotes to my kindergarteners and allowed them to use them independently as I read the questions to them on the flipchart," says Barrick. "The cheers from the students could be heard down the hall (maybe even across the street!) as they discovered how successful they had been in answering the questions. When I looked at my class, I could see the excitement in their eyes! Could they really be learning? Could learning be this fun?"

Barrick is one of a few teachers involved in the grassroots effort to bring the Promethean solution to every classroom at J.Y. Joyner Center for Spanish Language/International Baccalaureate Elementary School, a K-5 magnet school in Raleigh, NC.

Chris Knott, school principal, began the process in the Spring of 2007, when he invited nine classroom teachers to attend a demonstration of the Promethean solution.

"They were completely mesmerized," says Principal Knott. "I couldn't believe the looks on their faces when they saw the technology and support. They had to have one!"

So, through the help of his PTA, Knott purchased an Activboard for every teacher who attended that day, and a "revolution" began.

"Word spread pretty quickly about the boards and about student engagement," says Knott.



This summer, Joyner Elementary's Promethean teachers demonstrated the technology to the entire faculty. Eman Ziada Brandt, a 3rd grade teacher, was one of the presenters.

"I actually felt nervous about giving the presentation, since I knew that there was still a lot for me to learn with using my board, and was afraid that if someone wanted me to do something in particular that I would not know how to do it," says Ziada Brandt. "However, when I thought about it, I realized that for only using the board for a little over a month before summer vacation, I knew a lot.

“The purpose of the demonstration was to get the teachers excited and want one in their classroom, too. So I got together with a fellow teacher and we brainstormed all the things we have done. (We wanted to do some of our own ideas versus getting things already made to show them how easy it is to use.) All the teachers loved the presentation and were excited. I believe that about 12 teachers requested one right on the spot!”



Kindergarten teacher Barrick was also asked to present.

“When I was originally asked in August to present to the staff in September on a board that I just received in April, I was very nervous!” says Barrick.

“I had only used the board in my classroom for roughly 25 school days! I was no expert. Once I began reflecting on how the board had already changed my teaching style, I knew that I could not keep the news to myself. I wanted to share my excitement with the staff and explain to them how easy and exciting it would make their daily lessons.

“I showed them how they could use the Activotes as assessment tools and how they could effectively model writing. I shared little ideas about how to use the dice and tickertape. Our staff was so impressed they all requested a board after the presentation was completed.”

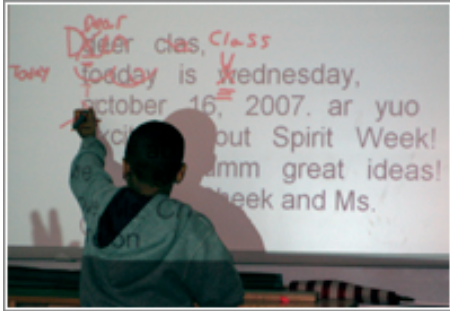
The excitement spread quickly among teachers, students, administrators and parents. Gina Stevenson, PTA Co-President, was present at one of the initial demonstrations of the solution, in which the PTA decided to help purchase some of the first Activboards for the school.

“Last year our Principal, Mr. Knott, introduced the boards to us at a PTA meeting,” says Stevenson. “We had just decided not to do a spring fundraiser, thinking that we just didn't have anything big enough to do a spring fundraiser for, and that we would give the parents a break. Then after we saw what the Activboards were capable of, and how some of the kids who happened to be at that meeting were immediately engaged with it – well, it became a no-brainer. We decided to go ahead with the fundraiser and we were able to purchase two boards with the money we raised.”

Stevenson, active in the PTA at Joyner for four years, has a 3rd and 1st grader at the school. In addition to witnessing for herself how the Activboards are making learning fun in her children's classrooms, she says other parents are talking about how they “need” to have Activboards in all of their classrooms.

“I have heard many parents talk about how their child talks about [the Activboard] and how they love working with it,” says Stevenson. “I think the kids really like the idea of having cool technology that they are allowed to touch and work with alongside their teacher. They see it as fun - not just learning - and isn't that the best way to learn?”

All of our parents who have seen what this system can do have said, ‘Well, of course we need these in our rooms!’ These are awesome tools for everyone!”



The teachers agree, and have already seen quite a bit of success in the short time they have been using the Promethean solution.

“I remember one instance last year when a special needs child was having difficulty learning how to sort tangible objects,” says Kindergarten teacher, Barrick.

“I worked diligently with this child on meeting this objective but he continued to fall short on meeting the objective. Once I received my board, I immediately used the buttons assortment from the resource library and allowed the child to sort buttons using the pen to sort the items. He enjoyed manipulating the pen and delighted in the fact that he was sorting items. He met that objective and we celebrated his victory!”

Third grade teacher, Ziada Brandt, has her own story to share:

“My most memorable classroom experience involving the Activboard was my first time using the Activotes. It was a math lesson - we had just gotten the votes in and I was nervous about using them. I had registered the votes and put together a few quick questions on what we were working on. I didn’t even practice, I just pulled out the votes, assigned each student a number, explained my expectations and started.

“I was amazed at how I was able to tailor my instruction for the next day. I had found out that the students did not get a certain concept that I assumed they did. I was able to immediately go back and help them understand the concept. I was also able to work more individually with the students that I saw did not get the objective at all, instead of waiting for the quiz we were going to give at the end of learning the objective.”

Joyner Elementary now has 11 Activboards in the school and is in the process of purchasing 10 more. The J.Y. Joyner PTA will be holding a silent auction fundraiser in February 2008 to raise money specifically to purchase Activboards for the remainder of the school’s classrooms.

“I am very excited about what the future holds for us in this initiative to bring 21st century learning tools to every classroom,” says Principal Knott. “As an International Baccalaureate school, it is important for our students to be able to explore the world and, through Promethean interactive technology, we can put the world in their hands.”