

The Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind

Case Study, St. Augustine, Florida, United States



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– Sue Clark, Math Teacher

One of America's Largest Special Needs Schools Standardizes on SMART Products

The Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB) is one of the largest schools of its type in the United States, accommodating the diverse needs of more than 750 students from pre-kindergarten to grade 12. When FSDB decided to add interactive whiteboards to its classrooms to improve learning outcomes, it needed to find a product that would benefit all students.

After evaluating and comparing the ease of use and features of various interactive whiteboard brands, FSDB chose the SMART Board™ interactive whiteboard for campus-wide installation.

"We had looked at other interactive whiteboards on the market and found that the SMART Board interactive whiteboard fit our needs the best," says Sue Clark, a mathematics teacher at FSDB. "When teaching deaf students, we need our hands free to use sign language. Having the option to use your finger instead of a pen with the SMART Board interactive whiteboard allows us to do that."

Now that FSDB has standardized on the product, SMART Board interactive whiteboards are being used with Mac OS X applications in almost all subject areas throughout the school. Students create movies and storyboards using

iPhoto™, iMovie® and Quicktime® applications on the SMART Board interactive whiteboard, applying effects and transitions to photos and videos captured during field trips. Teachers are finding that the features of the interactive whiteboards can be applied to improving learning outcomes for students with hearing or vision impairments, as well as those with secondary handicaps.

Students like those in Paula Brannon's class, who are not completely blind but have some degree of vision impairment, have found that the size of the screen helps them see things in the classroom they've never seen before.

"Paula was able to play videos on her SMART Board interactive whiteboard and enlarge the image, so her students could see details they couldn't usually see on a computer screen," explains Clark. "They were finally able to see and interact with a computer image, which is very valuable."

Another area where teachers are noticing that value of the interactive whiteboards is in teaching grammar basics. Susan Cooper, a reading and language teacher at FSDB, says many students arrive with limited language abilities, but the interactive whiteboards help improve language skills.

Challenge

Standardize on an interactive whiteboard that benefits students with special needs.

SMART Solution

SMART Board interactive whiteboards

Result

Learning outcomes improved

"It benefits the whole educational process. I love this tool. I couldn't teach without it."

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Teachers at FSDB use the SMART Board interactive whiteboard to engage students in learning.

“Using the SMART Board interactive whiteboard is a very inclusive experience for our students. The interactivity keeps students focused on learning and motivates them,” explains Cooper. “Our deaf students need a way to see English visually. Teachers across campus are using the SMART Board interactive whiteboard and Notebook™ software to color-code words and sentences. This helps students learn proper sentence structure and see how words function in sentences. Students can easily change colors of words as they change functions in a sentence. It gets students involved and benefits the whole educational process. I couldn’t teach this without the SMART Board interactive whiteboard!”

Clark says she has also witnessed the positive impact that SMART Board interactive whiteboards have on her students.

“I had a student named Allen who preferred just to sit back and not interact. Having the SMART Board interactive whiteboard really encouraged him to come up and present – even if he was just solving a fraction problem for his peers. It helped him come out of his shell,” explains Clark. “Another teacher told me that the SMART Board interactive whiteboard is a lifesaver because kids are so fascinated by it, they want to learn more.”

With results like these SMART Board interactive whiteboards will continue to captivate teachers and students at FSDB for years to come, helping them set and achieve continuously higher learning goals.

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About SMART

SMART is both the industry pioneer and global market leader in easy-to-use interactive whiteboards and other group collaboration tools. SMART products include the family of award-winning SMART Board interactive whiteboards, interactive pen displays, interactive digital signage and software. Using SMART products, groups can access and share the information they need to meet, teach, train and present. SMART customers include NASA, British Telecom, BMW, the Los Angeles Lakers, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Disney Imagineering and Harvard University. SMART products are sold through dealers across North America and distributors worldwide.

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