

Case Study

Southridge School Surrey, British Columbia

Southridge School solves the learning equation with technology

Southridge is the type of learning institution that makes adults wish they were back in school. Located in the seaside city of Surrey, British Columbia, Southridge School is a university-directed K-12 school with a facility that includes a community garden, top-notch soccer fields and high-tech computer labs. With a mission to create a well-structured learning environment for approximately 680 students, Southridge offers first-class education and a forward-thinking vision. Students are taught to trust and respect each other – there are no locks on the lockers – and the teachers are focused on developing students with strong moral character and 21st-century learning skills.

For teachers at Southridge, information and communication technology (ICT) must be thoroughly integrated into the students' learning to provide the best education possible. This independent school offers students a high-tech learning environment – classrooms and labs are rich with computers, data projectors, audiovisual and multimedia production equipment. All staff members and many of the students are supplied laptops, the biology classroom has an underwater camera and almost every classroom in the senior school has a SMART Board interactive whiteboard.

Phil Stringer, a senior school math teacher says that the integration of SMART Board interactive whiteboards over two years ago has "changed teaching fairly significantly." In the past, he found it hard to engage students in math because they had difficulty understanding abstract concepts, but introducing interactive whiteboards has improved participation and retention.

Challenge

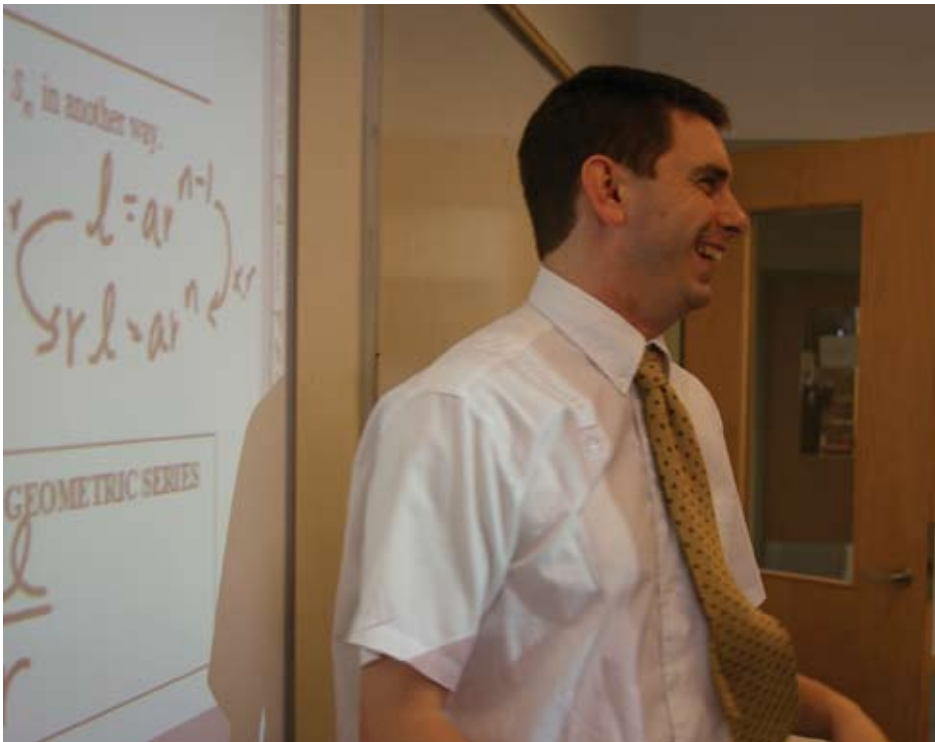
Add flexibility in the classroom, and use visuals to add excitement and build confidence for students learning math

SMART solution

SMART Board™ interactive whiteboards and Notebook™ collaborative learning software

Result

Students are more confident in their math skills, and the SMART Board interactive whiteboards add flexibility



"I think once you build that excitement and that confidence, especially confidence, students do better and better – it's a snowball effect. And the opposite is true if they are not confident and not getting it. So having a visual and having the ability to be adaptive is highly attractive."

Flexibility and engaging visuals are two reasons why Stringer values the SMART Board interactive whiteboard. When he prepares a lesson, he likes to create a template of the topics he will cover. Using the interactive whiteboard, he shows the template on the screen for all the students to see, and, as the lesson progresses, he fills it, adds new pages, links to a website for further inquiry about a topic, and uses mathematical applets and emulators.

The SMART Board interactive whiteboard is key in helping Stringer teach students to use graphing calculators. "All of our grade tens, elevens and twelves use TI84 graphing calculators. I have a touch screen emulator, which is used with the SMART Board, so I don't have to stand and pretend they can see a tiny graphing calculator in my hand. I know they can see the key strokes on a four foot by two foot graphing calculator at the front of the classroom. So they are learning that technology without me having to go slow or stop. So, it's a huge, huge benefit."

Stringer recognizes that students learn in different ways and at different speeds, so he approaches concepts in ways that help all students understand them. For instance, algebra is highly abstract and challenging for students who think in concrete terms. Stringer has solved this problem by using physical manipulatives such as algebra tiles. Students physically hold tiles in their hand that represent an equation and move them around to solve it. Stringer also uses virtual algebra tiles on the SMART Board interactive whiteboard.

The SMART Board interactive whiteboard has also solved another problem for Southridge – due to the small size of the school, almost every student is involved in an extracurricular activity, from sports to debating. This means that at any given time, up to 10–15 percent of the class can be absent because they are attending an event. Before, absent students would have had to photocopy the notes from another classmate to catch up on their course work. But the SMART Board interactive whiteboard allows Stringer to keep students on track because he can save the notes as a .pdf from SMART's Notebook software and e-mail it as an attachment.

A strong atmosphere of trust pervades every hallway and corridor of Southridge School. Students trust their teachers to give them top-notch education and, in turn, teachers trust SMART to give them the tools they need to engage students in every aspect of the curriculum.



Phil Stringer uses the on-screen graphing calculator.

"The students work on their laptops, and if they need help, it goes up onto the SMART Board. I can help four or five kids at once, or the whole class if everyone's struggling with something."

Phil Stringer, senior school math teacher, Southridge School

About SMART

SMART Technologies Inc. is both the industry pioneer and a global market leader in user-friendly interactive whiteboards and other group collaboration tools. SMART products include the award-winning range of SMART Board interactive whiteboards, interactive response systems, pen displays and digital signage as well as wireless slates, conferencing applications and software. SMART products are designed to meet the requirements of today's education and corporate environments. Teachers can access and share the information they need to improve student learning outcomes and streamline lesson planning. The SMART Board interactive whiteboard is used to teach over 15 million students in more than 500,000 classrooms in more than 100 countries around the world. SMART's education customers include New York City Board of Education (U.S.), Oxford University (UK), Kobe City Board of Education (Japan), Barnier Public School (Australia), University of Ottawa (Canada), United World College (Singapore), Stephen-Hawking-Schule Neckargemuend (Germany), Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (U.S.) and Harvard University (U.S.).

SMART is a private company founded in 1987. Employing more than 1,000 people, SMART is headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, with assembly facilities in Kanata, Ontario, and offices in Bonn, Tokyo, Shanghai, New York City, Chicago and Washington, DC. SMART has been issued and maintains a broad portfolio of patents with numerous U.S., Canadian and other patents pending. In 1992 SMART formed a strategic alliance with Intel® Corporation that resulted in joint product development and marketing efforts, and Intel's equity ownership in the company. SMART products are sold through dealers across North America and distributors worldwide. To learn more about SMART as a company and its products and programs, visit www.smarttech.com and www.education.smarttech.com.