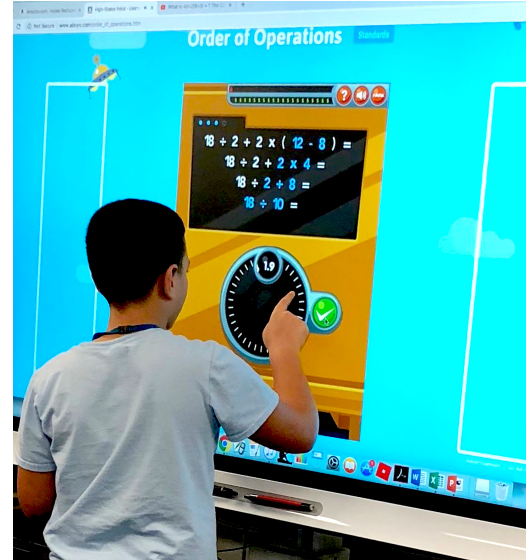
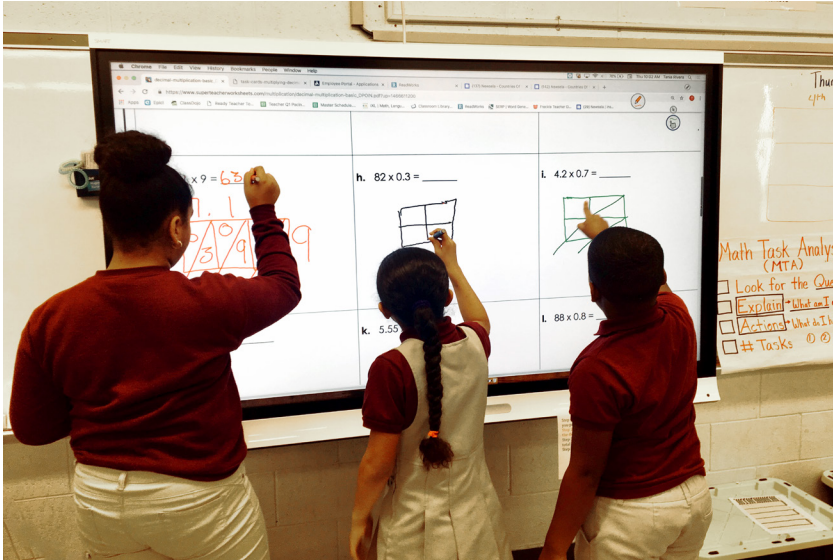




A Grassroots Approach To Changing Classroom Teaching Practice

A SMART Implementation story with Michelle Harris and Luke Bilger, the School District of Philadelphia



Motivation

Established in 1818, the School District of Philadelphia is the 8th largest school district in the nation by enrollment serving 126,994 students and employing 8,000+ educators. Districts across North America have spent the better part of the last decade focused on increasing the digital equity amongst students in all schools. The School District of Philadelphia understood that access to technology was not the only factor, but that teacher preparedness to use the technology to improve student outcomes was critical. This heavy-lift would depend not only on the vision and leadership of those within the School District of Philadelphia but also require partnership from the vendor(s) who entered this journey with them.

With a district of this size and diversity, this process was a task that would not yield immediate results. A plan was needed that would achieve milestones along the way. In the 2017-2018 school year, the District's Office of Information Technology was in charge of accomplishing this daunting task and was up for the challenge. To overcome this challenge and achieve the goal of creating an engaging environment that would elevate student outcomes, their first priority was to create a collaborative partnership between the district, vendor, and product support specialists to develop and deliver an efficient and goal centered plan.

School District of Philadelphia

Melanie Harris, Chief Information Officer
 Fran Newberg, Ed.D. Deputy Chief
 Michelle Harris – Director of Educational Technology
 Luke Bilger – Senior Project Manager

Challenge

How to increase awareness and usage of the SMART solutions available to teachers using a collaborative approach between the School District of Philadelphia, Visual Sound, and SMART Technologies.

SMART Solution

SMART Board® 6000 series
 SMART Learning Suite

Result

A 33.4% increase in student interactions with the board and 16.7% increase in small group interaction with the board.



Why SMART?

Prior to this large-scale SMART implementation, The School District of Philadelphia (district), Visual Sound Incorporated (vendor), and SMART had a seven-year partnership. When the district went out for the Interactive Flat Panel RFP, it had to make a decision on which Instructional Technology Company would best align not only with their District Vision, Mission, and Curriculum but also provide the partnership the district was seeking to make the biggest impact. This partner would not only provide professional development but also help design and develop an implementation plan that would help change teacher practice. This process led to the School District of Philadelphia choosing to partner with Visual Sound and SMART Technologies and its Efficacy and Implementation (EI) Team.

Once the School District of Philadelphia agreed to invest in SMART Technologies software and hardware solutions, all the pieces of the puzzle came together. SMART, Visual Sound and the School District of Philadelphia instantly began working on creating an implementation plan that would be efficient and focused on the goal of increasing student engagement in order to increase outcomes. The objective of the school year 2017-2018 would be to focus on increasing awareness and usage of the SMART solutions available to the School District of Philadelphia teachers. To achieve this first-year objective SMART's EI Team, in conjunction with SDP and Visual Sound, created a blended Professional Development (PD) approach with a single target of creating awareness of the SMART solution, in addition to encouraging teachers and students to interact with the board in any capacity. The PD program consisted of the following elements:

- Summer training sessions
- In-person experience training sessions
- Office hour support sessions
- Back-to-school lesson-building and content creation sessions
- Biweekly focused training series
- Ongoing development for district coaches

Due to the **sheer** size of the School District of Philadelphia, it was important to first build capacity. Once there was a deeply rooted foundation of awareness on what the SMART solution had to offer they could then turn their attention to focusing on purposeful usage. As the year went on, the implementation plan called for the PD sessions to then focus on teacher integration around students interacting with the board individually as well as in small groups.

Outcome

To track the progress toward reaching their goals, surveys and a Principal observation report form was used. During the course of school-year 2017-2018, principals reported, on average, a 33.4% increase in student interactions with the board and a 16.7% **increase** in small group interaction with the board.

“Our partnership with SMART and Visual Sound was invaluable in helping us provide professional development and coaching to principals, teachers and technology integration coaches on integrating technology with instruction at a high level.”

– Michelle Harris, Director of Educational Technology

About SMART

SMART Technologies Inc. is a world leader in simple and intuitive classroom technology solutions. We are an innovator in software and interactive technologies that enable natural collaboration, helping every student and teacher discover and develop their greatness. To learn more, visit smarttech.com.

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