

Panasonic Whiteboards

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➤ **UB-T781**
➤ **UB-8325**



Retooling Classrooms With Panaboards Shatters Charter School System Timeline

Summary

Something went drastically wrong with the timeline. The conversion from passive 19th Century chalkboard to interactive 21st Century Panaboard wasn't expected to be functionally implemented until the beginning of the 2011 school year, eight months down the road.

Instead it began happening in just days as once wary teachers almost instantaneously embraced their new state-of-the-art technological tools.

Within weeks the big old chalkboards, scheduled to remain in service until at least the next year, were being pulled out of classrooms and the positive effects of animated, multimedia learning were already being felt by students, teachers and administrators.

Backstory

Despite relying exclusively on Panasonic printers, copiers and Panafax machines to handle its back office document-processing workflow, Ann Arbor, Michigan-based education-service provider Global Education Excellence (GEE) did not automatically turn to Panasonic when it decided to add interactive electronic whiteboards to every classroom in the ten K-12 and Grade 6-12 public school academies it manages in and around Detroit, MI, and Toledo, Ohio.

To the contrary, GEE Chief Technology Officer Marwan Issa and his associates examined nearly 15 models from other vendors before determining that only Panaboards offered the combination of high performance, classroom-tough durability and advanced features required to meet

GEE's mandate to help each student "achieve his or her greatest potential by providing a diversity of experiences which integrates excellence in education with the child's individual abilities and unique talents."

"When you look at the Panaboard you feel the durability, you feel the strength," Mr. Issa said. "Another big thing is the pen, the teachers really like the fact that it is both very strong and very responsive."

"When we went shopping we wanted to know how well the boards could take a pounding," he added. "We wanted to know if the front of the panel would need to be replaced if someone accidentally used a permanent marker on it. We discovered that the Panaboards are not only tough enough for a normal classroom environment, they're tough enough for students using the classrooms after hours with minimal supervision."

"Impacts that might totally cripple other boards just throw the Panaboards a bit out of calibration and Panaboards boards accidentally marked up with permanent ink clean up as good as new."

Deployment

Working closely with Daniel Wentworth, CEO of full-line PSNA dealer Ann Arbor Office Repair, GEE began training teachers and installing 150 UB-T871 and UB-8325 Panaboards in their classrooms in January, 2010. With the majority of the teachers lacking experience in integrating interactive whiteboards into their curriculum and a fair number having, as Issa puts it, "reservations" about the new technology, it was projected that the

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boards would not be widely used "until sometime during the next (school) year."

What happened next came as a total surprise to Issa, Wentworth, their colleagues and, perhaps, even some of the teachers themselves.

"Within 24 hours after the Panaboards were installed in their classrooms, some of the teachers were already revising existing lesson plans and creating new ones to take advantage of the board's capabilities, particularly the UB-T871's built-in stereo system," Issa said. "Within weeks, teachers were adding all kinds of interactive activities to their lessons and students, who like colors and moving objects, were sitting up and paying more attention to what was going on in the classroom."

With the original Panaboard ramp-up timeline in tatters, CEE administrators tossed it (figuratively) under the school bus, began using the Panaboards as primary drawing, writing, display and projection boards, and started hauling the suddenly obsolete chalkboards, which had been expected to share duties with the Panaboards indefinitely, out of the schools and into the history books.

Results

Discernible educational benefits from adding interactive Panaboards to GEE teachers' arsenal of learning tools began to appear almost as soon the multimedia boards entered service.

Within weeks school officials reported noticing that:

- Students found it "more fun to answer questions using the Panaboards" and were "more at ease to go in front of the class and interact" with the Panaboards.
- Teachers were "implementing more interactive activities in their classrooms" and that these were generating more engagement and involvement from many students.
- The ability of students to move, combine and draw objects on the Panaboards and "hear, see and interact with the lesson" was helping them retain the knowledge imparted longer.

Conclusion

"Installing and using Panasonic interactive whiteboards has been a very positive experience for us." Issa says. "It provides the teacher with a new methodology which he or she can use as they see fit. It gives teachers a chance to involve all their students in an interactive environment that makes learning more fun and engaging than passive materials covering the same content."

Issa notes that the Panaboards will generate dollar savings by reducing the usage and concurrent costs of traditional classroom consumables, but insists that monetary savings were not a prominent consideration in the decision to digitalize GEE's classrooms with interactive Panaboards..

As he puts it, "the biggest return on investment for us, the only one which matters, is the success of our students."