

SMART Showcase School Profile

EDCompass newsletter

education.smarttech.com

Teachers and students get a kick out of SMART products

Teachers at [The Weiss School](#) in Florida have developed some innovative ways to use SMART products to teach the school's 240 gifted students.

The school has 23 SMART Board™ interactive whiteboards, some of which are used daily to teach core subjects such as math, science and language arts. But teachers are also using SMART products to help students compose music and perfect their martial arts moves.

At Weiss, Taekwondo is a nonelective academic course taken by all students from kindergarten to eighth grade. Marika Powell is the school's Taekwondo master and was the last teacher in the school to receive a SMART Board interactive whiteboard.

"Everyone else had a SMART Board, so I wanted one too," says Powell. Her colleagues wondered how she was going to use the interactive whiteboard for Taekwondo training, but she could see the potential right away.

Powell has been using the board to teach her students for the past year and is already noticing improved student attention and performance. She has connected a video camera to her SMART Board interactive whiteboard to help analyze her students' posture and also designs interactive games that keep her classes engaged.

"You learn Taekwondo and all martial arts by repetition. But after you've done the same kick a thousand times, children get very bored and they start paying attention to other things," she says.

"When I put the SMART Board in, I had to create my own little games and quizzes. It has brought their attention much more to the technical performance itself."

Helping students make music together

After years of using an overhead projector to teach music to her students, Nancy Gall couldn't wait to get her own SMART Board interactive whiteboard.

"When I saw the SMART Board, I went, 'Wow, that's exactly what I've been wanting all these years,'" says Gall. "It's hands on – they can get up there and manipulate the notes, draw the staff and compose their own music."

Gall says she's seen a definite improvement in her students' ability to read music and compose songs since she started using technology in her music classroom.

And it's not just the SMART Board interactive whiteboard that has made the difference. Gall's classroom is a hub for technology-enriched learning. She has a keyboard hooked up to the SMART Board, a SMART Document Camera positioned over her piano and SynchronEyes™ classroom management software installed on her computer. These tools enable her to guide learning for her fifth- and sixth-grade students, who all use tablet PCs.

SynchronEyes software (now called SMART Sync) gives her a thumbnail view of all computers in her class and allows students to collaborate with each other to create pieces of music. You can learn more about SMART Sync 2009 in this issue's product spotlight.



"When I saw the SMART Board, I went, 'Wow, that's exactly what I've been wanting all these years.' It's hands on – they can get up there and manipulate the notes, draw the staff and compose their own music."

Nancy Gall

Music teacher
The Weiss School
Palm Beach Gardens, Florida



If you'd like to visit The Weiss School in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, to talk with educators about their success and see firsthand how they're using SMART products, please visit the [SMART Showcase Schools](#) section of our website. You can also locate a [Showcase School or District](#) in your area.

Enthusiasm over the SMART Board interactive whiteboard spreads

The Weiss School started with four SMART Board interactive whiteboards three years ago. Now every classroom has one.

The school's technology coordinator, Sheryl Grimaldi, says that the longer the teachers used the boards, the more excited they got about the possibilities. "The more they could see what they could do with them and what the benefits were, it just became contagious and spread, and everybody wanted one," says Grimaldi.

Although it's only been three years, teachers at Weiss have already become proficient with the SMART Board interactive whiteboard. Grimaldi thinks that's due in large part to the support teachers get from the school for training and staff development. Teachers create and share interactive lessons, participate in workshops and trade tips at their weekly staff meetings.

This commitment to professional development has turned teachers into SMART Board enthusiasts and helped Weiss become a SMART Showcase School.

"We've been asked to run workshops at several conferences here in Florida, and that's because our teachers are all so excited about the SMART products," says Grimaldi. She says teachers at Weiss are always eager to share that excitement with other educators.

As a Showcase School, Weiss gets regular visits from teachers and administrators who are looking for ideas about integrating technology into teaching. In fact, the school recently had a visit from 39 Miami teachers who wanted to learn how to use their SMART products more effectively. Grimaldi says after spending several hours at Weiss, the visiting teachers returned home with new interactive lesson ideas and a renewed sense of enthusiasm about the power of technology to transform learning. **EC**

© 2009 SMART Technologies ULC. All rights reserved. EDCompass, SMART Board, SynchronEyes, smarttech, the SMART logo and all SMART taglines are trademarks or registered trademarks of SMART Technologies ULC in the U.S. and/or other countries.