

SMART Showcase School Profile

EDCompass newsletter

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SMART products help Toronto school celebrate diversity

By **Lavonne Boutcher**

Students at [Joyce Public School](#) speak many different languages, but technology is something they all understand. So teachers have discovered some innovative ways to use SMART products to enhance math and language skills.

Joyce Public School is located in a low-income neighborhood of Canada's largest city, Toronto, Ontario. The elementary school has a strong commitment to technology and a history of innovation. As a result, the school is experiencing significant academic success, especially in mathematics.

Principal Cheryl Paige attributes at least part of that success to the effective use of technology in the classroom. The school has SMART Board™ interactive whiteboards in every classroom, and Paige says teachers find the boards particularly beneficial in teaching math.

"The math scores in this school have gone up consistently over the past five years. The children in this school are achieving above the provincial and board norms," she says.

Joyce recently hosted a two-year project involving 14 other schools that were all using the SMART Board interactive whiteboard in math classes. Educators learned new interactive teaching techniques that they could use with the board and developed and shared digital math lessons.

"These teachers, all 50 of them, could share and access the lessons or could use sections of different types of lessons. So it became a real network," says Paige.

Senteo helps boost mental math skills

Math teacher Andrew Schmitt has discovered a powerful way to use the Senteo™ interactive response system to help his students learn mental math strategies.

"I do these mental math mini lessons where we're promoting addition or subtraction strategies," says Schmitt. He used to have students raise their hands to give answers or write them down on a piece of paper, but he says using the Senteo interactive response system is much more effective.

"I found that by using Senteo, I could actually get a more quantitative result to know which students really were getting it and which ones weren't. Then, I was able to create groupings afterward to help those students who were struggling. Without Senteo, I would never be able to get that snapshot every single time I do these mini lessons."

Schmitt says another great thing about using the Senteo interactive response system for this activity is that he doesn't always have to plan ahead. Instead, he can fit in the questions whenever he has a few minutes left at the end of a class.



"I wanted to provide outstanding teachers with the best tools possible, and I think the SMART Board really enhances teachers' practice."

Cheryl Paige

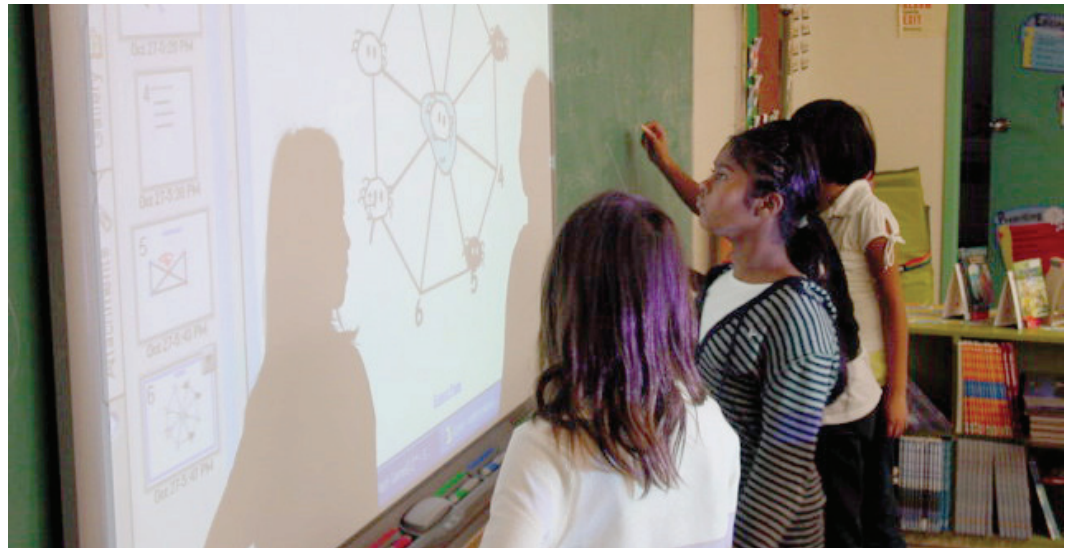
Principal

Joyce Public School

Toronto, Ontario, Canada



If you'd like to visit Joyce Public School in Toronto 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.



Teachers use the SMART Board to connect with students

Since more than 60 percent of students at Joyce Public School have a primary language that isn't English, the elementary school also has a strong focus on oral language.

"There are challenges with the English language learners. There are also advantages in that these children have a second language," says Leon Lenchner, the school's Reading Recovery teacher and librarian. "They've already learned the syntax of another language, and we try to capitalize on their skills."

The SMART Board interactive whiteboard has become an effective way to get students talking.

"So many teachers have said the SMART Board becomes a learning center for children to share ideas on how they solve problems," says Paige.

Rhea Perreira-Foyle is a special education teacher who often uses experiential learning techniques with her fourth- and fifth-grade students. She recently organized a cooking activity as a way to improve their oral language skills.

Students wrote down the cooking procedures on the SMART Board interactive whiteboard and discussed various food-related topics as they arose. Using the board, Perreira-Foyle could instantly search for information on the Internet and show it to her students. She says that showing images is an effective way to enhance the discussion for visual learners.

"One of the questions that came up was, 'Is a coconut a fruit?' So we pulled up pictures on the SMART Board of coconuts. We had a long conversation, and it was a really strong discussion," she says.

Joyce leads the way with technology

As a SMART Showcase School, Joyce receives visits every month from teachers and principals who are interested in learning more about how to implement technology in their schools.

As principal, Cheryl Paige is pleased to share her reasons for embracing technology. "I wanted to provide outstanding teachers with the best tools possible, and I think the SMART Board really enhances teachers' practice," she explains.

Dedication to research is another example of the school's commitment to innovation. Joyce is involved in various research projects that are tied to university partnerships. It also received a SMARTer Kids™ Foundation of Canada grant to study the use of the SMART Board interactive whiteboard in math instruction.

As a result, teachers at Joyce are regularly involved in developing and evaluating new methods of integrating technology into their teaching, helping students achieve academic success and express their cultural diversity at the same time. **EC**

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