

establishment

Gates County Schools
Gates County, North Carolina

grade level

K through 12

no. labs using

Four labs on two campuses

no. devices using

150 PC workstations

solution

Impero Education Pro



case study

background

Located in North Carolina, Gates County Schools has three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Gates County's mission is to prepare students to become independent learners with the desires, the skills, and the abilities necessary for lifelong learning. As part of this mission, Gates County strives to provide teachers and students with the technology necessary to meet the goal of lifelong learning.

issues

For several years, Gates County schools used SMARTSync software in classrooms and computer labs for management of their 150 PC workstations. While Gates County was pleased with the functionality of SMARTSync, the SMART company discontinued any new versions of the software. This left the school district with a need for a new solution.

solution

Because of the partnership between SMART and Impero Software, the Education Pro product was the logical, affordable solution to Gates County's classroom technology management needs. Education Pro provides all of the features that SMARTSync had, plus added benefits that the teachers love, and the students "love to hate", such as live chatting and screen sharing.

implementation

Gates County implemented Impero Education Pro in September of 2015, initially into just one teacher's computer lab. After two months of that teacher testing it out, the district adopted it for all of its labs. Because of the similarities to the SMARTSync interface, teachers found use of the dashboard to be quite simple.

benefits

Since implementing Impero Education Pro, Gates County Schools have realized several benefits, including:

communication – With Education Pro, teachers at Gates County Schools are able to communicate directly with students via instant messaging. This allows students to ask questions without any fear or embarrassment, because other students can't see or hear what's said. For subjects such as learning word processing software, a teacher is able to quickly demonstrate a task from his computer by sharing their screen.

assessing comprehension – By utilizing the quick question & testing features, teachers are able to poll all the students simultaneously on a particular subject. If several students are asking the same questions via instant messaging, teachers have the ability to share out a website, screenshot, or file that helps everyone at the same time.

distraction reduction – Education Pro gives teachers the ability to block all websites but one when giving a lesson, and turn applications on or off for all students or some in particular. Having thumbnail views of all student devices on the teacher console allows the instructor to see who's doing what. These features allow educators to keep students on track in computer labs where it's impossible to physically see all of the students' screens at the same time.

safety – The real-time monitoring features help teachers in Gates County Schools to be proactive when addressing any behavioral issues with regards to technology use. Screen shots of any unsafe or misguided online activity protect both student and teacher by providing documentation of occurrences.

Q-and-A with Brandon Matthews, Marketing and Business Instructor

Impero: What kinds of classes do you teach?

Brandon: I teach business, marketing, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, general marketing, sports marketing, personal finance - a little bit of everything.

Impero: How did the adoption of Impero Education Pro happen in your district?

Brandon: We used to use SMARTSync classroom management software. When that was no longer being supported, Impero was the suggested comparison to SMARTSync. I introduced it to our IT director, then it was installed in my classroom for two months before we installed on all the other labs. I was the guinea pig on trying it out. Now we are using two labs and part of another lab on our main campus. We are also using two labs at the middle school.

Impero: What was it like switching from SMARTSync to Education Pro?

Brandon: There are a lot of similarities in the interface, so the transition from SMARTSync to Impero was very simple. The similar interface makes it really user-friendly. Impero also seems to have additional features that SMARTSync didn't have.

Impero: Tell me a little about the additional features?

Brandon: There's the ability to collaborate back and forth in different methods. Networking, printers, the policies are a lot easier to enable or disable in Impero. There are more action commands that you can use to communicate from the teacher console to the student consoles.

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educational tool”

Impero: What kind of action commands do you use? How?

Brandon: Sending messages, live chatting back, polling the kids with a question. I can send them to a website that will pop up on their computer. I can send a file from my computer to them without a flash drive.

Impero: How are other teachers utilizing Education Pro?

Brandon: Teachers enjoy it because where our classrooms are oriented, you can't monitor what the kids on their computer unless you are constantly walking around the room. Teachers can be at their desks working on something for class and also monitoring through thumbnail images. If students ask questions, teachers can immediately help them go to 30 kids in the classroom. We have Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel classes, which is a lot of demonstration so it has been beneficial in computer labs.

Impero: How do the students like using Education Pro?

Brandon: The kids have a love hate relationship with it. I can see everything they are doing, ban their internet or certain websites, or programs. I can control what they do. But because it's a collaborative educational environment, they enjoy that I can view their screen when they have a question. If we want to chat back and forth, they can ask me a question from their seat and nobody else even knows they are sending me a message. They might not feel comfortable raising their hand in front of everybody, but they can do it through the chat feature.

Impero: How has Education Pro helped teaching and learning in your classroom?

Brandon: It's really good for re-teaching, or evaluating where kids are getting lost, because when the same questions come up, I can send a message to everybody and hit an idea or topic by sharing my screen with them.

Impero: How do you use Education Pro's safety features?

Brandon: I've used the screenshots and recordings. The students hate me being able to monitor what they are doing but it is so helpful for managing their behavior and keeping them on track.

Impero: Do you have anything else you'd like to share?

Brandon: Impero Education Pro is such a good educational tool from a management and instructional standpoint. We love it!

impero