

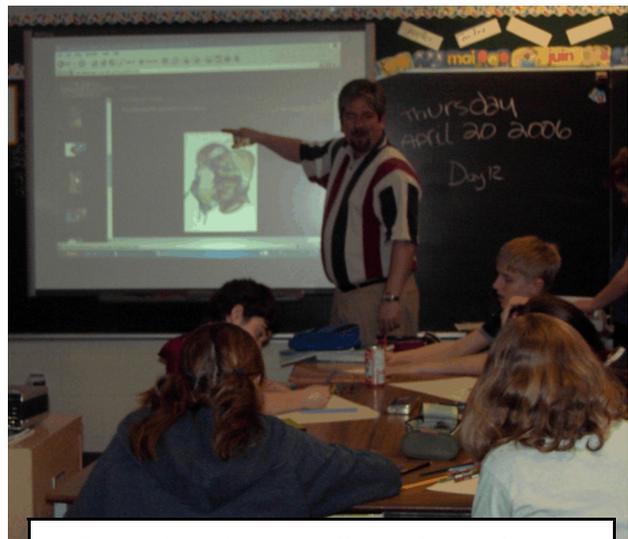
'SMART' TECHNOLOGY REVOLUTIONIZING PROGRAM DELIVERY AT NCDSB

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board has recently launched SMART technology by purchasing four SMART Boards to run a pilot project in our Catholic schools. Already, teachers are reporting that students are more enthusiastic about class and have become more interactively involved in their own learning.

The large interactive white boards engage students through their touch-sensitive display that connects to a computer and digital projector. Computer applications can then be controlled directly from the board using a virtual keyboard, a digital pen or one's fingers. Students and teachers can also capture and save any class work for future use or sharing with other educators. Words and sentences that have been handwritten in digital ink by the students can even be converted to a computer text file compatible with mainstream software applications.

Sacred Heart School Principal Ted Weltz believes this new resource has the potential to revolutionize program delivery and enhance student learning. "Research is increasingly pointing towards a link between technology and the acquisition of literacy skills," states Weltz. "Smart Boards facilitate this process because they are compatible with curriculum-based web sites and applications. Many students who would normally be reluctant to participate in class either because they lacked confidence or because they were nervous are now active participants and are motivated to learn. Students are more focused when this technology is being used because it is cutting edge, it is interactive and it is fun. These are key factors which make it a practical means for student learning in all areas, including reading and writing."

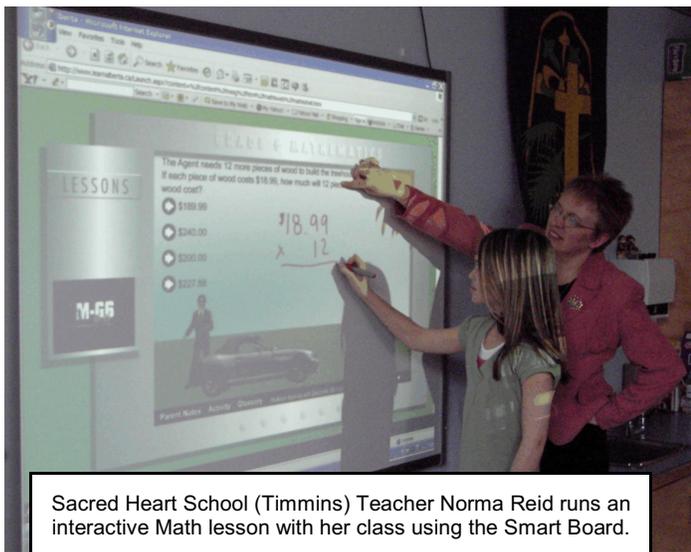
At English Catholic Central School in New Liskeard, teacher Marc Hurtubise is already seeing how this state-of-art technology will help engage more and more students because of its appeal. "The Smart Board is a very useful tool in the classroom," explains Hurtubise. "Not only is it used to display new software, but it has also been used to study artistic styles in Visual Arts. I have also used the Smart Board to study maps and video segments of historical events in Social Studies. The Smart Board has also been used for read alouds and article studies in Language Arts. This new technology provides students with an interactive, visual example of what is being studied."



Teacher Marc Hurtubise at English Catholic Central School in New Liskeard uses the Smart Board with his Grade 7/8 class during a Science Lesson.



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Sacred Heart School (Timmins) Teacher Norma Reid runs an interactive Math lesson with her class using the Smart Board.

Teacher Norma Reid who is piloting the same technology at Sacred Heart School in Timmins adds that the SMART Boards allow educators to reach all types of learners, including auditory, visual and kinesthetic. “Our visual learners benefit from full colour presentations, and see Math problems come to life before them,” shares Reid. Auditory learners appreciate the ability to tap into audio presentations from the internet or computer programs linked to the curriculum. Kinesthetic learners need a hands on approach, and by interactively using the virtual keyboard on the display screen, they can complete grammar exercises or draw diagrams as everyone else watches on.”

Four teachers are currently using Smart Boards to deliver programming in math, language, sciences, social sciences and the arts. The goal is to then have them share their knowledge and practical applications with their colleagues to help more and more students tap into this new learning tool.

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