



Hopewell Middle School, Fulton County, GA

Usability and Budget Drive Purchase of Mimio Technology

Founded in 1871, the Fulton County School System is one of the oldest and largest districts in Georgia. With a focus on student success and a commitment to continued improvement, Fulton has earned a prestigious reputation.

Hopewell Middle School, home to 1,200 students in the Fulton district, is working to uphold this reputation through its use of interactive teaching technologies. The administration, faculty, and staff at Hopewell have integrated MimioClassroom™ products into their classrooms, thanks in large part to Janice Etscovitz, Hopewell's media specialist. Currently, there are 26 teachers who are using the MimioTeach™ interactive system, the MimioVote™ assessment system, and the MimioPad™ wireless tablet as a regular part of their daily lessons at Hopewell.

How did Etscovitz bring this about? In 2009, she went to the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Conference in North Carolina. Media specialists from around the country gathered there to discuss advancements in technology and consider how schools could integrate these products into their curricula. Initially, Etscovitz was shocked at how expensive the interactive whiteboards were. But then a fellow media specialist told her about a more reasonably priced brand—the Mimio brand.

Etscovitz says she was “even happier to discover that it was an effective technology product that my teachers could use.”

To generate interest back at Hopewell, Etscovitz actively promoted Mimio products and their capabilities. When the teachers said they wanted to learn more about Mimio for their classrooms specifically, Etscovitz had a local Mimio vendor do a two-hour demonstration for them. “That afternoon,” Etscovitz says, “one teacher had already set up the MimioTeach and was using it. It was that easy!”

With the help of Hopewell's principal and a number of interested teachers, Etscovitz began to put together a plan to integrate MimioClassroom products into Hopewell classrooms. Now, she says, “our school is using these Mimio products more frequently across all curricula—social studies, science, and math. It's proved to be an incredible instructional tool.”

Testifying to the Effectiveness and Popularity of the Products

Since that first MimioTeach system arrived at Hopewell, teachers have had nothing but praise for it and for other products in the MimioClassroom suite. Etscovitz especially appreciates how quickly the teachers took to the technology. “When you take on a new piece of technology,” she says, “sometimes the learning curve is so steep that, during the school year, teachers never have enough time to learn how to use these products effectively. This was never the case when we integrated Mimio products. [They are] so user-friendly.”

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— Janice Etscovitz
MEDIA SPECIALIST, HOPEWELL MIDDLE SCHOOL



CASE STUDY

Hopewell Middle School,
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mimio®

Etscovitz says that teachers also enjoy the flexibility of Mimio products. She can move the MimioTeach system quickly and easily to different classrooms, which helps with the school's budget limitations. More than one teacher can share the equipment, so more students can reap the benefits.

Mark Poole, a colleague of Etscovitz's at Hopewell, also became a MimioClassroom advocate after seamlessly introducing multiple products into his math classes. He says, "If a student is confused about a problem, I can bring up a blank page and walk him or her through it from wherever I am in the room. The ability to have quick access with the MimioPad proves effective for classroom management."

Poole has also found that the technology benefits the teacher as much as the students. "I can download student results into spreadsheets and immediately assess who needs help or what part of the lesson I need to make clearer."

The MimioVote assessment system has gotten a lot of use in his classroom. Poole explains, "We have daily warm-up questions in preparation for the state standardized tests. I've inputted multiple worksheets, so it's a quick daily activity. My students come in, take a brief multiple-choice test, and I can instantly get feedback on how they did and what I need to focus on. It's a way to assess their skill levels after every lesson. If I tailor the questions correctly, I receive reliable feedback for each student." Getting such immediate, reliable feedback simplifies the task of creating lesson plans that will ensure student progress.

After receiving so much positive feedback from Poole and other Hopewell teachers, Etscovitz and school administrators have decided to invest in more MimioClassroom products for their school—testifying to the effectiveness and popularity of the products. "We couldn't buy products for every teacher immediately. We couldn't spend unwisely," Etscovitz says. "Mimio is worth the investment."

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— Mark Poole
TEACHER, HOPEWELL MIDDLE SCHOOL

"Tons of Ways" to Keep Learning New Skills

Etscovitz has found that many of Hopewell's teachers are learning new skills and continuing to try the many different functions of each Mimio product.

"In a word, it's awesome," she comments. "Our staff can go to the Mimio teacher website and learn how to do something in a matter of minutes. They can watch a video clip and learn how to teach an entire lesson! If that doesn't help, there is the option to ask a Mimio Master. Mimio has provided schools like ours tons of ways to keep learning and teaching our staff."

Poole is two thirds of the way through the Mimio Masters program, and he's not the only teacher interested in acquiring certification. Poole remarks, "I'm enjoying trying new, different, and, in my opinion, better ways to teach my class mathematics."

Etscovitz says that even those teachers who aren't actively pursuing certification are using MimioClassroom products to their definite advantage. "Teachers are individuals," she adds. "Some are trying to do everything and anything they can to continue to push the envelope and use the products to the best of their ability...while others, who are using the products in their simplest functions, have found that for now it's enough, because 'enough' is working for their classroom and their students."



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— Mark Poole
TEACHER, HOPEWELL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Nothing but Rave Reviews

“Our students love it!” Etscovitz remarks. “Right after we implemented MimioTeach, one of our sixth-grade science students ran home and said, ‘Mom, you’re not gonna believe what we did in class today!’” The student’s mother, a former PTA president, then wrote to the principal to express how happy she was about the new technology tools—and about the fact that her daughter was suddenly happy about going to school. Etscovitz notes, “We’ve received nothing but rave reviews from parents and students.”

That level of student approval holds true for Poole’s classroom as well. “My students love it—they’re teenagers! They get to use technology in the classroom, go up to the whiteboard, and actually interact with my lesson in a way they couldn’t before.”

Poole is convinced that because today’s students are digital natives, classroom technology was an easy transition for them. Most of his students have grown up with the existence of eReaders, the Internet, and smartphones. Adding similar tools to the classroom seemed like the next step. Etscovitz agrees: “This is their life. Technology is a huge part of that.”

Positive Effects on the School

When asked about student performance, neither Poole nor Etscovitz could provide any specific statistics tying the use of Mimio products to enhanced performance or higher test scores. However, they both agree that Mimio products have positively affected their school.

“Anytime you do something different in the classroom, even with technology, you can’t use the same stuff every single time, every single day,” Etscovitz says. “There has to be a variation to keep kids interested in learning. Mimio has provided variety in our classrooms.”

Poole points out, “Mimio products have let me rework my lesson plans, do warm-ups differently, and interact with my students on a different level.” He adds, “Interactive learning has played a part in progress for my students.”

Thanks in part to both Janice Etscovitz and Mark Poole, the integration of Mimio products in Hopewell Middle School has become an example for the rest of the Fulton County School System. Etscovitz believes that other schools in the district should start looking at implementing these beneficial and easy-to-use classroom tools. “In my opinion,” she says, “MimioClassroom has the most affordable and most flexible family of products. Most importantly, they’re incredibly easy to use!”