

THE COMPUTERWORLD HONORS PROGRAM

CASE STUDY



LOCATION:
*Las Vegas, Nevada,
United States*

YEAR:
2006

STATUS:
Laureate

CATEGORY:
Education and Academia

NOMINATING COMPANY:
IBM Corporation

ORGANIZATION:

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School

PROJECT NAME:

Learning with Laptops Program

Summary

The St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School's Learning with Laptops Program is an international program designed to help students start at an early age to incorporate technology with learning throughout their formative years.

Introductory Overview

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School is located in the Summerlin area of Las Vegas, Nevada and houses double sections of grades K-8. The school opened in August of 2000 with single sections of grades K-5 and gradually built out to the existing configuration with a current student population of 452 students. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School implemented their Learning with Laptops Program in August 2004 for grades six and seven. The program is voluntary for students and the laptop computers are parent purchased items. During that first year of implementation, 74% of eligible students obtained laptop computers. SEASCS expanded their Learning with Laptops Program to the 5th grade levels for the 2005-2006 school year. Approximately 92% of the 5th grade students are currently participating in the Learning with Laptops Program. The goal for the Learning with Laptops Program at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School is 100% participation for students in the 5th through 8th grades.

Benefits

The St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School Learning with Laptops Program was designed and successfully implemented for students in the 5th through 8th grades. The Learning with Laptops Program has given the students in the 5th through 8th grades the opportunity to become familiar with and use computers on a daily basis. The learning experience of using computers everyday at school extends to their opportunities to use this knowledge outside of school and with all individuals they inter-react with in life. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School implemented their first electronic textbook, Middle School Literature, during the 2005-2006 school year. The Learning with Laptops Program was instrumental in the success of using electronic textbooks by giving the students the ability to access the electronic textbook during class. The



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teaching expertise of the teachers is instrumental to the success of this program. Teachers must initiate lesson plans that use the benefit of the laptop computers while ensuring that the students that do not have laptop computers are provided an equal opportunity to meet the requirements of the curriculum. The Learning with Laptops Program will prepare the students for the increased demand to technical knowledge once they graduate and attend the High School of their choice.

The Importance of Technology

Technology resources that contributed to the success of the Learning with Laptops Program include more than the computers that the students use. Personnel resources are as important to this program as the network infrastructure. The Parish Pastor (Very Reverend Kevin McAuliffe, V.G., JCL) and School Principal (Timothy P. Curtin, M.Ed.) ensured that the technology personnel and teaching staff were hired before the start of the program. An adequate network infrastructure was also installed, ensuring continual operation to support the network requirements for a successful program. Parents in Partnership, the parent group associated with the school is very proactive in supporting the Learning with Laptop Program. Parents in Partnership provided supplemental funding for technology projects that enhanced the capabilities of the network infrastructure in support of the Learning with Laptops Program. After researching vendors to support this program, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School selected Laptopschools.com who has extensive experience supporting the Learning with Laptops Program in schools located in several states. IBM ThinkPad Notebook computers were selected as the computer of choice for this program and have proven to meet the demands of the program.

Originality

The Learning with Laptops Program at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School is 100% percent voluntary. The parents purchase the computers used in this program. Technology staff maintains the network infrastructure and provides initial technical support for the program. To the best of our knowledge, SEASCS is the only Catholic school in Nevada to implement the Learning with Laptops Program and may be the only school in the state of Nevada with such a program.

Success

With 74% of the 6th and 7th grade students participating in the program the first year and 92% of the 5th grade students participating the second year, we feel that we met our expectations for the first two years of the program. The program was intended for students in the 5th through 8th grades. We implemented the program in the 6th and 7th grades the first year and then intended to extend the program from the 6th to 8th grades the second year. We accelerated the implementation to include the 5th grade students the second year of the program instead of the third year. Directly, this program affects 216 students in the 5th through 8th grades. Indirectly, the knowledge that the students acquire through this program affect their inter-action with their family members and throughout the rest of their lives. Kathleen Kennedy, a 5th grade parent commented "I am very happy with the program." and "I didn't purchase a computer for my son at the beginning of the school year because I wasn't sure how much it would be used, but after seeing how much the 5th grade teachers use the computers and what they used them for, I wish



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Difficulty

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