

SmartBoard Responses – IASA Listserv

1-14-09

Colleagues,

We have a new middle school currently under construction and scheduled to open this fall. We are aware of the instructional and educational benefits of SmartBoards, but are still struggling for a number of reasons with whether or not to make a change to have these *permanently installed* in place of traditional white marker boards in our classrooms.

Please help by answering these questions:

1. If you have built or added on in the last five years, did you install permanent SmartBoards in the classrooms?
2. If no, why not and what did you install? If so, are you pleased with the SmartBoards?
3. If you answered yes to #1, please offer any thoughts or wisdom gained from your experience.

Thank you in advance for your responses. I will be happy to post after responses are received.

Mark R. Cross, Superintendent
Peru Elementary School District 124

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1. We have an older building; however, throughout the past 5 years we have permanently mounted SmartBoards and LCD projectors in every classroom. The best set up is to have the SmartBoard mounted in the center of the room with a traditional white marker board on each side.
 2. We are very pleased. I would suggest permanently mounted SmartBoards and white marker boards for every classroom.
 3. Be prepared to offer ongoing training and upload the updates on a regular basis. Also offer training regularly for the new uploads. A SmartBoard is neither efficient nor effective for every teaching situation. Sometimes the traditional white board is better. We have both in every classroom and it works out extremely well.

Mark,

We have not added on in the last few years but have installed over 13 permanent smartboards in our elementary, 6 in our middle school, and 6 in our high school the last three years. I would not make a choice between white marker boards and smartboards. There is a place for both in the classroom. We maintain both in these classrooms. The level of instruction and student involve has been outstanding in those classrooms using the Smartboards.

We installed SmartBoards several years ago when we converted several classrooms to "smart" classrooms. They're gone. I really don't know specifically why, but I can tell you that I didn't particularly care for them and I'm pretty technically oriented (I like new toys). I found them pretty fussy to use. All the other "smart" stuff (computer/video consoles, ceiling mounted projectors, etc.) stayed and we use screens with adjacent chalkboards.

All of our classrooms now have built in smartboards and ALL the teachers use them. They also have whiteboards but the smartboards are used all the time. The key is training training training... We have been training for three years and it started out slow since only a few teachers were interested so we only put them in the rooms of teachers who said they wanted them and would use them. After hearing about how much their colleagues loved working with the smartboards the rest of the staff also requested them. We have used every inservice for training and have allowed our experienced smartboard teachers to have release time to work with their colleagues for additional support. It has proven successful because it came from the staff and they wanted them... The results have been quite amazing.

We are having great success with the Mimio. It is only about \$800, does the same thing as a Smartboard, and is portable so it is not really installed. It is actually a small device that is suction cupped to the board. You can learn more at <http://www.mimio.com/index.asp>. We have smart classrooms with the Mimio, a document camera, and a ceiling mounted LCD projector.

We have a Mimio in all classrooms in our newer schools and are working to provide them for all classrooms throughout the district. I'd be happy to share more if you want to call and we can certainly schedule a time for you to see these in action!

Mark,

We installed 55 Promethean Boards in new MS and HS classrooms with ceiling mounted projectors. They have been an asset to instruction. This is our second year with them and teachers use them! Promethean comes with a web site of lessons developed by teachers.

For better pricing on interactive white boards go out to bid. We got ours for \$1,100 per board. Also, put in for training of your tech person on installation and maintenance in the bid specs.

Hello Mark...

1. Yes, we permanently install SmartBoards.
 2. Our faculty prefers SmartBoards to other interactive boards due to the software associated with the SmartBoards. It is more user friendly and capable of more than "generic" interactive boards. SmartBoards are all we buy now.
 3. We have backed off our aggressive plan of installing SmartBoards to be sure that teachers are using them to their capabilities. I would suggest getting them to teachers who will actually use them properly, and then others will become interested.
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We are investigating the Mimio product because it is portable and can be added to any marker board which transitions the marker board to an interactive white board.

We have SmartBoards in all classrooms at the high school level and in about half the rooms in middle school and elementary. We have them attached to the walls. My staff loves them and uses them constantly. I would do it again. We did not have any new construction - just hung them next to the white marker boards that they also use. Projectors are mounted on the ceilings.

1. We installed permanent SmartBoards in each classroom with White Boards mounted on each side.
 3. The kids love them as do the teachers, you might be doing very similar activities on the smartboard but because it's interactive the kids tend to stay engaged more.
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We have smart boards installed in a majority of our classrooms and the teachers use them extensively. They are permanently installed.

Teachers had the choice of smart boards, document cameras, or sympodiums. We are currently piloting a mimeo as well.

Hi Mark,

We just added four rooms and installed projectors and screens with the goal of bringing the smart boards in with this technology. We are in the process of putting smart boards in every classroom of all three buildings. We did have discussions on Smart boards versus Ebeam or Mimio. Those are products that do everything that a smart board will do for about 2/3 of the money.

At my previous district we installed Mimio and had great success. We did that because of a limited budget. We wanted the dollars to go as far as they could. We utilized REAP money to give a yearly influx of technology and then put another \$70,000 into IMac's and a portable Apple lab.