



## Customer story

Kenosha Unified School District



# Kenosha Unified School District makes education technology a top priority

For some school districts, technology is as essential to teaching and learning as desks and chairs. These districts see education technology as a critical tool for helping teachers do their jobs and helping students achieve in school. Kenosha Unified School District is one of those districts.

Mary Salani has been an instructional technology teacher consultant with KUSD for 25 years and has played a pivotal role in the district's edtech evolution throughout her tenure. KUSD started off with SMART

boards, but when Salani realized they "didn't play well" with the Macintosh computers the district was using, she knew a change had to be made. "It was like pushing a square peg into a round hole," recalled Salani.

So in 2007, Salani decided to switch to Promethean, initially purchasing about five panels through a middle school math grant. Almost 15 years later, KUSD is still a loyal Promethean customer. For Salani, the ultimate goal is a panel in every KUSD classroom.

## Using edtech to its fullest requires training

“What a Promethean panel does is amp up the learning,” explained Salani. But she’s keenly aware that educators need to first learn how—and when—to use technology in their teaching. “It’s knowing when to reach into that toolbox and pull out a particular tool to target a particular skill or concept.”

That’s why KUSD has focused a great deal of effort and resources to providing technology training to their teachers. “We carve out time for that professional development, so teachers learn how to utilize the tools that they’re given in a more powerful way—beyond just the first level.”

Page Kessler, who’s been an instructional technology teacher with KUSD for 23 years, is focused on helping teachers use technology efficiently in their classrooms and throughout their curricula. She starts off with a half-hour training session to introduce them to their ActivPanel and help them get comfortable with it. A week later, she’ll visit the teacher’s classroom to observe how they’re using the panel in a real-world situation. “I work with them on how we can maximize those features,” explained Kessler.

Indian Trail High School and Academy, where Kessler currently works, will have close to 95% of its classrooms equipped with an ActivPanel by the 2021-2022 school year. According to Kessler, most teachers are excited when their turn to receive the panel arrives, but there are a few holdouts. “One teacher was kind of hesitant,” Kessler recalled. “But now he’s had it for a year and he’s like, ‘Oh my God, this has changed my whole life!’”

## The ActivPanel helps students understand complex concepts

Physics teacher Patrick Conors was one of the first teachers at Indian Trail to receive a panel. He had used one while working at a different school, so when the chance to get an ActivPanel through a special math grant arose, he volunteered enthusiastically. “I’ll do whatever you want for a panel,” he remembered saying. “I want that back in my room.”

Conors could be described as a “super user,” having found myriad ways to use the ActivPanel—both for in-class teaching and hybrid. For example, he uses the panel to set up a digital lab that can run simultaneously with a real-life lab, allowing him to zoom in on specific aspects to better demonstrate how it works.

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Mary Salani

When Conors has particularly challenging material to explain, he records a brief video with the panel and uploads it with all the other assignments and labs, so his students who are struggling to comprehend the material have easy access to a clear explanation. “That’s had a noticeable improvement in some of my students’ skill levels,” noted Conors. “When I tried to do that without a panel, it took me forever, and the quality was terrible,” he said. But with his ActivPanel, he can produce “a really high-quality recording in just two or three clicks.”



Heidi Jones, a fifth-grade teacher at Grant Elementary, is similarly attached to her ActivPanel. “Having taught with a chalkboard, an overhead projector—I don’t ever want to go back,” she said. “Especially in math, the panel is just invaluable in showing lots of different ways of doing something,” she explained. “And I just love being able to pull up stuff on the internet—you know, those teachable moments. Having so many resources at our fingertips is wonderful.”

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Heidi Jones

Jones has found that the panel is especially helpful in reaching kids who are visual learners. “I think when you add the visual, we have a lot more success than when kids are just hearing directions or hearing a passage read to them,” she explained. “I think that creates a whole bunch more learning.” For Jones, experiencing that incredible moment when a student finally grasps a concept is what teaching is all about. “They say: ‘Ahhhh!’” she said with a smile. “That’s the greatest sound a teacher could ever hear.”



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