



"I'm totally convinced we need to change the way we're thinking...that to succeed, our students need full-time use of mobile PCs that allow them to type, handwrite, do research, plus communicate and collaborate in and out of the classroom."

—Cathy Barnett, District Technology Director

Antwerp "Archers" take aim at empowering technology.

Serving less than 400 students in the small Village of Antwerp in Northwestern Ohio, Antwerp Local School had a challenge, a vision and a tremendous opportunity. The challenge: the school's limited local tax base from which to draw funding. Their vision: move beyond an outdated, walled-in desktop computer lab to put empowering mobile technology in the hands of students. The opportunity: the Learn and Serve Ohio program—part of President Obama's National Service Learning Initiative, which aims to better the community by mingling classroom instruction and public service.

How Antwerp surmounted this situation—against all odds, and with the help of one very dynamic, undaunted educator—should give inspiration to many under-resourced schools looking to embrace 21st century education.

At the center of it all was Cathy Barnett, Antwerp's District Technology Director. Long a firebrand, she knew that mobility and connectivity were key to enriching teaching and learning, and fully understood the challenge of securing scarce budget dollars for a 1:1 computing pilot program. Yet, she pressed on with her usual dogged determination. And soon she would prove that when a great cause, great challenge and great attitude converge, truly great things can happen.

featured products



Portégé® M700



Port Replicator

Guided to the target: Toshiba Notebooks for Schools®

Enter Toshiba, originator of Notebooks for Schools (NFS), a first-of-its kind program that for



over ten years has helped schools test and prove the value of laptops for learning. Barnett was justifiably excited to read about NFS. But she frankly wondered whether Antwerp's small size and lack of visibility might make her school a too-distant target for such a grant. Thus, she was suitably amazed when she applied for and received over \$50,000 worth of mobile computing equipment from Toshiba, including award-winning Portégé® M700 Tablet PCs, docking stations and accessories, plus a digital projector. And that ripple of appreciation soon spread to Antwerp's Learn and Serve students, as well as teachers in a variety of subjects including Science, English and even Physical Education. And into the local adult community, which became a grateful beneficiary of this new technology—and whole new approach to education.

Bulls-eye— and beyond!

From Day One, Toshiba Tablet PCs demonstrated their worth as an invaluable tool for learning, and gave a significant advantage to teachers as well. Students in math and chemistry, in particular, were quickly married to their tablets, taking notes and working problems on-screen with a digital pen, emailing questions to their teachers after hours and posting content on the secure school website.

But to the delight of all, the students soon went a step beyond, leveraging their Toshiba tablets throughout their school day to become a kind of technology troubleshooting team helping teachers in their classrooms. In fact, they could often be found eagerly connecting to and projecting websites, or fixing wireless access issues and a host of other problems that once required a visit from IT.

What's more, in complete fulfillment of the Learn and Serve Ohio program managed by Barnett since 2001, these students then utilized their Toshiba tablets in the service learning element of their curriculum. By accessing content,

"The students love the tablets...especially for math and chemistry. They take them everywhere and do all their note-taking on them."

—Cathy Barnett, District Technology Director

demonstrating Web browsing and using email real-time, they helped empower local adults to gain competitive job skills, thanks to the Learn and Serve computer training they received. In addition to gaining a great deal of confidence and social skills, these motivated learners were also able to earn high school credits.

Sighting in on the future.

The Village of Antwerp is a far drive from any major city, and its school a far cry from a super-funded institution. But the implications of what happened in this small American town, the passion of Barnett and her students and the impact of Toshiba technology could well reverberate across the country. The lesson: advanced mobile technology not only helps students learn academics, but learn the value of technology itself, along with the notion of helping their community.

Nor has Cathy Barnett stilled the waters on the pool of potential she helped create. Just the opposite. Indeed, she continues investigating ways for the school and community to benefit from the learnings of the laptop pilot program. She also plans to ask for a teacher committee to more fully explore 1:1 computing by visiting representative schools. And few who know her doubt that when the time is right for more funding to flow, Antwerp will again be in position to achieve all it's aiming for.



Antwerp Local School

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