



Meet the
Spirit SD

Michigan Elementary School Incorporates Technology to Meet Standards



Issue

Harrington Elementary School is one of five K-12 schools within the Albion school district, a suburban district in Michigan that serves approximately 1,500 students. With its adoption of a new English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum and set of standards, the school is required to have a listening center in every classroom.

Craig Wilson, principal at Harrington Elementary School, recognized the school's need for a flexible, inexpensive listening center that could be implemented in each classroom. With a large number of classrooms, Wilson realized he had to find a product that would fit within the school's budget, while providing a quality learning experience for students.

"With the new ELA adoption, it was our job to create media centers for each classroom, especially with the curriculum made available online," said Wilson. *"Since the ELA program was to be implemented immediately, it also was important that the students could jump in and use the equipment right away – little to no instructions required."*

With this in mind, Wilson searched for a product that was user-friendly for both teachers and students and could play audio material in a variety of formats. Since multiple students would utilize the listening centers, it also was important that the product be able to withstand the wear and tear of extensive classroom use.

Implementation

After completing his research, Wilson chose the **Spirit SD Multimedia Player/Recorder**, made by Califone International, Inc. The Spirit SD enables educators to enhance the learning experience with rich audio content available through multiple media formats, such as CDs, MP3s and cassettes. Its built-in SD card slot and USB port allow for use of both pre-recorded and student-made audio activities.

Built for classroom use, the multimedia player features rugged, shatterproof ABS plastic for safety and durability. The product's steel grills provide added safety and strength by preventing accidental damage to the recessed speakers.

"The durability and portability are great features," commented Wilson. *"Although the students aren't rough with the multimedia players, the units don't feel fragile at all, and teachers have the flexibility to use them anywhere – in the classroom, at a desk, in the hallway – essentially creating a mobile listening center."*

With its built-in mic and headphone jack, students can easily use the multimedia player to listen to recorded books or music and record responses for individual assignments or larger group projects. *"The best feature of the Spirit SD is the ease of use for students,"* said Wilson. *"There's no learning curve. We don't have to teach students how to use them – it's so user-friendly that students know how to use the technology immediately."*

Results

"Aside from the ease of use, we were pleased with the product's SD card and USB functionality," Wilson continued. *"With our new ELA adoption, curriculum is downloadable from the Internet in MP3 format. With this multimedia player, we're able to use the curriculum in its existing format, instead of having to transfer it to a different format."*

Educators at Harrington Elementary School also use a reading program with content contained on a large collection of CDs. Since the curriculum CDs are expensive, teachers wanted the ability to transfer content to flash drives and SD cards to save money and preserve the CDs, especially since transferred files can become damaged. With the new multimedia player, educators were able to use the curriculum in a format most convenient and cost-effective for everyone.

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— Craig Wilson, Principal

"The ability to go straight from a MP3 file to pressing "play" is key. We didn't have that option before the ELA adoption. I wouldn't have been able to afford blank CDs needed to burn files, or the time necessary to copy content. The Spirit SD players have proved to be a real time and money saver," said Wilson.

With 19 multimedia players now available, educators use the product in every classroom for grades PreK-6. Currently, teachers are using the Spirit SD primarily with recorded chapter books and audio books for language arts activities, but are planning to expand use to other subjects, including social studies and science.