



Upstate NY District Focuses on a Future Forward Tech Integration & Infrastructure

After receiving grants in 2017 to upgrade tech infrastructure, Azhar Ahmad's primary goal was to find a sustainable and teacher-friendly solution at East Ramapo Central School District. Across the district, many East Ramapo staff and its 9,000 students were experiencing software limitations on interactive whiteboards and projectors, stifling lesson interactivity.

As the district's Network Technology Consultant, Ahmad was seeking a tech-agnostic partner that offered subscription-free software built on an Android™ platform. "The competitor's LCD

panels were not tech agnostic, had limitations, and everything came with a subscription model," Ahmad said.

"I need to make sure that we are getting bang for our buck and a solution that I can support and sustain over the years. [Promethean has] the complete package. It was a seamless integration of Google G Suite™ applications with this panel. It was just part of the puzzle...and all of the pictures are coming together now."

- Azhar Ahmad

A fellow IT Coordinator recommended Promethean to Ahmad, mentioning that ActivPanel® is a future-forward solution and an ideal fit for East Ramapo's classrooms. Impressed by the panel's simplified user-interface and the company's robust professional development courses, Ahmad decided to invest in Promethean as the district's next EdTech partnership. "I wasn't just buying a bunch of boards and putting them in the classrooms. I was looking for a turnkey solution and a partnership," Ahmad stated.

After initially installing 100 ActivPanels in its classrooms, the district received high praise from staff and administrators for the panel's ease-of-use at initial professional development sessions, which led to an additional installment of over 100 ActivPanels.

Switch. Sustain. Save.

Before switching to Promethean, the Management Information Systems (MIS) department at East Ramapo were flooded with maintenance requests on interactive whiteboards. Replacing projector bulbs and hardware accessories were often preceded by subpar image resolution when connected to a teacher desktop or laptop.

For Media Specialist Erin Higgins from Hempstead Elementary School, the transition to interactive flat panels (IFP) has eliminated these barriers; the switch has instilled confidence to incorporate IFP technology into a lesson. Because the ActivPanel can be personalized and updated like a smartphone, teacher buy-in has been welcomed by her East Ramapo colleagues.



"The ActivPanel is optimal for classroom setup and aesthetically pleasing. There are no big projection devices hanging from the ceiling or bulbs to worry about. It is seamless technology simplified," Higgins said. By mirroring a device or switching sources from multiple points of her classroom, improved accessibility saves Higgins valuable instruction time between transitions.

Software Without the Catch

Having full access to premium lesson tools and importing existing lessons eliminates the guesswork out of teaching with new software. With ActivInspire® Software, Higgins has adopted popular tools such as the timer, dice, and magic ink to scaffold an active learning environment. During whole group instruction, Higgins utilizes the desktop annotate feature to illustrate key concepts. To build student confidence, Higgins regularly invites her kids to the panel for hands-on practice with the software's math tools. For blended-learning classrooms at East Ramapo, using layers to create drag and drop activities brings interactivity to facilitate differentiated instruction.

In addition to ActivInspire, utilizing ClassFlow's cloud-based software has given Higgins added flexibility to craft a more immersive lesson experience. Students can use ClassFlow with Chromebook™ devices to share lesson material, activities, and video clips that allow them to engage in real-time. One of Higgins' favorite tools on the ClassFlow software involves using the polling feature to gauge quick feedback from each class. "Students like ClassFlow because it's anonymous. Polling boosts self-esteem as students are contributing without feeling embarrassed, or wrong," Higgins said.

Tech Tricks that Engage Students

When expanding digital skills, the curriculum should be more than handing out devices to every student. Using ActivPanel's apps, East Ramapo staff have adopted a holistic approach to enrich collaborative learning experiences on a simplified tech platform. Because of its ease-of-use and ability to save, the Promethean Whiteboard App is the most common tool used in East Ramapo classrooms to personalize active learning. The app's infinite canvas provides students with ample opportunities to develop and apply critical thinking skills in the moment.

"I wasn't just buying a bunch of boards and putting them in the classrooms. I was looking for a turnkey solution and a partnership,"

- Ahmad stated

To bolster East Ramapo's transition towards a one-to-one device initiative, Higgins has integrated the Promethean Screen Share App into more aspects of her lessons. Live casting on the app allows her to share ideas and stories wirelessly. At the start of a morning lesson, Higgins will use Screen Share to model the daily "Do Now" activity attached to the group's Google Classroom page. As a virtual exit ticket tool, Higgins has volunteer students live cast discussion responses from Chromebook devices onto ActivPanel. Integrating Screen Share as a positive interaction has promoted a strong sense of digital citizenship among her students.



IT Takes a District

Ahmad highlighted the importance of differentiated professional development (PD) to navigate a clear path toward effective tech integration. With each successive PD workshop, the district is continuing to build a strong coalition of lead teachers that regularly share ActivPanel's most practical adaptations. "The [integration process] was night and day. They're using different tools available and cloud-based apps directly from the panel," Ahmad said.

With new technology integration, there is no one-size-fits all approach. To supplement their in-person workshops, the district has leveraged Promethean's free online PD. The training and resources available have helped the teachers tailor instructional strategies with ActivPanel and meet the needs of the district's diverse learners.

Promethean's continued partnership with East Ramapo has laid the groundwork for a robust infrastructure, scaling student-centered learning with easy-to-use tech tools. By encouraging staff to fuse Promethean software with Google for Education™ applications, teachers have utilized ActivPanel to deepen student engagement and enrich instructional quality.



To learn more visit: [PrometheanWorld.com](https://www.PrometheanWorld.com)