

PROFILE

NAME: Bridgeport-Spaulling Community School District
LOCATION: Bridgeport, MI
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS: 4
NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1,522
WEBSITE:
<https://www.gobearcats.net/>

CHALLENGE

Bridgeport-Spaulling Community School District was in need of updating its classrooms, including teacher and student technology, and classroom furniture. With limited time before the start of the school year, the district had to determine what would best support teachers and students.

SOLUTION

In addition to new student devices and flexible classroom furniture, the district purchased Epson BrightLink interactive laser displays for every classroom and new 10-foot-wide whiteboards, which allows for a larger than 100" image size¹, larger than traditional and interactive flat panels, that works for them.

No Barriers, Just Possibilities

Michigan School District Installs Epson BrightLink Interactive Laser Displays

Bridgeport-Spaulling Community School District, located in Saginaw County in central Michigan, is home to more than 1,500 students across its four buildings. The county has one of the highest poverty rates in the state, and 100 percent of its students qualify for free and reduced lunch.

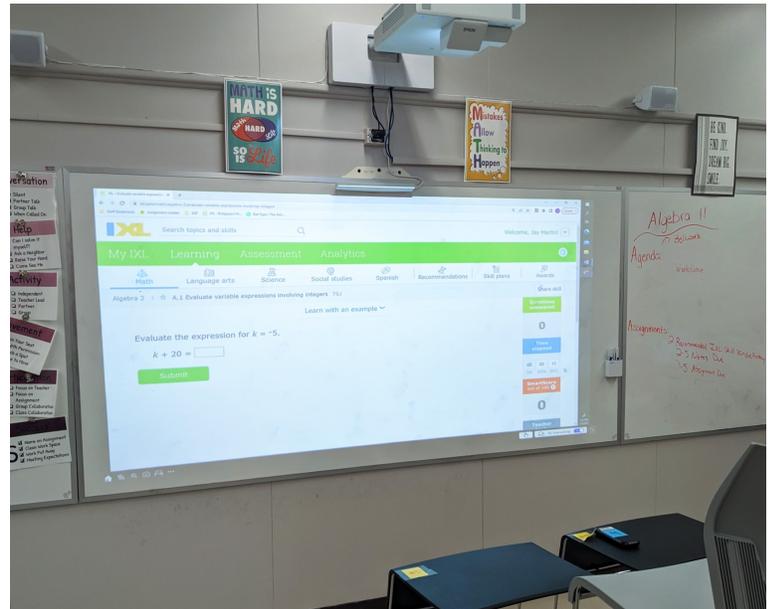
Mark Whelton, the district's superintendent, started his current role in the summer of 2018 and introduced one of his mottos to the district, "no barriers, just possibilities." The district applied this motto when they made plans to purchase new technologies and update every classroom.

"If you build it, they will come..."

Bridgeport-Spaulling was in need of updating its classrooms. The classroom desks, for example, had been there since the 1960's and were old and uncomfortable. For instance, the chairs were connected to the desks which would not accommodate every student. Whelton wanted to clear everything out, start from scratch, and be sure to break down any possible barriers to high quality teaching and learning they had in the classrooms.

"We knew we needed to update our furniture to provide a better learning environment for students. This was happening during COVID and we were the first district to get ESSR funding approved for furniture," said Whelton. "As part of the selection process, we had some of our students test different chairs and desks, including our star basketball player because we needed to make sure the desks would accommodate everyone."

Each classroom got composite, light desks with flexible, non-connected chairs. Everything in the classrooms is movable and stackable which helps create a flexible learning environment for the students. This idea of offering a flexible learning environment carried over when the district was determining which display technology to choose.



"A bright future is ahead of you..."

One barrier to installing display technology was having walls that are mostly windows. The rooms are very bright which is great for learning. However, with their old projectors teachers needed the shades down and lights off in order to use them. Whelton found it was difficult to engage students in that type of setting. So, the district purchased [BrightLink® interactive laser displays](#) to help transform every classroom into an exciting space to learn in by providing 5,000 lumens of color and white brightness² and a virtually maintenance-free 20,000-hour laser light source with no lamps³.

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- MARK WHELTON, SUPERINTENDENT,
 BRIDGEPORT-SPAULLING COMMUNITY SCHOOL
 DISTRICT

“When we put the BrightLink in the first room, I was immediately sold,” said Whelton. “It’s absolutely beautiful and is something that impacts students immediately.”

In addition to a BrightLink display, each classroom has an [Epson Document Camera](#), Lightspeed sound system, and whiteboard that is 5-foot by 10-foot. The large, ultra-wide whiteboard means when the display is on images are much larger and text is more legible than they would appear on a 65-inch flat panel, and when the display is not on, it leaves a large area on which teachers and students can write. This large, versatile set-up allows for a lot of flexibility and interactivity. For instance, teachers can have three students up at the whiteboard all doing different things at the same time.

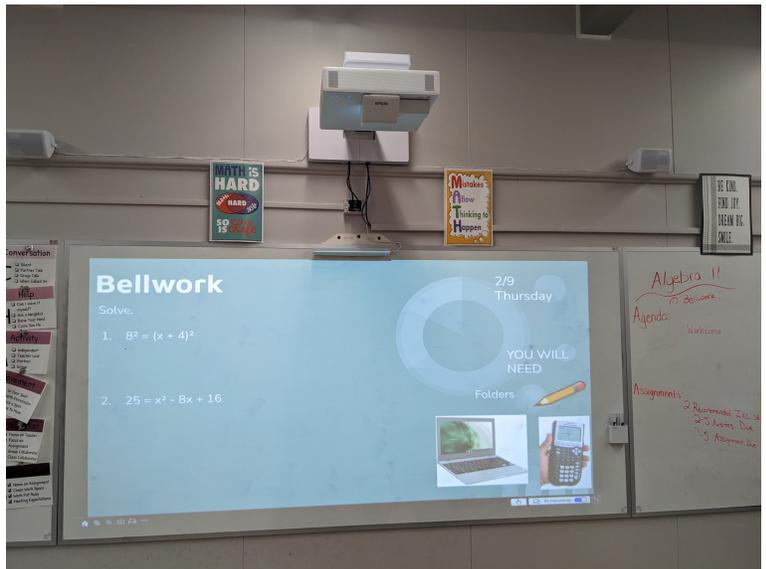
“It has been a game changer,” said Whelton. “Our math teachers, for example, are using the interactive whiteboard for graphing problems. When students are dialed-in on something being displayed, it’s pretty dynamic and exciting to see.”

“There is no substitute for hard work...”

With the short turnaround time between installation and use (displays were installed over Labor Day Weekend), Whelton enlisted a local integrator, Troy Bridges from [Bridges Audio Visual](#), to ensure that classrooms were set up quickly and correctly for the teachers to use the following Tuesday morning.

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Whelton also saw this as an opportunity to try new something new in the way of professional development. Instead of traditional training days, “We shared information and [Epson training videos](#) with teachers to help get them started. It’s also great to have staff that is willing to learn and try new things,” said Whelton.

Although teachers didn’t have the typical amount of training, they still made it work throughout the school year. Through collaborating with staff members, they learned how to use the new technologies in their classrooms, as well as new ways to incorporate it into lessons.

“The future is your motivation...”

Despite time constraints that required the district to take a different approach to new technology training, Whelton is eager for future professional development days so they can work on helping teachers learn more about the technologies in their classrooms. By next year, teachers will have had a year of using the technology under their belts and will bring their own ideas on how to use the technology to trainings and workshops.

“Having this level of technology has been absolutely phenomenal and now when someone walks into a classroom they’re impressed and already starting to see the value,” Whelton said.

¹Manufacturers recommend 100” 16:9 as the largest interactive image size supported.

²Color brightness (color light output) and white brightness (white light output) will vary depending on usage conditions. Color light output measured in accordance with IDMS 15.4; white light output measured in accordance with ISO 21118.

³No required maintenance for the light source for up to 20,000 hours. Approximate time until brightness decreases 50% from first usage. Measured by acceleration test assuming use of 0.04 - 0.20 mg/m³ of particulate matter. Time varies depending on usage conditions and environment. Replacement of parts other than the light source may be required in a shorter period.