

## **May Community Academy iPad Initiative 2011-2012**

### **Executive Summary**

May Community Academy's iPad initiative was implemented in our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade departmentalized classrooms. While the overall grant project was a Shoe Project each teacher was able to incorporate the iPads into their daily instruction allowing us to reach more students using multiple modalities. Students were in a 1:1 environment where they used the same iPad daily in order to promote a sense of responsibility through personalization. Teachers in the program were trained through Apple & CPS as well as in school-based training sessions. Teachers were allowed the use of an iPad exclusive to them throughout the school year in order to gain familiarity and allow for further exploration of applications they could incorporate into their curriculum at their own pace.

May Community Academy is located in the South Austin community on Chicago's west side. We service approximately 500 students; 98% of which receive subsidized meals. We are currently on probation. Our community is striving to improve living conditions for its residents. The mobility rate within our school is 34% with crime, drugs and poverty contributing. The median household income of the area is approximately \$31,000. Technology is not readily available in most households so exposure within the school is critical.

Quantitative data was analyzed from three sources: Achieve 3000 Lexile reading scores, Scantron Performance based assessment (also in reading) and a student response survey. Initially we sought attendance data but discovered 11% of our iPad population transferred out at some point during the school year while additionally 9% of students came into the program mid-year.

iPad students (along with additional students) in our building use Achieve 3000's "Kid Biz" online comprehension program multiple times weekly. We found that student

reading lexile scores improved in all four classrooms. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms averaged 180 points growth while the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students averaged 104.5 points growth.

The second source of data examined was from Scantron, a district mandated online assessment. From 2010-2011 to 2011-2012 students meeting their target growth moved from 69% to 76%. Additionally, the number of students labeled “below average” decreased (from 12 students to 6) and the students labeled “above average” increased (from 23 to 25 students).

At the beginning of the iPad initiative students in grades 5 and 6 were asked to take a pre-iPad survey to gain an understanding of what exposure and knowledge they had about the mobile device. Seventy-five percent of the students surveyed had little or no experience with the iPad. In the post survey 99% of students said they absolutely enjoyed using the iPads (with eight percent of those saying they enjoyed them “sometimes, but not every time”). Fifty-five percent of the respondents thought the subject that would be most affected by the addition of the iPads was science. This carried over into the post survey with 78% of students responding that science was the subject that was affected the most, although writing and reading followed (students were allowed to select more than one subject).

The qualitative data was inspiring as well. Students became more independent and more creative as the school year progressed. Our music teacher incorporated the use of the iPads into her curriculum with the four classrooms as well. She taught the students how to create blues songs and took the initiative to apply for grant money to purchase apps. Teachers were able to share information with students and to collaborate using Edmodo on the iPads. Several other applications were incorporated on a consistent basis as well such as StoryKit, Popplet, Keynote and iMovie to name a few.

Student comments reflected in the survey included the following:

*“I enjoyed the iPads because it keeps me more focused than boring textbooks”*

*“They give me updated information”*

*“The iPads were a new fun way of learning”*

*“It made my work more easy”*

*“I really like the iPad and it makes kids want to come to school and the children are starting to say they like school”*

The knowledge gained from using the iPads this year didn't stay contained to May Community Academy. Through our iPad blog at <http://mcaipads.blogspot.com> we were able to show other educators and students our accomplishments as well as explain individual apps and how they can be used. Our initiative was presented to educators throughout Illinois by Nicole Zumpano at the Illinois Education and Technology Conference in November 2011. Our students participated in Tech 2012 where they presented their iPad projects to legislators and visitors in Springfield's Capitol building in May 2012.

Overall our 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade iPad initiative was successfully implemented at May Community Academy. We look forward to expanding it to more students in the future.

For more information please contact Nicole Zumpano at [nmzumpano@cps.edu](mailto:nmzumpano@cps.edu)