# iPads @ Eli Whitney | Executive Summary

Eli Whitney Technology Magnet Cluster School, a 21st Century Community School celebrated its centennial in 2005. Whitney's main focus is to build capacity not only at the school level but the community level as well. The school building is open from 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. weekdays and on Saturdays in order to enhance the learning experiences for students, families, and community members. 69% of the student population report participating in the extended learning opportunities like homework help, reading, mathematics; GED and ESL classes for adults, aerobics, computer technology (iPads), and Ju-Jitsu which engages both students and adults in our highly involved community school.

Eli Whitney is located in the heart of the Little Village neighborhood where data indicates as one of Chicago's least Internet connected communities. Whitney proudly serves approximately 1200 students; 99% of our students are Hispanic and 40% are second language learners with most students only exposed to English at school. Many of Whitney's students speak Spanish as their primary language affecting their English language comprehension, acquisition, and performance on standardized tests (SIPPAA 2008-2010). In the 2010-2011 academic school year 82% of our student population met or exceeded state standards in math and 68% met or exceeded state standards in reading. It is our goal that the iPads in the classroom will help to close the achievement gap between reading and math and help to support our English Language Learners and special needs students with the use of technological interventions and non-linguistic representations such as diverse media, charts, graphs, photos, maps, audio, video, and demonstrations which will target their individual styles.

Student success with the iPads was measured through classroom observation, student reflections, analysis of student work, and scores taken from the Scantron online assessment given three times a year. Our school goal is to have all of our students on a college ready track which means we want 70-80% of our students meeting or exceeding their target learning goals.

The graph below shows the Scantron reading progress of students in a 5th grade classroom that utilized the iPads on a daily basis. Additionally, 62% of these students met their individual targeted learning goals for the academic school year. Through the use of the iPad technology students felt more confident taking online assessments which also attributed to their increased reading scores.
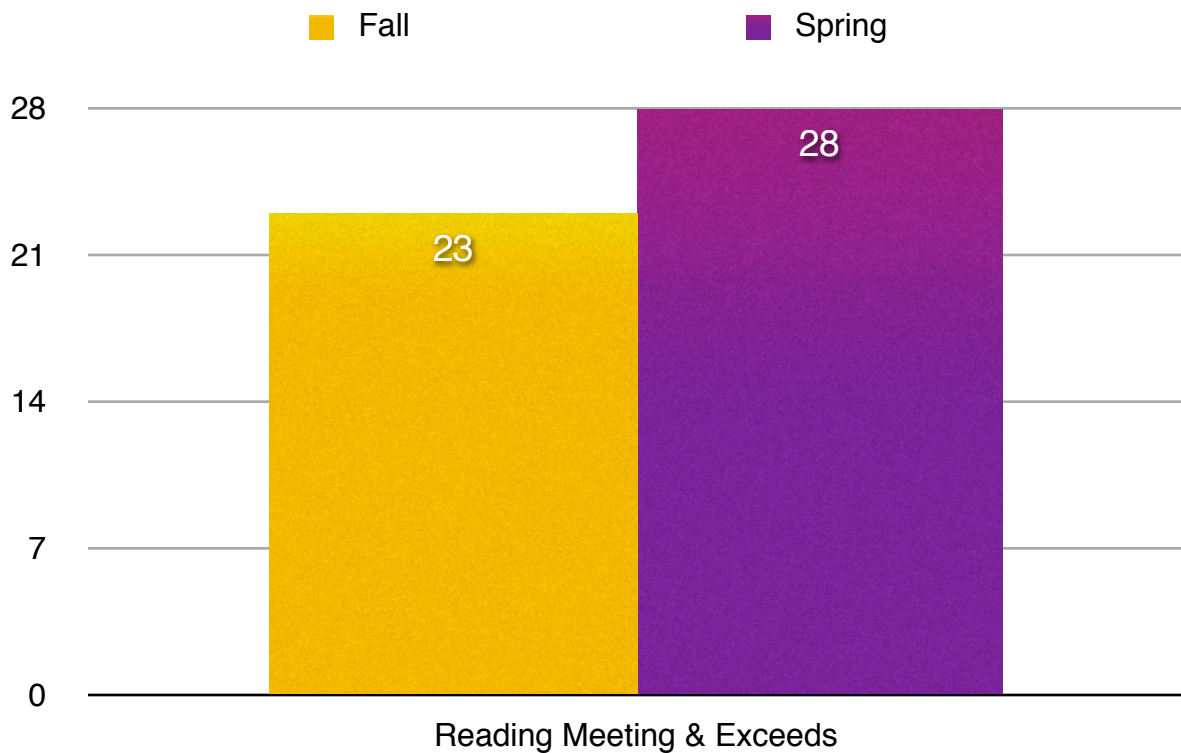
Examples of how iPads were utilized in the classrooms:

• Edmodo was used for interactive class discussions with teachers and their peers to enhance reading comprehension. Students were able to agree and disagree with each other in diplomatic ways using 21st century tools. Additionally, teachers were able to share resources with students and students were able to turn in assignments more efficiently and without the use of paper.

• Student exit/reflections slips were created on the iPads to show student understanding of the day's lesson and the iPads made it more convenient and time efficient for teachers to compile student performance data to inform their instruction.

• Keynote was utilized by students to create multimedia presentations of their learning from various classroom projects.

• Students used iPads via iBooks, websites like Achieve3000 and StudyIsland during their daily reading selections instead of textbooks which provided them with a more interactive whole language experience. Students took more responsibility for their own reading through highlighting text, looking up vocabulary, and checking their verbal fluency all through the use of iPad applications.

• iPads intrinsically motivated our students to learn as it was utilized as tool for learning in all subject areas. Having the iPads in the classroom gave our students more access to information and gave them more confidence in their technology skills.

• Teachers used the iPads to integrate cross curricular lesson planning to engage our students in their learning. Students were able to correlate how all subject matter can be linked together and how learning is cohesive and not compartmentalized and how it applies to real world situations.

• Teacher collaboration was increased through formal and informal discussions on how to utilize the iPad to enhance instruction, collaborating on classroom projects, and teaching each other the fundamentals of how the iPad works.

• Parents and families were trained on how to use the iPad with their child, learned different iPad applications and resources, and learned how to make a basic video essay with iMovie with their child.

• Parents and families increased English vocabulary through the use of the Screen Chomp application which allowed the parent and child to process english vocabulary in both written and oral forms.