



Palm Projects 2003-2004

Brinker Elementary School

Objectives:

The goal of these projects was to afford students the opportunity to use the Palm Handheld devices to enhance their academic progress in a variety of subject areas and in the area of study skills.

The empirical data evidenced by teachers, administrative and the West Cluster IT staff have resulted in the formulation of several objectives to be implemented when the projects continue next August. At that time, it is the plan that project designs, which support legitimate comparative studies of student progress will be in place.

Summary:

The fifth grade students at Brinker Elementary were part of two Palm projects. Use of the Palms was integrated into the math and language arts classes as a tool for the students' study of basic economics, composition skills, study skills, and technology skills. The students who participated in this project were members of Leese Ann Middleton's Language Arts and Math classes. There were students in these two classes from each of the fifth grade homerooms and they did not stay together as a group for all subjects. Therefore, the use of the Palm was only integrated into two of their subjects and during the rest of the day they usually did not use their handhelds as part of their lessons.

To enrich math skills and concepts, students used Docs to Go Spreadsheet application to learn how to record and analyze numerical data. The students employed their Palms to record data as they worked in groups on the classroom workstations. The students participated in the Microsoft Stock Market Game on the Internet as part of their social studies curriculum.

The students used the Palm devices as a means of increasing their access to technology. This specifically enhanced their language arts work. Students, who had access to a word process (Docs to Go and their portable keyboards) full-time during the school day, wrote journals, essays, and took tests on their Palms. They shared, or beamed the documents to their teacher or saved them on the network through the synchronization process. Opportunities for collaborative writing and research projects using technology was greatly increased by making technology available to each child upon command.

Organizational and study skills were taught to the students through the use of an "electronic organizer." The organizer, Homework Diary, was used by students to record homework assignments and organized their time. The digital transfer of parent and teacher notes and signatures enhanced communication between the home and the school.

Students who did not participate in the Language Arts, Math and Study Skills project described above, participated in a project that piloted using the handhelds as a means of providing technology access to each student in their music class. The students used their Palms to recognize, create and play musical notes and tones. They also used a drawing program, Sketchy, to illustrate and animate musical notes and phrases, tempos, and beats. The students used the IIC color Palms. The color proved to be a valuable and necessary attribute in the note/tone recognition lessons.