



## Shaping the future

United States' 11th largest school district transforms the learning experience for students, teachers, and administrators with Adobe® software



When it comes to educating students, Florida's schoolteachers and administrators have a lot on their plates. Between the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Tests (FCAT), the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS), and various other subject-specific standards that must be met, the amount of data and information generated during a student's school years can get overwhelming. There's also an overarching requirement to prepare students to excel in today's information-driven society; a prerequisite to helping students land jobs and launch careers. This is all capped off by the dire need to engage every student, from the highest achievers to the disenfranchised.



Adobe solutions help students meet standards and reach benchmarks as they learn digital literacy skills that ready them for higher education and the job market. Teachers can create more engaging and effective instruction, and the school administration is empowered by Adobe tools including Adobe Acrobat Connect Pro, Adobe Presenter, Adobe Creative Suite, and the Adobe Flash Platform.



*“We calculated that Adobe Acrobat Connect Pro would pay for itself within one year, even if only ten people conducted one meeting per week.”*

**Lee Keller, educational technology programs specialist,  
School District of Palm Beach County, FL**

With Adobe software, Florida teachers have found a solution that helps students meet standards and reach benchmarks, while establishing a meaningful connection with every student and preparing them for the 21st century. At the School District of Palm Beach County, students learn digital literacy skills that ready them for higher education and the job market. Teachers can create more engaging and effective instruction, and the school administration is empowered by industry-leading communication tools. For Palm Beach County, Adobe software is pivotal district-wide to preparing students for whatever they ultimately want to accomplish.

“Adobe tools help students learn real-life skills,” says Dr. Marion Weil, manager of distance learning for the School District of Palm Beach County. “Depending on their role after they graduate, they require all the tools and skills Adobe products provide.”

#### **Fostering a learning community**

Palm Beach County School District in Florida is the 11th largest school district in the United States. The district has 168,000 students, 20,000 employees, 36,000 volunteers who work in schools with students, and more than 185 schools as well as additional charter schools. The school district is in the largest geographical county east of the Mississippi River, making it challenging to reach every teacher and student.

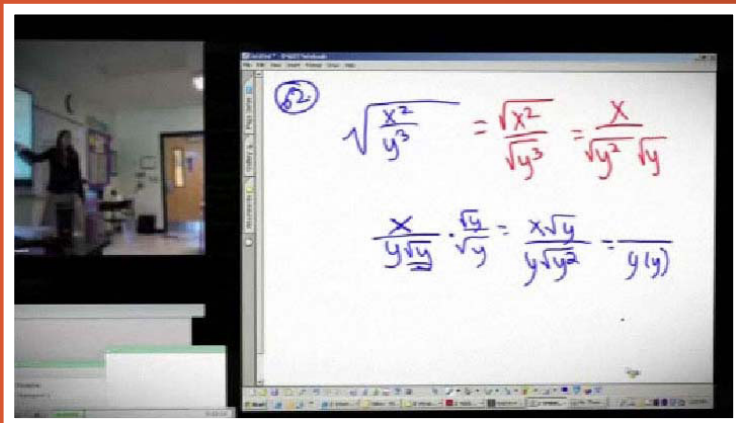
To help engage students and create an active community among instructors, students, and parents, Adobe software is used throughout the district for professional development and training. The District’s instructional television unit, The Education Network, uses Adobe Flash® Media Server to simulcast multiple channels of instructional television through web-based applications directly to the schools.

The district is acutely aware that strong professional development and regular staff training build the foundation for effective teachers. With Adobe solutions, including Adobe Acrobat® Connect™ Pro, the district can offer extensive training to teachers across the country at less expense. According to Lee Keller, educational technology programs specialist for The Education Network, the Adobe software is not only unique in its ease of use and rich features for collaboration, but is also very cost-effective. “We calculated that Adobe Acrobat Connect Pro would pay for itself within one year, even if only ten people conducted one meeting per week,” says Keller. “With Acrobat Connect Pro, you own the software and you’re done. With other solutions, you keep paying by the minute.”

The district recently conducted an online distance learning course called *Restoring School Civility*, based on a book by Dr. Philip Vincent. Teachers met the author and shared insights online after the session through rich features such as live chat. The bulk of the professional development courses delivered through web conferencing focus on helping teachers learn technology in order to keep pace with students who grew up using computers and software.

#### **Learning beyond the classroom**

With Adobe software, the district can reach students in new ways. For instance, many teachers record class sessions and provide links to the district’s system for parents and students.



Adobe Acrobat Connect Pro helps the School District of Palm Beach County offer training to teachers across the country at less expense. Professional development courses focus on helping teachers learn technology in order to keep pace with tech-savvy students. In addition, the district can reach students in new ways. Many teachers record class sessions and provide links for both parents and students. Teachers also host virtual office hours and use webcams, microphones, and chat to create an interactive instructional environment for students.

Teachers also can rapidly create high-impact presentations and eLearning courses from Microsoft PowerPoint presentations, complete with video. “With the new features in Adobe Presenter such as support for video, it’s ridiculously fun and easy to create engaging educational content,” says Keller.

Teachers also host virtual office hours after school, enabling students to obtain online immediate help from a dedicated teacher. Through the use of webcams, microphones, and chat, the students and teachers can see, hear, and instant-message with each other within a lively, interactive instructional environment.

### Integrating technology into the classroom

Enabled by a partnership with the Palm Beach International Film Festival, which lends video and still cameras to students within the district, The Education Network also offers blended and online courses for students and teachers in Adobe graphics and video software, furthering the district’s efforts to integrate technology into the classroom and engage students in new ways. The students, according to Weil, create productions that astound teachers and administrators across the district.

“Today, we can offer extensive interactive content and video for students and professional development opportunities for teachers,” says Weil. “We receive tremendous accolades from teachers, students, and the community telling us that Adobe solutions enrich the learning experience and allow everyone

within the district to share knowledge in an interactive, collaborative environment; that’s crucial within a school district this large and geographically dispersed.”

### Digital literacy for the artistically inclined

Many students participate in the district’s graphic design program at Conversion Charter High School South Tech Academy. Beginning with ninth grade, students learn the basics and principles of graphic design such as balance and contrast and negative and positive space. They also are groomed for success in industry through skills gained by working with Adobe graphics and web software. Upon graduation, students have a portfolio of work that can take them far in either continuing their education or moving directly into careers.

“Students love using Adobe software,” says Mickey Schemer, graphic design instructor at South Tech Academy. “Adobe Creative Suite® software is captivating and it motivates students to succeed. So many students come back to me after graduation with smiles on their faces because fundamental design skills and knowledge of Adobe software have helped them succeed in college or in creative careers.”

### Bringing science to life

At the Palm Beach County School District, Adobe software is used for teaching students more than just creative topics. When Brian Dawson’s eighth grade students enter his science class, what they expect and what they find are typically two different things. Instead

### School District of Palm Beach County

West Palm Beach, Florida  
[www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us](http://www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us)

### Challenge

- Help district students learn 21st century digital literacy skills
- Create more engaging and effective instruction
- Empower geographically dispersed district with powerful online communication tools

### Solution

- Use Adobe Creative Suite software to build skills across multiple disciplines
- Build online educational network with Adobe Acrobat Connect Pro software

### Benefits

- Built digital literacy skills for 168,000 students
- Provided effective ways for students to actively learn and engage with concepts
- Brought dispersed district together with sophisticated online learning network
- Expecting that Acrobat Connect Pro will pay for itself within one year

### Toolkit

- Adobe Acrobat Connect Pro
- Adobe Flash Platform. Components used include:
  - Adobe Flex®
  - Adobe Flash Media Server
  - Adobe Flash Player
- Adobe Creative Suite Design and Web Premium. Components used include:
  - Adobe Dreamweaver®
  - Adobe Fireworks®
  - Adobe Flash Professional
  - Adobe Illustrator®
  - Adobe InDesign®
  - Adobe Photoshop®
- Adobe Digital School Collection. Components used include:
  - Adobe Photoshop Elements
  - Adobe Premiere® Elements
  - Adobe Presenter
- Platform: Mac and PC



Using Adobe graphics and web software, ninth grade students in the district's graphic design program at Conversion Charter High School South Tech Academy start to learn the basics and principles of graphic design such as balance and contrast. Through skills gained by working with Adobe solutions, students are well prepared to work in creative careers and have a portfolio of their work to showcase in interviews. Adobe software also helps eighth grade science students bring concepts to life by creating animations on computers.



*"Adobe Creative Suite software is captivating, and it motivates students to succeed. So many students come back to me after graduation with smiles on their faces because fundamental design skills and knowledge of Adobe software have helped them succeed in college or in creative careers."*

**Mickey Schemer, graphic design instructor, South Tech Academy**

of learning about gravity or kinetic and potential energy only from a textbook, the students bring the concepts to life by creating animations on computers using Adobe software. They draw on their personal life experiences to animate the concepts, making lessons meaningful and memorable in ways that extend far beyond rote memorization.

"The eighth grade students pick up the basics of Adobe software quickly," says Dawson. "Once they do, they can explain a complex concept like

gravity in their own unique, individual ways. They learn science and build critical digital skills at the same time. Some students choose science, some choose to become animators or designers, and others go off in entirely different directions. Regardless, they all are better off because their skill sets match what industry demands today."

#### **Promoting long-term success**

For the Palm Beach County School District, Adobe solutions help administrators and teachers stop juggling priorities and start achieving them. "Adobe software touches everything we do in the district. It covers the gamut of what's needed today in education," says Kim Cavanaugh, educational technology programs specialist for the Palm Beach County School District. "With Adobe software across the district, we are fostering digital literacy and integrating technology into the curriculum so that students can take their skill sets into college or straight into the workforce and be successful. Plus, we've found that students are much more engaged and committed when Adobe technology is an integral part of the curriculum."



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