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EDUHSD Delivers 21st Century Classrooms

In an extremely competitive and ever-changing global market, students must be prepared for college or a career upon graduating from high school. To meet this crucial demand, the El Dorado Union High School District (EDUHSD) enhanced their school's classrooms with the latest technology that will prepare students for success in the 21st Century. Besides the traditional computer labs available on campus, students now have access to devices that can be used at their classroom desks for essay writing, projects and research. In addition, 28 different courses in the district now have digital online access to content and the textbook; virtually eliminating the need for the 50 lbs. backpack. Students now learn in an environment that combines traditional textbook learning with interactive online experiences, and every student and staff member has access to cloud data storage and communication tools which allow them to access their digital files from home or school. "We are teaching our students about new technology because these skills are necessary for future, real-world application. The achievement gap for children only widens when they do not have proper access to the technology used in higher education and the workforce," said EDUHSD Superintendent Christopher Hoffman. "I'm proud of the hard work that was done to turn this vision into a reality."

Students at Oak Ridge High School are among those who immediately see the value, "...the world revolves around technology and that isn't such a bad thing. I like that we have Chromebooks and tablets in our classroom, because it gives us access to the world outside of school at that very moment. We don't have to wait to complete assignments because the resources are right at our fingertips." Another student noted, "I like the Chromebooks a lot, because the things you need to look up online you can look up in class instead of at home, This is really good for students who don't have internet at home."

These district-wide advancements have inspired administrators and teachers to use forward-thinking methods throughout instruction, and the district continues to train teachers on new technologies and software. This enables them to assist students, keep them engaged and encourage them to complete assignments. "One of the biggest differences I have seen is an increase in enthusiasm of students towards their work, and in their willingness to start working collaboratively with others on school projects," said Jennifer Zemny, Librarian at Ponderosa High School.

"I have observed our students eagerly embrace these new opportunities as they see the direct connection to their post-secondary goals," said Oak Ridge High School Principal Paul Burke. "This connection combined with the never ending new ways teachers can use the technology to foster student achievement, has definitely added to the instructional synergy here at Oak Ridge."

To ensure maximized project results, EDUHSD systematically built a solid technological infrastructure including a comprehensive pilot program last year incorporating the teachers and students who now utilize these tools. "The implementation of technology has given students an advantage in addressing problem solving skills, obtaining information, literary understanding, and confidence in collaboration," said Suzanne Everett, a teacher at Oak Ridge High School who was part of the pilot. EDUHSD will continue to incorporate feedback and safeguards to keep their classrooms updated and secure for students. For more information about EDUHSD, visit <http://www.eduhsd.k12.ca.us/>

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