



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: *Monday, January 25, 2010*

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Moreland Elementary's iTouch, iLearn program featured at state conference

(Mendota Heights, Minn.) --- West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan School District's iTouch, iLearn program was featured at the Minnesota School Boards Association's annual Leadership Conference on January 14 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. The district was part of the conference's Show and Tell event, which highlights the state's most unique and outstanding programs in education.



From L to R: Justin Wheeler, Julian Rosillo, Principal Pete Otterson, and Charles Duarte.

The iTouch, iLearn program implemented at Moreland Elementary is a creative use of Apple's iPod Touch in the classroom. During the conference, Moreland students Justin Wheeler (second grade) and Julian Rosillo (third grade) presented live demonstrations using a document camera, exhibiting the programs they use in the classroom.

Charles Duarte, a second grade teacher at Moreland, has students use the iPod Touches every morning for journaling. He emails them a subject to which they must formulate responses that include complete sentences, as well as proper punctuation, spelling, and grammar. The students also use the iPod Touches for reading comprehension by using a comic strip application. They convey what has happened in the stories they read by turning them in to a comic with pictures and narration text.

Implementing the use of technology into the classroom has become a focus for many educators. "The goal of a teacher is to prepare your students for life outside of the classroom," says Duarte. "I think that getting a leg up on technology through this program will help them in the future."

The students at Moreland genuinely enjoy using the iPod Touches in class. It is often the first thing they ask about in the morning, and they are enthusiastic about bringing ideas to their teachers. There was also a high level of interest in the iTouch, iLearn program at the Show and Tell event, keeping Wheeler and Rosillo engaged the whole time.



MSBA's annual Leadership Conference draws nearly 2,000 school board members, school administrators, and others. The Show and Tell event is an opportunity for conference attendees to learn more about the innovative programs from across the state. Being invited was an accomplishment in itself for the district.

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