

Dade County Teachers Agree "Learning Today™ Improved Student Performance"

Program Background

In May 2002, Learning Today, Inc., a provider of instructional technology delivered directly via the Internet, implemented its products for a Pilot Program into three Miami-Dade County elementary schools. The program involved 22 teachers and over 550 students from the following three schools:

- ◆ Flagami Elementary School
- ◆ Citrus Grove Elementary School
- ◆ Charles Drew Elementary School

The Pilot Program ran during the 2002-2003 school year. Over the summer of 2002, Learning Today technical staff performed school site technical reviews to ensure that the environments would support Learning Today. In every case, the school sites had access to high speed Internet in the classrooms or in the Media Centers and Computer Labs, or both.

"This Program is the first, all inclusive program I have ever seen for primary children."

The only support required from the school's technical personnel was the upgrade of Internet Explorer to Version 6.0 (a free upgrade done directly via the Internet) and in some cases, the installation of Macromedia's Flash 6 (also a free plug-in obtained via the Internet). In a few cases, headphones for students had to be obtained for some of the classrooms.

In late September and early October 2002, Learning Today's professional development staff trained the teachers in two group-training sessions. After the training, Learning Today's staff worked one-on-one with the teachers in their classrooms to fully implement the program. Booster training

"The skills that have been added have been beneficial in getting ready for the FCAT. It reinforces the skills."

and support by Learning Today was ongoing.

There was an even distribution of four teachers from each grades K – 3rd. Pre-K teachers and ESOL teachers in grades 3rd – 5th were also involved.

The teachers set up and used the Learning Today materials with their students. Seventy-five percent of teachers used Learning Today in the classroom, while the other 25% used it in the computer lab or media center.

Survey Overview

In March 2003, teachers involved in the Learning Today pilot program were asked to complete a comprehensive survey to formally communicate their opinions in a host of areas. The survey was anonymous and made up of Agree / Disagree questions

with sections for open-ended, narrative comments.

The average number of years teaching for the educators in this survey was 11.5, with the greatest number of years being 35 and the least number of years being two. Teachers used the program on average with 25 students.

The survey was designed to obtain the following information from teachers who used the system with their students:

- ◆ *How have the teachers and students been using Learning Today?*
- ◆ *Do the students like and enjoy the materials?*
- ◆ *Do the teachers think the program improved student performance?*
- ◆ *How are Learning Today's training and support?*
- ◆ *Do the teachers like the lesson builder application and features?*
- ◆ *How is the quality and effectiveness of the Learning Today curriculum?*
- ◆ *How was the overall system performance?*
- ◆ *How was the quality of the student progress reporting?*

Results

The results of survey are extremely favorable about Learning Today and the product. (See Table 1 for summary of some questions and collective responses).

All respondents agreed that the students enjoyed the material and liked the fact that the Learning Today lessons include an introductory tutorial. Ninety-five percent of the teachers agreed that their students benefited greatly from using the Learning Today materials.

Conclusions

The results of the pilot program evaluation indicated that teachers found the Learning Today curriculum useful and that it improved their students' performance.

Ninety-percent of the teachers agreed that the material was more than adequate to meet the needs of the students and that their students enjoyed using the Learning Today program.

Agree/Disagree Type Questions	
My students benefited greatly from using the Learning Today materials.	95% Strongly Agree, Mildly Agree or Agree.
The Learning Today materials are very good quality and met or exceeded my expectations.	91% Strongly Agree, Mildly Agree or Agree.
My students enjoyed the materials and were eager to use Learning Today.	100% Strongly Agree, Mildly Agree or Agree.
I like the fact that the Learning Today lessons include an opening tutorial presentation.	100% Strongly Agree, Mildly Agree or Agree.
There were more than enough materials to meet the needs of my students.	91% Strongly Agree, Mildly Agree or Agree.
Narrative Response Type Questions	
Please characterize your overall opinion of the Learning Today Program.	92% Favorable or Extremely Favorable
Do your students like and enjoy the materials?	92% Favorable or Extremely Favorable
Do you think the program improved your student's performance?	92% Favorable or Extremely Favorable
Would you like to continue using Learning Today next school year?	92% Favorable or Extremely Favorable
Do you think other teachers and students in your grade level would benefit from using Learning Today?	92% Favorable or Extremely Favorable

Table 1 - Pilot Program Teacher Survey Results

All three administrators have expressed a strong desire to renew for the 2003-2004 school year