



Denver Green School  
Denver Public Schools

#### INTERVIEWED

► **Sam Sheppard,**  
Third Grade Teacher

#### INDUSTRY

► Education

#### CHALLENGE

► Replace old, barely functional projector with state-of-the-art interactive display

## Third Grade Teacher Achieves Increased Engagement, Visibility and Collaboration with ViewSonic® ViewBoard® Interactive Displays

### SCHOOL

Denver Green School Southeast serves around 570 students from kindergarten through eighth grade. A part of the Luminary Learning Network (LLN) and the Innovation School Zone established in 2008 by the Colorado General Assembly, Denver Green Schools (DGS) use relevant instruction and shared leadership to serve a diverse community and create an inclusive environment that engages all learners to flourish and live a sustainable life. Along with high academic achievement, goals for learners at DGS campuses include partnering with teachers to engage in relevant, student-directed learning; building leadership capacity by embracing a democratic decision-making model; using service learning as a way to become community stewards; creating mind-body connections as well as community connections; and using the school buildings and neighbourhoods as laboratories for the study and implementation of carbon footprint reduction and sustainable living.

### CHALLENGE

Now looking forward to her fifth year at the school, third grade teacher, Sam Sheppard, began her career at the Denver Green School Southeast as a student teacher, and has never looked back. Grateful to be hired as a staff teacher at this innovative school, which empowers teachers with greater autonomy than typical public schools, Sheppard describes the learning environment as rewarding and joyful.

“I love it here. We have a farm where the kids harvest things that end up on their lunch table, and we raise chickens in the classroom,” said Sheppard. “Teachers

*“There was so much excitement from the kids around going up to the ViewBoard and working on it. Engagement increased one hundred percent. Everyone actually wanted to come up and show their work. That didn’t used to happen nearly this much. Honestly, the kids just love it.”*

— Sam Sheppard, Third Grade Teacher



ViewSonic

## SOLUTION



▶ 65-inch ViewSonic® ViewBoard® IFP6550 4K interactive display



▶ ViewSonic VB-STND-005 rolling cart

have a voice here. We're able to write our own plans and have ownership over how we teach."

As a Title One school, DGS Southeast has limited funding for technology. Sheppard did her best with an old, glitchy projector.

"I'd say it only worked about half the time," she said. "We got used to waiting for it to warm up. The kids invented 'magic fingers' that they would wiggle at the projector to help it get going."

When it did work, Sheppard said it was often hard for the kids to see what she was projecting, due to shadows and fuzzy images. Thinking back to her own school years, she reminisced about the usefulness of Smart Boards.

"It made me sad that my kids didn't have this advantage," she said. "Asking myself why not, it came down to funding. Projectors were what the school could afford."

## SOLUTION

In her fourth year at the school, Sheppard decided to take action. She created a project page on DonorsChoose – like a GoFundMe just for teachers – asking donors to contribute to her request for a ViewSonic ViewBoard interactive display.

"I had done some research and discovered the ViewSonic ViewBoard displays," said Sheppard. "They had great reviews and I wanted a great interactive display that was clear and easy for the kids to see. I also really liked that it could be put on a cart and could move around the classroom with us."

As a crowdfunding platform, projects on DonorsChoose are most often supported by small individual contributions. Sheppard had high hopes for her project to get fully funded (around 70% of projects do), and was working hard to drum up supporters, but recognized that progress might take a while. Little did she know that ViewSonic had caught wind of her DonorsChoose fundraiser and decided to surprise her with a 65-inch ViewSonic ViewBoard IFP6550 4K Interactive Display.

On a typical Monday, Sheppard was going about her usual classroom routine when DGS Southeast Lead Partner, Jessica Krichbaum, showed up at her door. Two ViewSonic team members brought in a ViewSonic ViewBoard display on a rolling cart. Sheppard was astonished. Her excitement, as well as the fast and easy setup are captured in this Instagram reveal: [vsfinch.es/DenverGreenSchoolIG](https://vsfinch.es/DenverGreenSchoolIG)

"I was so surprised," said Sheppard. "It was amazing. Such an amazing surprise for which we are all so grateful."

Her students had a similar reaction when the board rolled in, happily yelling things like, "Yay! No more projector!"

## RESULTS

As anticipated based on her research, Sheppard's students absolutely adored the new classroom technology. Although they only had three weeks of the school year left, Sheppard made sure to make the most of the beautiful new display. Active participation in math and learning games were two of her students' favorite activities, she said, and collaboration and engagement went through the roof.

## RESULTS

- ▶ Teacher reports huge increase in student engagement
- ▶ Students love interacting with the display
- ▶ Clear visibility of content for all students at all times
- ▶ Output from integrated speakers is audible to students throughout the room

“There was so much excitement from the kids around going up to the ViewBoard and working on it,” she said. “Engagement increased one hundred percent. Everyone actually wanted to come up and show their work. That didn’t used to happen nearly this much. Honestly, the kids just love it.”

Another big benefit provided by the new tech was the clear visibility for every student in the classroom, with no more “weird head shadows” blocking the view.

“Like many classrooms, we celebrate at the end of the year by watching movies,” said Sheppard. “It was so amazing to have clear views and built-in speakers. Finally, my kids could see and hear clearly, and I didn’t have to keep asking them to scootch down in their seats so their heads wouldn’t cast shadows on the screen.”

Krichbaum seconded all the above, commenting that, “It has been amazing to see the ViewBoard display up and running so quickly, and kids being so much more engaged as they manipulate things on the screen. Not to mention that everyone can actually see what is happening on it!”

Despite only having the new technology for a few weeks, Sheppard and her students were able to quickly learn how to use it.

“The ViewSonic ViewBoard display is so user-friendly for the kids, which aligns perfectly with my goal of putting more student voice into the classroom next year,” Sheppard commented. “I envision more student leadership; things like having them rotate through roles where they’re in charge of the board in one way or another.”

Sheppard looks forward to many more applications for her new ViewSonic ViewBoard interactive display in the upcoming school year, including the use of Google Slides to structure the day – a growing trend among Google Classroom teachers.

“I am so excited to use it for full year next year. Along with all our teachers I’ll be moving toward using Google Slides,” said Sheppard. “Everything throughout the day will be presented on slides, and will be visible on the big display. My students and I will be able to interact with each slide using whatever type of content I’ve embedded into it.”

Happily, Sheppard won’t be the only teacher at DGS Southeast using a ViewSonic ViewBoard interactive display.

“Amazingly, the ViewBoard on my DonorsChoose page was fully funded, so my teaching partner will have one next year too,” said Sheppard. “It will be great to collaborate together on ways to use them, and we hope to do some PD with ViewSonic to deepen our understanding of what’s possible when teaching with this amazing interactive display.”

