

# Students gain education advantage with Epson projectors in the classroom

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## case study



### Barnier Public School

A K-6 public school, Barnier has maintained a focus on providing its students with a rich learning environment through the innovative use of technology.

### Challenges

- Create a more relevant learning environment
- Provide students with greater engagement in the classroom

### Solution

- Epson EMP-400W projectors
- Interactive whiteboards

### Benefits

- Improved attendance rates and student behaviour
- Greater spontaneity in teaching
- Outstanding levels of projector reliability and performance



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Rod Gibbs

Principal, Barnier Public School

Located at Quakers Hill in Sydney's Western Suburbs and known throughout the community as "The Technology School", Barnier Public School leads by example in demonstrating the enormous value technology adds to the K-6 learning environment.

One of the first schools in Sydney to implement projector and interactive whiteboard systems, and the first school in Australia to use the emerging Senteo response system technology, Barnier has long been committed to the use of technology in creating an engaging and stimulating learning experience for its students. Playing a crucial role in meeting that commitment are interactive whiteboards and Epson EMP-400W projectors.

Supplied and installed by Electroboard, an Epson Australia business partner, the projector and interactive whiteboard solutions were first introduced at Barnier in 2002 when, according to Principal Mr. Rod Gibbs, they were well and truly in the infancy stages of application in the education environment.

"We had heard of Macquarie University and only one school in Sydney using the projector and whiteboard systems at that time," Mr. Gibbs says. "But after some visits to those places and a hands-on demonstration from Electroboard we were blown away by the obvious potential they had for learning and teaching."

### Wide screen in the classroom

Now, with every one of the school's 28 classrooms featuring an Epson EMP-400W projector and interactive whiteboard, even Barnier Kindergarten students take it almost for granted. Every morning as soon as they enter their classrooms, instead of answering to the traditional calling out of names from the roll, they walk up to the interactive whiteboard and select their name from the student list projected onto the whiteboard.

Flexible and engaging teaching, though, underpins the very real value of the Epson projectors at Barnier. Each of the projectors, which is connected directly to a fully "kitted out" Windows-based PC and used in conjunction with an interactive whiteboard, functions as a primary display for virtually any application. From sharing digital portfolios and instructing on the use of software applications, right through to making the most of widescreen movies, the projectors are as adaptable as the teachers need them to be.

That adaptability is demonstrated with the EMP-400W's Wide XGA (1280 by 800 pixels) display capabilities. This ensures that the Wide XGA display, which is becoming an increasingly common PC display resolution, can be projected accurately onto the whiteboard. "It's that level of functionality with the projectors that ensures our teachers can introduce any digital material into the curriculum without having first to concern themselves with technology limitations," Mr. Gibbs says.

### Experience tells

In commenting on the reasons behind maintaining Epson as the only make of projectors used throughout the school, Mr Gibbs says: "Over the years we've learnt through experience that there are numerous features that must be considered when it

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comes to ensuring the best results in the classroom; and key among those are brightness and absolute reliability.”

On the issue of reliability, Mr. Gibbs goes on to explain that with the interactive whiteboards being a fundamental tool in the Barnier classroom environment, any projector failure could easily represent major disruption. “The fact it,” he says, “that aside from the need to change the occasional lamp, there has not been a single instance of Epson projector failure at this school.”

Certainly, with nearly thirty projector and interactive whiteboard solutions along with around 300 computers used daily throughout the school, it would be safe to assume that Barnier’s IT support personnel were kept fairly busy. But there’s one problem with that assumption – the school has no dedicated IT support staff. Rather, the vast majority of on-site technology support and maintenance is carried out by teaching staff.

According to Mr. Gibbs, the ease with which the Epson projectors are maintained is – along with their high levels of reliability – a telling factor in their eminent suitability for the education environment. “This is a public school without the financial resources other educational institutions might have,” he says. “Fortunately, the Epson projectors seem to have been designed to make it easy for virtually anyone to manage and maintain; and that in itself is a major benefit for any public school.”

Then, with regard to brightness, one of the major advantages the EMP-400W projectors deliver is the ability for teachers to more fully exploit the potential of the interactive whiteboard solution. Without the need to go through the rigmarole of darkening classrooms in order to achieve a bright and crystal clear display, Barnier teachers can quickly make use of the projectors and deliver to their students a more dynamic learning experience. Kindergarten teacher Terri Bullock and Year 6 teacher Rob Hawkes both point to the spontaneity this brings to the classroom.

By way of example, Ms. Bullock explains: “Last year during a reading I was doing from Graeme Base’s *Jungle Drums*, one of my students piped up and said that he knew of another book – *Uno’s Garden* – by the same author.

“Using the computer connected to the projector and whiteboard, we did a quick Google search and discovered a podcast that featured Graeme Base talking about one of his books. Essentially, it gave us a great insight into the author and had the children excited about learning more.”

Mr. Hawkes relates similar experiences with his students. “It might be the case that we’re creating a Web site and of the students comes up against a particular issue that warrants being brought up with the entire class,” he explains. “Rather than have everyone crowd around a single computer, we simply use the projector and whiteboard so everyone can see precisely what’s being discussed.”

### It’s just better

Ultimately, the real effectiveness of the projectors and interactive whiteboards can only be measured against student performance; and on that note, Mr. Gibbs comments: “With the broader use of the projectors and whiteboards, we’ve seen a major improvement in attendance and even suspension rates have dropped significantly. Our students are engaged! We have had visitors to the school walking around at 2.30 on a Friday afternoon and seen maths lessons in progress where every student is engaged and attentive.

“If anyone was to ask about how valuable these solutions are in the classroom, I’d have to say that that’s one of the most telling examples.”

For more information on Epson Projectors please call 1300 361 054 and quote reference 40057.

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