

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Description: Education/Community Interest Story

WASHINGTON COUNTY K-5 TEACHERS RETURN TO A SPRING BREAK SURPRISE

Washington County's Department of Education is proud to announce the implementation of Audio Enhancement technology in classrooms throughout the school system. According to the Audio Enhancement website, these systems are designed to enrich the audio environment of the classrooms, resulting in improved student attention, participation, and success.

Additionally, by using a normal voice volume (as one would use when speaking face-to-face with an individual) throughout the school day, teachers typically experience less physical stress.

On October 5, 2016 a meeting to discuss Audio Enhancement technology was held at the Washington County Department of Education Central Office. School board members, Central Office staff, County commissioners, as well as Jeff Anderson, CEO of Audio Enhancements, and Bryan Merville, of Beacon Technologies, attended the meeting. The meeting resulted in Mr. Anderson making available 26 audio systems for WCDE to evaluate for 90 days with an option to purchase. During the week of October 24, 2016, Beacon Technologies of Nashville installed the Audio Enhancement in 26 classrooms. The Audio Enhancement systems yielded such great reviews from the teachers using them that Director of Schools, Kimber Halliburton, introduced a three-year plan to the County Commission's Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) Committee to install audio systems in all classrooms in the district. She requested \$316,000 for this school year to install the Audio Enhancement system for all K-5 classrooms. The HEW committee approved the request as did the Budget Committee. The request was then sent to the full County Commission for approval. On January 25, 2017, the County Commission approved the request and 158 audio systems were ordered on February 9, 2017.

During the Spring Break week of March 27, 2017, Beacon Technologies installed Audio Enhancement systems in K-5 classrooms throughout the school system. On Monday April 3, 2017, teachers returned from Spring Break to find a big surprise in their classrooms. After a few days of using the Audio Enhancement system, Dr. Jill Leonard declared, "We love our Audio Enhancement equipment in our Kindergarten class! I am convinced that my students are listening and understanding the concepts of my lessons with the increased attention. Within just the few days that we have used this equipment the students appear more confident in answering questions from the material that has been presented. They especially love using the microphone to share answers. This product has helped to increase volunteered responses from all students including my students with Speech and Language impairments and students who are generally too shy to talk. Also, the ability to express myself without the daily strain on my voice and the muscles in my neck and jaws has been wonderful. It has been a great opportunity to have such a transformative and beneficial product."

See more of Washington County's best teachers and brightest students using the Audio Enhancement systems by searching Twitter: @WCDE_TN , @AudioEnhancemnt , @Kimberhalliburt



Sandy Forbes-Kindergarten Teacher at Grandview School



Dr. Jill Leonard's Kindergarten class at South Central School