

# EPSON BRIGHTLINK INTERACTIVE PROJECTORS CREATE A SEAMLESS TECHNOLOGY SOLUTION FOR MARTIN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

**SCHOOL PROFILE**

**NAME:**  
Martin County School District

**LOCATION:**  
Stuart, FL

**TYPE:**  
Public

**ENROLLMENT:**  
18,000

**WEBSITE:**  
[www.martinschools.org](http://www.martinschools.org)



As the first bell rings this 2014–2015 school year, students throughout the **Martin County School District (MCSD)** in Stuart, Florida are racing to their K–12 classrooms to get their hands on new technologies. For the first time, the district begins a school year with all 1,000 classrooms fully equipped with interactive technology, choosing the Epson BrightLink<sup>®</sup> ultra-short-throw interactive projector as its new interactive standard.

“With the Common Core State Standards requiring more critical thinking from our students, it’s up to us to transform the way we’re teaching and how our students are learning,” said Marilyn Gavitt, coordinator of digital learning at MCSD, an academically high-performing K–12 district of 18,000 students.

“We’re finding that teachers are using interactive technology to engage students,” she said. “The children are walking up to the front of the classroom and using BrightLink’s finger-touch- and pen-based interactivity, becoming content creators and making their own flowcharts to share with classmates.”

MCSD is located on Florida’s Treasure Coast in a fast growing region halfway between Daytona Beach and Miami. Most Martin County residents live in its coastal communities, while others reside among the ranches, farms, and citrus groves to the west. Each school day, the district opens the doors of 12 elementary schools, five middle schools, and three high schools. MCSD is consistently ranked among the state’s top performing school districts.

## Technology Flashback

When Gavitt joined the district's Educational Technology staff nine years ago, MCSD had very little technology in its schools. "At the time, the best we had were 19-inch TVs and overhead projectors," said Gavitt, who "came out of the classroom after teaching for 15 years" at MCSD. "Now that we're moving into a digital curriculum here in Florida, it's important that we support our teachers in learning how to best utilize the new technology."

In 2008, the district started a pilot program installing Promethean boards in its elementary schools and SMART Boards in its secondary schools, as well as developing professional learning communities and an annual Digital Learning Institute for teachers. By 2012, 40 percent of all classrooms had interactive whiteboards, and nearly all classrooms had multimedia projectors and document cameras. That same year, MCSD began working toward its objective that 100 percent of its classrooms have interactive technology, document cameras, and audio enhancement by 2014.



Although MCSD successfully installed the interactive whiteboards, Gavitt saw room for improvement in hardware standardization and the quality of the projected image. "It was a challenge for us to support two types of hardware," she said. "I wasn't happy that we were locked into each manufacturer's projector because the image quality just wasn't as good as I knew it could be."

## Versatile Technologies

The district altered its game plan in 2010 and began installing ceiling-mounted Epson PowerLite projectors to work with the interactive whiteboards in new construction. Then, in 2012, Gavitt shifted her strategy when she learned about the Epson BrightLink interactive 3LCD projector, an ultra-short-throw projector + pen and finger-

touch combination. "Here was the solution that would really engage staff and students with better image quality, built-in interactivity, and easy integration into what we already were using," she said.

Mounted above a standard whiteboard, BrightLink turned out to be the best of both worlds. Teachers could make almost any smooth, light surface interactive, including dry erase boards and tables, and yet continue using the same software teachers were already trained to use. Installing the high-performance BrightLink projectors allowed the district to expand its previous investment in Promethean's ActivInspire<sup>®</sup> and SMART Notebook<sup>™</sup> learning software.

"Epson's partnership with Promethean and SMART Technologies worked to our advantage, as we were able to make an easy transition to BrightLink with the same software our teachers were already trained to use," said Gavitt.

## Brighter Colors

With BrightLink, Gavitt also saw a big improvement in image quality and color brightness. Walking into classrooms, she saw teachers displaying brighter and more true-to-life images, whether from curriculum software, presentation slides, web pages, flip charts, eBooks, videos, DVDs, or scanned images.

“Without color brightness, the projected images tend to be muddy and soft, losing detail—and the attention of students,” said Gavitt. Using 3LCD, 3-chip technology, the new BrightLink 595Wi has 3,300 lumens of color brightness<sup>1</sup> and 3,300 lumens of white brightness.<sup>1</sup> Teachers can also project large, interactive WXGA (1280x800 resolution) images up to 100 inches without shadow interference.

## Hands-on Learning

With BrightLink’s touch- and pen-based interactivity, students are active participants in their own learning. The BrightLink 595Wi, called “the world’s first touch-enabled 3LCD interactive projector,” allows them to touch, draw, select, and interact using intuitive and familiar gestures.

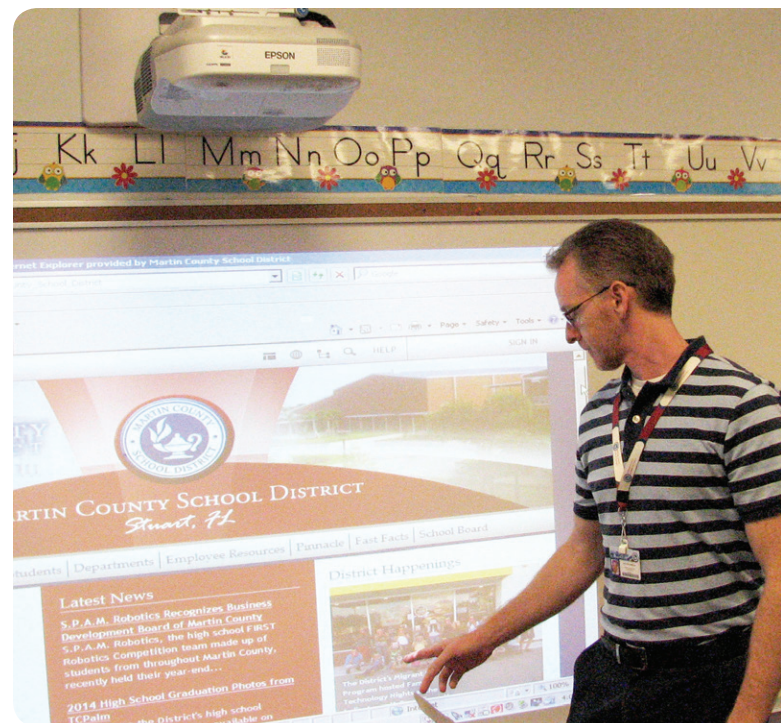
“Teachers report that students are definitely more engaged and inquisitive about the day’s lesson,” said Gavitt. “The most exciting part for me is observing how teachers can use BrightLink to spark a love of learning.”

With dual pen support, two users can write on the board at the same time, either directly on projected images over the school’s network or on content from a range of devices including DVD/Blu-ray® players, document cameras, tablets, and mobile devices with advanced connectivity options.

## Saving Dollars

With plans to phase out all other interactive hardware in the near future, 600 out of 1,000 classrooms are now standardized with BrightLink. Already MCSD is finding that BrightLink’s low total cost of ownership is bringing value in the long run. “We no longer worry about interactive whiteboards and all of the periphery items that go with them,” said Gavitt. “It’s a lot easier to support one type of equipment and move forward with a standardized projector brand, which is allowing the district to meet its projections sooner.” She is also pleased with the projector’s reliability and the long-life, low-cost lamp.

“I’m pleased that our district is reaching its objective for full integration of interactive technology,” said Gavitt. “It all begins with good teaching, a supportive community of students, teachers, administrators and parents, and the right tools like BrightLink.”



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<sup>1</sup> Color brightness (color light output) and white brightness (white light output) will vary depending on usage conditions. Color light output measured in accordance with IDMS 15.4; white light output measured in accordance with ISO 21118.