Using technology in the classroom to support all students

Sweden – The Swedish Agency for Participation

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The focus of the project is to increase knowledge among students, teachers, and other involved professionals on how the use of innovative technology in the classroom (from interactive whiteboards to smartphone apps) can facilitate student participation and performance and thus support the successful completion of secondary school. Survey data proves that such knowledge improves the performance of all students significantly.

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— Ms. Heidi Hayes Jacobs , President and Founder, Curriculum Designers and Curriculum21

FACTS & FIGURES

- 215 students at two secondary schools in the municipalities of Linköping and Kungälv received individual project support. These 215 students are students with disability.

- A needs assessment was carried out before and after interventions, showing a significant improvement in 13 of the 16 areas assessed.

- 97% of students said that they would continue to use the technology after the project time, and 62% felt they their ability to deal with difficult situations improved as a result of their participation in the project.

PROBLEMS TARGETED

Students can have functional limitations that affect their academic achievement due to a variety of neuropsychological, cognitive, physical, psychiatric, and neurological conditions. It is not uncommon that students advance in school without their functional limitations being identified or addressed. It is also not uncommon that these functional limitations can also cause problems outside of the school environment.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

Training materials were developed and knowledge acquired on how various disabilities can affect classroom performance and how innovative technologies can support students with functional limitations to improve. The use of technology in the classroom (e.g., microphones, interactive whiteboards, computers, web-based platforms, MP3, smartphones with apps) enhances the academic environment for everyone involved while providing the opportunity to give specific non-stigmatizing support to individual students as needed. The project worked both on an overall organizational level and on a more concrete, practical level with individual students, as the aim was to ease the transition from school to work or further study. The collaboration has resulted in the students being enrolled in activities such as employment internships relatively quickly after graduation.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

The University of Linkoping will follow a large number of the students who received individual interventions and who have consented to be included in a follow-up study. A website dedicated to increasing technology support for students with learning difficulties in order to create equal opportunities to education and future work has been established, and offers information and teaching materials developed in this project. The Swedish Agency for Participation has received many requests concerning the project, and studies on the use of technology in schools and the dissemination of results of the work carried out continue even after completion of the project.

Photo: Yes

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CONTACT

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