



Case Study: Glendale Elementary School District Glendale, Arizona

Glendale Elementary School District Speak and Play with New Headsets

English language learners (ELL) represent the fastest growing segment of the school-age population and now account for nearly 19 percent of school-age children, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). As projections suggest that the ELL population will continue to increase (approximately 20 percent of the workforce and half of the population under 18 in the next 20 years), school districts are examining how this increase will affect the educational environment in the future.

The Glendale Elementary School District (GESD), located northwest of Phoenix, Arizona, encompasses 16 square miles in the heart of Glendale. Once a small agricultural community, the population of Glendale has increased significantly to more than 180,000 people in recent years. This rapid growth is largely attributed to the favorable climate and available employment opportunities, drawing in people from all over the nation and many immigrants from around the world.

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This significant growth in population has caused Glendale Elementary School District to become one of the fastest growing districts in Arizona, serving nearly 14,300 elementary students, with more than 3,800 English language learners (nearly a quarter of the student population). In an effort to further help the district's rapidly increasing population of English language learners, GESD decided to adopt a specialized curriculum program called DynEd.

Based on extensive research into how people learn, the language learning courses from DynEd are designed for students needing to master the English language. The program uses multimedia technology to offer an alternative method to traditional, text-based learning approaches. The company refers to its listening-based, visually supported method as the DynEd Recursive Hierarchical Recognition (RHR) approach. GESD administrators view the program as a way to actively and consistently engage and hold the attention of their students.



3066-USB

In order to implement the program, GESD needed to purchase headphones that would allow the students to listen and practice their new language skills. They required a headphone with a microphone that would be durable enough to handle classroom abuse, and could allow the students to both hear their lessons and speak and record vocabulary using the computer.

“We decided to purchase the Deluxe Multimedia Stereo Headsets (3066-USB) wired headphones from Califone because we liked that they easily connected to the computer – just plug and play,” said Delfina Rodriguez, the ELL Intervention Program Coordinator for the district. “Students participating in the specialized ELL curriculum illustrate their progress by listening to an audio recording from the program’s software, repeating the sentence into the microphone, recording the message, and then playing it back to assess their own work.”

The Deluxe Multimedia Stereo Headsets are designed for language learning in today's classrooms. The headset's compact, adjustable headband with high speed USB plug is ideal for high speed Internet listening, language learning and tutorials in computer labs and other multimedia applications. And the around-ear ambient noise-reducing earcups provide maximum protection against exterior sounds (without added electronic circuitry and expense). This technology reduces the need to increase the volume, encouraging safe hearing practices.

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders asserts that more than 30 million Americans are exposed to hazardous sound levels on a regular basis. And, as many studies have found that irreparable hearing loss can result from high levels of noise over extended periods of time, Califone designed the 3066-USB to meet the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) recommendations for using ambient-noise reducing headphones on a consistent basis.

In addition to encouraging safe hearing practices, the headsets compatibility with the classroom computer allows each ELL to be split into small groups. This allows the teachers to monitor them and their progress closely.

Eighteen schools are piloting the DynEd program using the 3066-USB headsets. The district ordered 900 units to start and found that the headphones are consistent with desktop usage. Teachers agree that the headphones are ideal because they fit student's heads as opposed to larger, bulkier sets made as “one-size-fits-all” hardware. Additionally, the ABS material is safe and helps to keep classrooms healthy as the headphones can easily be wiped down after each usage.

“Both the students and the educators are excited to use the headsets and found that they work nicely with the specialized curriculum,” Rodriguez said. “The majority of the headphones are for our ELL program and others are used throughout the district in labs or on mobile carts.”