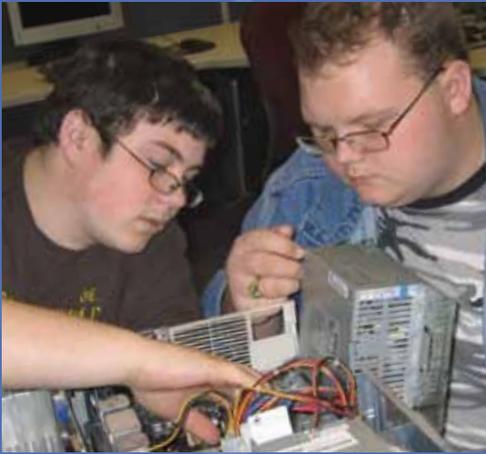


education
is *different*
here



EAST[®]initiative

what is east anyway? east is:



“ EAST has made me more aware of the world around me... It's shown me that with the right knowledge I can do whatever I want in life. ”

—Sarah, EAST student

What does all this have to do with education? Everything! EAST is a **self-directed** educational model in which students choose their own projects based on needs they discover in the community. They then use **teamwork**, along with cutting-edge **technology**, to complete these **service** projects. And they accomplish far more than is usually expected of students. They become invested in the projects and in their communities; they develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills, a sense of responsibility and increased self worth—all while improving the world around them. And because the EAST environment more closely resembles the working world than a conventional academic setting, students become better prepared for the real world.

EAST students have participated in a wide variety of community projects. Here are some examples of things they have done:

- Created and distributed television commercials statewide, as well as an educational film for the Arkansas Department of Education's Smart Core, part of a state initiative focused on improving Arkansas public high schools
- Worked with the Arkansas State Park Service to develop modeling for “greener” cabins and virtual reality tours for promotions and ecological diversity studies
- Worked with the National Park Service to map hiking trails for its website and for Google Earth
- Partnered with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to map underwater features of area lakes for safety and mitigation of accidents
- Assisted various school districts in mapping bus routes to save fuel and transportation time

These are only a few of the many amazing ways students have improved their communities. The sophistication of these projects illustrates what students can accomplish when they are given the opportunity and the necessary tools.

The EAST Environment

EAST classrooms are led by specially trained instructors called facilitators. They are trained to guide and encourage as the students identify community problems and seek to solve them. The facilitator does not “dole out” information for the students to memorize. He or she is not expected to know all the answers, or to have mastered all the forms of technology. The facilitator acts as a coach and motivator. This different role can be challenging for teachers trained in more conventional education techniques. Initially, letting go of the traditional structure of the classroom can be scary. However, the results prove to be astounding!

self-directed teamwork service technology



“ EAST is one of our most important pipeline programs for potential high school and college student talent. ”

—Allison Nicholas, Team Leader
College Recruiting & University Relations
Axiom Corporation



The Technology

EAST classrooms are equipped with state-of-the-art technology not usually available in traditional classrooms. Some of the fields students may explore:

- computer networks and network system administration
- desktop publishing
- presentation software
- computer aided design (CAD)
- geographical information systems (GIS)
- global positioning systems (GPS)
- website design
- animation
- virtual reality
- video and music creation

In spite of the technical resources of EAST classrooms, technology is not the main focus. Rather it is a tool that is integrated into the learning process. The primary focus is on the intellectual and problem-solving growth of the student. The goal is to produce creative, self-starting, innovative, problem-solving citizens.

Why Do We Need EAST?

Our society has changed from an industrial based economy to one driven by information. Our educational system must provide students with the skills and experiences necessary to flourish in this new culture and to deal with and solve problems. EAST

integrates constantly changing technology into the classroom and facilitates meaningful learning. When we simply teach the technology, we teach obsolescence. Twenty-first century technology users must be prepared to construct their own learning. In EAST, students *learn to learn*.

Who Benefits From EAST?

First of all, the **students**. But who are these students? The EAST classroom provides an effective learning environment for all types of students: at risk, special education, gifted and middle-of-the road. Student interest is the only prerequisite; preconceived student ability is not a requirement. EAST works for all kinds of students.

The **community** also benefits from EAST. Students collaborate with many community and civic groups to correct and improve neighborhood, city, county and state conditions. In many cases the local EAST classroom has resources that the community does not. Especially in small communities, EAST students can provide valuable services that would otherwise be unavailable. As a bonus for the community, these students become engaged and productive citizens.

Because of the transition to an information age, employers need an appropriately trained workforce. By contributing their expertise — as well as financial support — to EAST, businesses help create the type of workforce they require. So **industry**, and the overall **economy**, benefit as well.

The EAST Initiative

The EAST Initiative is a non-profit organization that works with schools and institutions across the country to establish local EAST programs. It has a 14-year track record in helping schools, facilitators and students implement service learning projects, technology education and individualized education goals. The EAST method has been named a model by the United States Departments of Education and Labor and has proven, research-based results.

The Initiative works with schools to equip classrooms, train facilitators and provide technical training for students at local and regional training centers, as well as online. Participating schools must sign a set of assurances, promising to follow the prescribed EAST methods, and participate in periodic required facilitator and student training sessions.

The Initiative also plans and executes an important part of the EAST experience—the annual EAST Conference. Each year hundreds of schools from all over the country send EAST student representatives to present their work from the past year. Students experience a trade show-like environment including exhibits, break-out sessions and a gala awards banquet. It is the highlight of the year for EAST programs nationwide and provides another excellent learning experience for students.

Our Supporters

The EAST Initiative is supported through a unique set of relationships with public and private entities from the business, education, and government sectors. These supporters include the schools and students themselves, state departments of education and economic development, colleges and universities, businesses and industries, as well as other philanthropic individuals and organizations.

Corporate supporters such as software manufacturers may become sponsors of the annual Conference, where they have the opportunity to present their products to and conduct training sessions for thousands of the country's most promising students. The Conference is also a good recruiting opportunity for colleges, universities and other business and government organizations.

All EAST supporters are committed to making a difference in the lives of children and in improving the quality and relevancy of education, for the benefit of all.

For more information on the EAST model of education or the EAST Initiative, please visit www.EASTinitiative.org or email EASTinfo@EASTproject.org.

